

Sunday, June 17, 2007

## **Family File**

### **Set rules for grads about drugs, alcohol**

It's graduation time, and to help keep your graduates safe from the lure of alcohol and drugs, Adrienne Marcus, executive director of Westchester County-based Lexington Center for Recovery, recommends:

- Discuss your opinions on drugs and alcohol in an open, honest conversation with your kids. Make your expectations of them at graduation and graduation parties very clear. Let them know you will not tolerate drinking or drug use.
- If your kids and their friends are going out without adult supervision, be sure to set clear behavioral guidelines. Remind them alcohol and drug use is illegal - bottom line. Exercise your parental rights and duties and establish consequences for breaches of those guidelines. Be certain your children understand you will enforce pre-established punishments, if necessary.
- Attend a PTA meeting to discuss with school administrators and other parents what graduation parties are taking place. Ask questions: Will transportation be provided? Does the venue have a no drug/alcohol policy? Do school administrators have a plan to enforce that policy?
- Ask your kids who they are going to celebrate their success with. Take time to meet those friends - and their parents. You can do this by hosting a party for parents and their kids or arrange an informal coffee with parents to discuss these issues so you are all dealing with your kids from a united front.
- Supervise your kids and their friends during parties. Volunteer to host an after-graduation brunch or have a sleepover on graduation night. Be certain to keep the guest list small. The larger the group, the more difficult it will be to supervise.