



NEW PROVIDENCE ALLIANCE

to prevent alcohol and drug abuse

NPMA

Prom and Graduation Issue

SPRING 2011

TAKE 20 MINUTES TO WATCH THE NP ALLIANCE EVERY 15 MINUTES VIDEO

Before the prom, sit with your teens and watch a video of the "Every 15 Minutes" program on underage drunk driving presented last year at NPHS. It will make them think twice about drinking and driving or getting in a car with someone who has been drinking!

Go to <http://vimeo.com/18919445>

(warning, some content may not be suitable for viewing by younger siblings)

A message from Your Student Assistance Counselor

The end of the school year is rapidly approaching, and with it comes two of the most exciting times in our students' lives; prom and graduation. Most of the students look forward to the prom as their last big event together before graduation and hope to make it a memorable evening. Talks of dresses, tuxedos, limos and, of course, the traditional post prom trip to the beach have been buzzing in the air for weeks.

As a faculty member, it is nice to see their excitement; however, no matter how enthusiastic they are, I become equally anxious. My hope is that all goes well, but my fear says something completely different. I am just some counselor who works at their school; so if I am this worried about them, I can only imagine how worried you, the parents, must be. As parents, you face difficult decisions on a daily basis. You must always walk the line between your kids liking and hating you based on those decisions...often the latter. I know how difficult it can be to let your kids down by having to tell them "no". I think many of us can agree that saying "no" can, often times be a very hard and unpopular thing to do.

Now some of you will be granting permission for your children to go down the shore after the prom, and some of you will be saying no. If "no" is your answer, I would encourage you to stick to that answer. The safety of your son or daughter is far more significant than whether or not they like you. If your answer to the beach is "yes", then I would encourage you to come up with a plan to try and ensure their safety. Talk to your son or daughter about your concerns and what worries you have

regarding post prom activities, drinking and drug use. Please keep in mind that even if you trust your child not to drink and drive, you certainly can not trust other people's children to not drink and drive on the very same roads. Instruct your son or daughter to stay in contact with you throughout the evening and the next day on a regular basis. I would encourage you to require phone calls and NOT texts. You want to hear your child's voice, hear the background noise, and use those as assessment tools to help you determine if your son or daughter is safe. Explain to them that if you do not hear from them, if they sound under the influence on the phone, or if you hear anything that creates concerns, you will be coming down to get them. No one finds the prospect of driving to the beach in the middle of the night desirable, but your son or daughter is, clearly, worth that effort.

The most important job you have is being a parent. Explain the sincerity of your commitment to them, and how much you truly love them. You want their prom night to be memorable for all the right reasons, do your best to help them achieve that. Please feel free to contact me at the school with any questions or concerns you might have. I hope that it is a wonderful evening for all and good luck!

Sincerely,
David Chango
Student Assistance Counselor
908-464-4700 Ext. 430

Visit us at www.newprov.org/municipalalliance

Tips for Parents

Parents and guardians play a key role in creating a safe prom event. Listed below are tips and ideas for parents to help their teen stay safe during prom (and graduation) season.

- Good communication between parents and teenagers can have a positive influence on teens. Teens who report regular, open communication with their parents about important issues say they are less likely to drink, use drugs, or engage in early sexual behavior. Discuss rules for the prom: your own rules, the school rules, and the consequences for violating the rules.
- Communicate with your teen ahead of time about the agenda for the evening.
- Discuss the evening's curfew and what acceptable after-curfew possibilities there might be (an alcohol- and drug-free post-prom party, inviting friends back home to spend the night under your supervision, etc.)
- Some parents feel that hosting a house party where alcohol is served to minors is safer because they can control it. Allowing these parties is illegal, even with other parents' consent, and the host parents may be held responsible for consequences that result. Remember, too, that excessive alcohol consumption brings more dangers than just impaired driving.
- Know who is driving. If your teen is riding in a limo, check the company's policy on allowing alcohol in the vehicle.
- Encourage seat belt use.
- Do not rent hotel rooms, or vacation rental properties, for prom-goers.
- Communicate with other parents about prom plans.
- Stay up for prom-goers' return home.



The Alliance is proud to sponsor PROJECT GRADUATION - An all night celebration for the High School graduation class in a supervised substance-free environment.

Tips for Teens

The best way for you to stay safe and have a great prom is to have a plan and get everyone involved!

- Pledge to have a safe prom with your friends.
- Discuss plans with your friends and prom date ahead of time.
- Know your agenda and provide the information to your parents.
- Plan ahead what you will say or do if someone offers you alcohol or another illegal drug. Simple phrases such as "No, thanks," and "Not for me," often work, even if you think they won't.
- Know your date before you go. If your date is someone you do not know well, spend a little time together in advance. You and your parents will feel better about your staying out late with someone you know.
- Find out what your curfew is, and tell your date and/or your friends before prom night.
- Discuss with your parents any after-curfew possibilities (the party at your friend's house or early morning breakfast at your place).
- Ask a trusted adult to be near a phone and available on prom night in case you need to call.
- If you have a cell phone, make sure it is fully charged, or carry a phone card or enough change to make several phone calls from a pay phone if necessary.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL
OUR GRADUATING SENIORS.
WISHING YOU A SAFE AND FUN
GRADUATION CELEBRATION!**



Visit us at www.newprov.org/municipalalliance



Don't be
a party to
**teenage
drinking**

It's against
the law!

