

## Checklist for Parents

- ✓ Know where your teenager will be throughout the evening.
- ✓ Set firm guidelines and a reasonable curfew and make sure your teenager is aware of the consequences of violating these rules.
- ✓ Be aware of who is driving. If a limo is being hired, confirm that the company does not allow alcohol consumption by underage passengers.
- ✓ Speak to school officials and fellow parents about planned events for the evening. Make sure snacks and alcohol-free beverages are served.
- ✓ Talk to your teenager about the serious dangers and consequences of underage drinking and driving as set forth in this brochure.
- ✓ Let your child know they can always call you if they need a ride home.

## Tips for Teens

- ✓ Having a good time isn't dependent on alcohol—besides underage drinking is illegal and can result in serious trouble, injury, or worse!
- ✓ Don't let friends drink and drive, and don't get in a car with another teen who has been drinking.
- ✓ It's safer to travel in groups—remind each other about responsible decision-making and standing up to peer pressure.
- ✓ Always keep an eye on your non-alcoholic drink and never accept a beverage from someone you don't know.
- ✓ Remember that alcohol consumption can lead to poor judgment calls and dangerous situations.
- ✓ Don't be a statistic: 60% of all teen deaths in car accidents are alcohol-related.

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**TIPS HOTLINE 1-888-577-TIPS (8477)**

## Consequences of Underage Drinking



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**UNDERAGE DRINKING**

## CONSEQUENCES OF UNDERAGE DRINKING

As adults, and especially for those who are parents or guardians, we must be vigilant against underage drinking.

It is particularly important during times of celebration such as proms, graduations, weddings or other parties that we as adults join together to ensure our children's safety. There is no doubt that our teens will experience even greater peer pressure during these times to consume alcoholic beverages or drugs and attend late night parties. In fact many parents experience pressure themselves to agree to allow underage drinking at certain occasions such as graduation parties in the spring or farewell parties in the summer for those students leaving home for college. It is important for parents, guardians and all adults to do everything we can to resist this pressure and prevent underage drinking.

Unfortunately, many young people fall prey to the "Myth of Invincibility", believing that there are no real, or lasting, effects of alcohol use or consequences of underage drinking. However, they are wrong. Some parents feel that there is not much they can do to influence their children's choices, since a lot of parents feel that "drinking is part of growing up" and teens "will drink no matter what". They're wrong too!

Parents who talk with their teens about underage drinking, set expectations, and enforce consequences are significantly less likely to have

children who drink. Research shows this to be true – parents or guardians who talk with their teen about alcohol and underage drinking could prevent serious problems later.

The best way to honor teens at graduation or other celebrations is to help them safely celebrate their achievements. Hosting an alcohol-free party, clearly communicating expectations for personal behavior, and enforcing consequences for violating the rules are just a couple of good ways to start.

It seems like almost every year at these times of celebration we in law enforcement become involved in the investigation of motor vehicle fatalities involving our youth. In many of these cases children are killed and other children are prosecuted and incarcerated. Whenever children drink and drive, are fatigued and drive, use drugs and drive or simply experiment with a drug, even once, they are at risk of seriously injuring or killing themselves or others. As I tell our children at D.A.R.E. graduation programs, "NOT EVEN ONCE."

For those young drivers who are fortunate not to be killed or seriously injured as a result of driving after having been without sleep for a period in excess of twenty-four consecutive hours, falling asleep while driving or driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, if they kill another person they will face serious legal consequences. That is, a conviction for vehicular homicide may be either a crime of the first or second degree and result in a state prison term of up to 20

years. If they are arrested for driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, unrelated to a motor vehicle collision, for a first offender it may cost them over \$20,000.00 in fines, surcharges, legal fees, increased insurance premiums, etc., as well as the loss of their driver's license for a period of between seven to twelve months and, in the discretion of the court, a term of imprisonment up to 30 days.

It is also important for parents, guardians and all adults to understand that if you offer, serve or make an alcoholic beverage available to a person who is under the legal age for consuming alcoholic beverages you may be charged and prosecuted as well.

Finally, any person who provides a controlled dangerous substance (drugs) to another may be held strictly liable for a death which results from that drug use and guilty of a first degree crime and subject to a prison term of up to 20 years.

These are just a few of the severe and tragic consequences that may await underage drinkers, drug users and adults. The purpose in providing you with this information is to make you aware of these consequences so that you are better able to protect our children as well as yourself.

Sincerely,



Somerset County Prosecutor