

# Opinion



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Editor

## \* Our viewpoint

### Prom night tips

*(Editor's Note: Much of this comment is reprinted from an earlier column submitted by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, Arizona affiliate. More information is available at [www.drugfreeaz.org](http://www.drugfreeaz.org). The Fountain Hills Coalition also is a good source of information at [www.safehomesfh.org](http://www.safehomesfh.org).)*

It's that time of year again -- thoughts turn to prom, graduation and other special occasions to mark the end of the school year. For Fountain Hills students, prom is Saturday evening at Fort McDowell's Radisson Resort and graduation is set for Friday night, May 24.

Wonderful prom memories, for example, will be with your teenager for the rest of his/her life...hopefully.

Unfortunately, these festivities are all too often destroyed by teens using alcohol and other drugs. Every year we hear the heart-wrenching stories of kids who are hurt or worse, killed, as a result of a prom or graduation after-party (thankfully many graduates take advantage of the Falcon Fiesta here on graduation night).

The Partnership for a Drug-Free America, Arizona Affiliate, suggests the following prom night tips for every parent to read before the big night:

1. Be sure you know your child's complete itinerary for the evening, including who they will be with and phone numbers where they can be contacted.
2. Discuss the school's prom rules regarding alcohol with your child and the consequences for violating these rules.
3. Determine a fair curfew that is based on your child's previous history of responsibility.
4. Take stock of all the alcohol and prescription drugs in your home.
5. Do not rent hotel rooms for the after-party. If you suspect your child has booked a room, call local hotels and check for their reservation.
6. Communicate with other parents and school officials to create a unified force against alcohol and drugs.
7. Know who is driving and ensure the driver will remain sober for the entire evening.
8. Establish a couple of mandatory call-in times such as right after prom, from the after-party location and on their way home.
9. Give your child the unconditional option of calling you at any time for help or advice, which includes picking them up if needed. Create a code word that your child can use to indicate that they need your assistance.
10. Talk to your child about the risks of alcohol and drug use. Kids who learn about the risks of drugs from their parents are up to half as likely to use drugs.