

# Memorable and Safe Graduation

Graduation is an exciting time for students and parents. It is a time to celebrate reaching an academic milestone and to acknowledge completion of one phase of a young adult's life.

An important consideration is that along with graduation comes graduation parties.

Although underage drinking is not legal, safe grad parties happen in our community and parents can help keep their teen informed and safe by talking with them well in advance. To ensure that the grad party becomes a positive memory for students and parents, consider the following.

## For Students:

You have a choice about alcohol. Plan whether you will or will not drink alcohol. If your decision is NO, think of some ways you can say "no" when offered alcohol so you are able to relax and enjoy the company of fellow graduates. Plan to stay busy talking, dancing etc. so you are engaged in fun activities. If you are planning to drink alcohol, follow these simple guidelines:

- Plan how many drinks you will consume and stick to your plan.
- Use the 5 drink maximum for men and 4 drink maximum for women (less if you are lighter or petite).

- Pace yourself: If you drink one drink per hour, you will not get into trouble with intoxication or risk alcohol poisoning or worse.
- Count your drinks: DO NOT allow others to refill your glass before it is empty; you will lose count.
- Be safe: do not leave your drink unattended.
- Say No to drugs - keep your mind clear so you remember the night.

## For Parents:

Talk to your graduating youth about choices around drinking, driving, safety and friends. Ask enough questions to satisfy yourself that they will have an enjoyable and safe evening. Sample questions include:

- What plans have you made for after the grad party?
- How are you getting there?
- Who are you going with?
- How will you handle being offered drugs or alcohol?
- How will you get home (i.e. who is the designated driver)?

For more information about risks associated with drinking, go to [www.aadac.com](http://www.aadac.com): Alcohol: The ABCs- Decisions About Drinking. With planning and discussion, graduation can be a fun,

safe experience for both teens and parents.

This article is one of a series by the Strathcona County Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy Committee addressing information about drug and alcohol issues.

## Resources

For a complete listing of resources available, pick up the Drug/Alcohol Resource Directory at the Strathcona County Health Centre located at 2 Brower Drive or at Strathcona County Family and Community Services located at 2755 Broadmoor Boulevard (2nd Floor) in Sherwood Park.

## Questions about drug or alcohol issues?

Call Strathcona County Family and Community Services at 780-464-4044

