



Helping Teens Stay Safe During Prom and Graduation Season

Hudson Valley , NY - (May 19, 2008) - Prom and graduation season can be a joyous time in the life of a high school student. Sadly, the season often becomes dangerous and even deadly. Alcohol-related fatalities tend to increase between the prom and graduation months of April through June, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The non-profit Century Council reported that up to half of all 2002 prom-season fatalities of teens between the ages of 15 and 18 were alcohol-related.

Teen drivers are notoriously high risk drivers year-round. In 2006, Westchester drivers aged 16 and 17 were involved in over 800 accidents involving fatalities, personal injuries or property damages. Numbers exceeded 450 in Dutchess County and 350 in Rockland County.

Prom season offers a timely opportunity for parents to communicate with their children about automobile safety, as well as personal safety and compliance with illegal drug and underage drinking laws.

Dr. Adrienne Marcus, Executive Director of Lexington Center for Recovery (LCR), one of the leading providers of alcohol and substance abuse treatment in the Hudson Valley, suggests open discussion between parents and teens before the big events:

- Write out a schedule for the night or weekend that includes all event locations. Agree on best ways to contact each other if plans change, cell phones don't work, or the teen needs to be picked up.
- Confirm that activity locations will be supervised by adults. Parents should refuse to rent hotel rooms for groups of teens.
- Contact the transportation service in advance to establish no-alcohol, no-drug rules. Teens should be aware that area police officers routinely stop and check limos and their passengers on prom weekends.
- Discuss potentially difficult situations and strategies for dealing with them, including phoning home or calling a taxi.
- Remind teens not to ride in a car with a driver who has been drinking or taking drugs, or one who is overly tired.
- Review the symptoms of alcohol poisoning and drug overdose and encourage teens to notify an adult, call a local poison control center, or contact 911 in the event that a classmate needs assistance.

Dr. Marcus reminds parents to strongly express their opinions to their teens and set clear guidelines. "Teens whose parents speak out against underage drinking and use of illegal drugs are better able to resist peer pressure."

For more information about how to talk to your kids about alcohol and drug use and abuse, please call Lexington Center for Recovery at 914.666.6740.

LCR's administrative headquarters is located at 332 East Main Street, Mt. Kisco, NY. Westchester County clinics and programs are located in Mount Kisco, NY; New Rochelle, NY; Yonkers, NY; White Plains, NY; and Peekskill, NY. The agency's

Dutchess County clinics are located in Poughkeepsie and Beacon, NY. For additional information, call 914.666.0191 or visit www.lexingtonctr.org.

About LCR : Lexington Center for Recovery is one of the largest providers of alcohol and substance abuse treatment in the Hudson Valley. It has treated approximately 30,000 people in its 25-year history and has 16 distinct programs throughout Westchester and Dutchess counties. A vital community resource, LCR eliminates barriers to entry and success in an alcohol and substance abuse recovery program by providing support services to clients and their families. Its innovative programs are affordable and aimed at different needs and ages. LCR is licensed by the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services.

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