Hosting a pre or post-prom or graduation party at your home is a great way to celebrate and give your teen and his or her friends a safe place to have fun. But Parents who serve alcohol in their home to anyone under 21 face a variety of serious consequences:

Fact #1 It is illegal in New Jersey to serve alcohol to anyone who is under the legal drinking age of 21.

Fact #2 It is illegal in New Jersey to make your home or property available for the purpose of allowing anyone who is under the legal drinking age of 21 a place to consume alcohol.

Fact #3 Any person who serves or makes alcohol available to a person under the legal drinking age of 21 is subject to a \$1,000 fine and up to 180 days in jail per person served. Parents can be held civilly liable even if they are not present during the time of the party.

Fact #4 If serving an underage person alcohol results in injury, the adult may be charged with Endangering the Welfare of Children, and may be subject to a fine of up to \$15,000 and up to 5 years in state prison.

Fact #5 New Jersey Law imposes civil liability on social hosts who serve alcohol to anyone under the legal drinking age of 21 who is subsequently involved in an incident causing injury or death.

Fact #6 A social host may be sued for up to two years after an incident that occurs resulting in injury or death. As the result of a lawsuit, your house, car, and bank accounts may be seized and future wages may be garnished.

(Information courtesy Prevention Links. For more information on underage drinking and other substance abuse issues, go to www.preventionlinks.org)

HIGH SCHOOL PARENTS:

Preparing Your Teen For College

Hard to believe, but your teen will be heading off to college soon. There's plenty to do to prepare – but don't forget to consider the issue of alcohol on campus.

It's important: A riskier campus environment will jeopardize your son or daughter's academic success and personal safety.

AT THE COLLEGE:

- Question resident advisors to see if they've been trained to limit student drinking. Inquire whether the school offers "alcohol-free" residence halls.
- Find out how the school prevents underage drinking at school sporting events. Check how extensively alcohol companies sponsor school activities, and whether alcohol is heavily advertised on campus.
- Ask if campus health clinics routinely screen for alcohol abuse, and about the types of treatments they offer.
- Learn the percentage of students who join fraternities and sororities. Check whether Greek party-goers routinely get ID'd, and how the groups work to curb alcohol abuse.

AT HOME:

- Talk together about the danger of college drinking. Alert teens that their risk increases if they join a fraternity, sorority, or sports team.
- Explain how blood alcohol content works, and why alcohol poisoning can be lethal. Point out that alcohol hidden in jello shots, frozen popsicles, or party punch is still harmful.
- Warn young women that they're more vulnerable to sexual assault when they're drinking.
- Emphasize the importance of waiting until the legal age of 21 to drink alcohol.

Talk to your teen about alcohol before he or she leaves for college. Make these discussions easier with help from the MADD Parent Handbook. Go to www.madd.org.

BE SMART ON THE ROAD

Even if you and your friends pledged not to drink and drive, there will be other people on the road who didn't! Weekends and especially Prom night are the worst times to be on the road. There are more drunk drivers at that time. Be sure to drive carefully and know where you're going. Keep your cell phone charged in case of an emergency and take extra precautions like pausing another second at a red light or stop sign.

Visit us at www.newprov.org/municipalalliance

2011 New Providence Alliance to Prevent Alcohol and Drug Abuse

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Mary Ann Comparetto, Corresponding Secretary
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Counselor

New Providence High School Student Members:

Nina Sun, Peter Wirth, Katie Zabel

Officer Dennis Carovillano, Armand Gallucio,
Shirley Grande Harrington, Tara McFarland,
Marie McNally, Joe Narciso, Donna Stumpf

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

The New Providence Alliance is looking for volunteers. We meet monthly at 7pm on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at the Murray Hill Inn. For more information, call us at (908) 665-1400 x579.

CAN YOU HELP?

The Alliance is a volunteer organization consisting of concerned parents, residents, senior citizens, and representatives from the borough offices, schools, and police. We invite you to join the Alliance and help us in our efforts to achieve a drug-free community and improve and enhance the quality of life for all who work and live in the Borough of New Providence. Our goals can only be reached with the talents and efforts of everyone in the community. Since our grant money does not cover all of our expenses, your contribution of time and money would be greatly appreciated. For further information, please call our office at 908-665-1400 ext.579.

Yes, I would like to donate: \$10.00 \$15.00 \$25.00
 \$50.00 Other \$ _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Please make check payable and mail to:

New Providence Alliance
Borough of New Providence
360 Elkwood Ave., New Providence, NJ 07974

PARENT/TEEN PROM CONTRACT

One third of alcohol-related traffic fatalities involving teens occur during the prom and graduation months of May and June.

Make a pledge to celebrate safely and responsibly.

TEEN PROMISE:

I commit myself to celebrating my upcoming educational milestones in a safe and healthy way. Because it is illegal, I promise not to drink alcohol or use drugs, particularly during the prom and graduation season. I pledge not to get in a car with someone who has been drinking alcohol or is under the influence of drugs. If I find myself in a situation where I feel unsafe or uncomfortable, I promise to call you, my parent or guardian, for a ride home. I commit to this pledge and recognize there are consequences for every decision I make.



Teen Signature

PARENT/GUARDIAN PROMISE:

As your parent/guardian, I promise to make myself available to you during this season of celebration. I promise to provide a safe, drug and alcohol-free environment for you and your friends. You can count on me any time, day or night. I promise that I will agree to pick you up, no immediate questions asked. When we are safe at home, I pledge to respect you and listen to what has happened and help in any way I can.



Parent/Guardian Signature

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