



Knowledge is Prevention

Preventing substance abuse by sustaining & strengthening a safe and healthy community, together.

This issue of 'Knowledge is Prevention' is devoted solely to keeping our teens safe during this most critical time in their lives.

A Message to Parents: Graduation Time is Here!

A joyous occasion for our students, parent, grandparents, high schools and the community. Another class of students leave behind 13 years of classroom instruction, field trips, teachers, recess, fun days, sad days and everything in between.

To commemorate and honor our students, parties of all sorts take place. Family get-togethers, outdoor parties, parties at parks and of course the all night party at the high school.

Graduation time is also a time of high risk. Some students celebrate by drinking alcohol, using other drugs and mix these with other high risk behaviors. Students that never used substances before, sometimes do so at graduation time. It's their ultimate time to celebrate. Getting caught up in the moment has brought confusion to the parents who have all along believed 'not my kid.'

What to do to safe guard your teen and protect your family.

- 1 Talk to your teen. Let them know this is a risky time and they are responsible for making good choices to safe guard their life and their future.
- 2 Put limits on where they can go to celebrate. Call the parents hosting house parties, check it out. Ask about the availability of alcohol, how it will be monitored and if chaperons will be present.
- 3 If you are hosting a party, don't serve alcohol. Keep your self safe from any liability. If a minor leaves a party where alcohol was served and there is an incident, that parent can be held liable. This includes the renting a hotel/motel room. The adult, who signs, maybe held both financially and criminality liable for all minors that attended.
- 4 If you are serving alcohol, keep the alcohol at one location and station a responsible adult to monitor.
- 5 Encourage other parents to call you when their teen is invited to your home for a party. This type of phone call can be hard enough without the parent on the other end feeling offended. It's more about keeping tabs on their teens. So let's support each other here.
- 6 If you have older siblings, talk to them about the legal ramifications of purchasing alcohol for minors. Jail time and fines can be imposed. They too will be held liable for any incident that might occur due to teen drinking.

7. What to do if the teen who is the driver drinks or takes a drug? Now is the time to work out a plan with your teen. From taking the keys, calling home for a ride, to anonymously calling the police. This is not snitching; this is about saving lives; the driver and those on the street with an impaired driver.

Community Action does make a Difference

The Royal Oak Community Coalition with the Royal Oak Police Department coordinates volunteers to make face to face visits to alcohol merchants to distribute a free ID Checking Guide. This expensive guide allows alcohol retailers to screen out fraudulent identification to curb alcohol access to minors.

Hotel/Motel managers are sent a letter from the Royal Oak Community Coalition and the Royal Oak Police Department encouraging them to be on watch for adults renting rooms for teen parties. Included in the mailing is a counter – top placards reminding patrons that renting rooms for teen parties is illegal and will not be tolerated.

'How to Host a Teen Party' pamphlet is sent home to all senior high families with a letter signed by school principals, police department and the coalition reminding our families of the danger graduation time can bring and the shared responsibility by all of us to safeguard of young people and community. For a free copy, send a stamp-addressed envelope to: Party Hosting Brochure; ROCC; 1500 N. Stephenson Hwy., Royal Oak, 48067

Both private and public high schools host all night parties to provide a safe night for celebration. A team of dedicated volunteers work all year to provide a night filled with fun, entertainment and good food. Many businesses and organizations donate to help make this a memorable night.

The Royal Oak City Commission passed unanimously a Parent Responsibility Ordinance. The law helps provide a protective measure for our young people and assists parents who feel pressured by their teens to ignore or even provide alcohol to refuse.

If you suspect:

- A clerk selling or serving alcohol to a minor
- Teens drinking at a party or park
- Signs of impaired driving
- Call the police, the life you save may be theirs or one of your loved ones

A SALUTE TO OUR 2010 GRADUATING CLASS OF 2010

As you embark on this new chapter in your life, think back to your first days of kindergarten. It was exciting and a scary time for you and your parents. Transition times are usually a mix of these emotions, for you and your parents even today.

Whether you are off to college, starting a new job or taking courses in skill trades, your future is determined by your choice of attitudes and behaviors.

Take time to think about the kind of person you want to be. The kind of family life you want to create. Large homes and big paychecks are nice, but does not necessary bring happiness, peace or love. You will be the sole designer and sculpture of your life now. You alone are responsible.

Probably unknown to you, there has been an entire community of caring individuals, organizations, agencies, civic groups, businesses, school personnel, and parents throughout your childhood working to make your city, school and home environment safe and healthy. Because graduation is a high risk transition time, many community members are working hard to make sure that you stay safe.

Our police department increases road detail, hotel and motel managers are keeping vigil that rooms are not being rented for teen drinking parties. Alcohol vendors post warnings of fines and jail time for those who purchase alcohol for minors. Letters were sent home to parents reminding them of the legal ramifications of serving alcohol to minors, with tips for hosting a party. Limo companies are sent letters reminding them of their responsibilities for their passengers. Area florists are inserting "Safe Party Cards" including the Commonground Sanctuary Crisis hotline phone number (248 456-0909 or 800-231-1127), with all the corsages and boutonnieres.

The parent/student all-night party committees from our public and private high schools have worked hard to host a fun farewell for all of our graduating seniors. Over 60 plus businesses donated goods, foods and services. This is a special night, a night to say good-bye to those who you met in kindergarten and will now venture off to new and exciting adventures.

The Royal Oak Community Coalition wants you to know we all care. We might not know you, nor you know us, but our work has been all about strengthening and sustaining a safe and healthy

community for you, your family and friends. Enjoy celebrating your accomplishments, please do so safely.

The future is yours,

Diane Dovico

Executive Director

Royal Oak Community Coalition



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www.ci.royal-oak.mi.us/rocc

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