



COMMUNITY NEWS

Downtown District

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Teens and Alcohol The Combination Affects Everyone

Someone in the United States is killed in an alcohol-related traffic accident every 23 minutes. That “someone” could be your spouse, your child, your best friend – or you.

Prom and Graduation Season is a time of great celebration for high school students. Sadly, alcohol is sometimes part of that celebration. According to a 2007 report by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 714 youths under age 21 were killed in alcohol-related traffic fatalities during the three months of the 2006 Prom and Graduation Season.

More than five million American high school students binge drink at least once per month. With thoughts that they are not “that” drunk, that they are too scared to call their parents to get a safe ride home, or they don’t want to anger their friends by refusing to get in the car, these teenagers often hit the road — a recipe for disaster for themselves, their passengers, and any innocent motorists who get in their path. Even if you don’t have a teenager, your life can be forever changed by someone else’s child’s decision to drink and drive.

Teen drivers are a high-risk group, partially because they are young and just learning the rules, but that is not the only reason. Young drivers often think they are invincible; that the crashes caused by teenage drinking and driving reported on the news will never happen to them.

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From The Desk Of Commander Johnny Cervantes

Along with the good decisions surrounding prom and graduation we hope our teens will make, it is important to talk about parents making good decisions as well. As parents, we try to safeguard our children from harm on a daily basis. We try to teach them right from wrong and how to be upstanding members of society, as we have their best interests in mind. At times however, we allow their nagging and prodding to cajole us into letting our guard down. As a result, we may end up making decisions that are not in their best interest.

It is understandable, that as a parent you want to make this milestone in their life a memorable one. It is important that we don’t make an error in judgment, in an attempt to make this happen. Renting hotel rooms for our children to celebrate with friends can lead to uninvited guests showing up and providing drugs or alcohol. Please remember that when you rent the room for them, you are liable for their actions. Also, please monitor the activities that are occurring during the parties you may host in your own home.

Purchasing alcohol for your children is illegal and you can be held criminally liable for furnishing. In addition, anyone under the age of 21 can be cited for possessing it. As our children yearn for their freedom and move on, they are still our children. We have to be strong in our convictions. Keep strong and keep them safe.

Commander Johnny Cervantes

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Teens and Alcohol continued.

- 60 percent of all teen deaths in car accidents are alcohol-related.
- In a study, 70 percent of teenagers reported drinking alcohol.
- In a single year, 522 children under age 14 were arrested for driving while intoxicated, (113 of them were under 10 years old).
- In the United States, 12.8% of all fatal traffic crashes were alcohol-related, and 40% of that number involved teens driving while drinking alcohol.
- Someone with a Blood Alcohol level of .15 – extreme DUI (about four to seven drinks per hour for the average teen) is 380 times more likely to die in a single vehicle crash than a sober person.

In reaction to teenage drunk driving statistics, states have enacted harsher penalties to punish **teens** that drink and drive. In addition to harsh penalties for teenage drunk driving, it is also a crime in Arizona for anyone under the age of 21 to possess, transport, buy/try to buy or have ANY amount of alcohol in their system at any time. Adults can be prosecuted for furnishing alcohol to minors.

Parents and older siblings must be aware that they are role models to younger family members, and should be cognizant of what kind of examples they set in regard to both their driving and drinking habits. Restricting access to liquor at home could be an effective preventative measure in the short term, but it is hard for parents to admit their teenage children may have an alcohol problem.

Today's young people are under incredible pressure to perform up to society's standards, especially during adolescence. Peer pressure forces teens to make difficult choices on a daily basis, but providing them with concrete educational information about teenage drunk driving can help them reach adulthood, safely, alive and without a criminal record. Talk to your child about the dangers of alcohol.

If you suspect anyone of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, report them to 9-1-1.

Resources:

- www.sadd.org – Students against Drunk Driving
- www.maddaz.org – Mothers against Drunk Driving in Arizona
- www.radd.org – Friends Don't let Friends Drive Drunk – The entertainment industry's voice for road safety.
- www.centurycouncil.org - The Century Council is a national, not-for-profit organization dedicated to fighting drunk driving and underage drinking.

For more information on crime prevention or additional opportunities to get involved in YOUR community contact Crime Prevention Officer Jennifer Wattier at 480-312-0275, email jwattier@scottsdaleaz.gov, or District 1 Police Aide Sherry Cross at 480-312-2537, email: scross@scottsdaleaz.gov.

Upcoming Events:

May 9, 2009: 8:00-10:30 (or until the trucks are full)
FREE Shredding Event at 11256 N. 128th St Scottsdale AZ (Mountainside Middle School). We will have two shredding trucks both of which have a 10,000 lb capacity. Up to four boxes shredded free. Times: 8:00-10:30 or until the shredding trucks are full (whichever comes first.) Questions? Contact Terri Terlazzo at 480-312-8292 or tterlazzo@scottsdaleaz.gov.

May 14, 2009: 8:00-10:30 (or until the truck is full)
FREE Shredding & Drug Disposal Event in the Wal-Mart parking lot @ Pima and Chaparral RD. Scottsdale PD is partnering with the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community Police and Wal-Mart to bring a shredding and drug disposal event to you at no cost. Up to four boxes will be accepted. Old prescription drugs can be dropped off for environmentally safe destruction. Contact Craig Abernethy at 480-312-2594 or cabernethy@scottsdaleaz.gov for more information.

Public Safety Community Contact Numbers and E-mail Links

- **Emergency** (Police/Fire/Ambulance) 9-1-1
- **Scottsdale Police Non-Emergency** 480-312-5000
- **Scottsdale Fire Department** 480-312-8000
- **SPD Drug Enforcement Hotline** - Suspected illegal activity, 480-312-TIPS (Hot lines are not monitored)
- **SPD Traffic Enforcement Hotline** - chronic traffic problems, 480-312-CARS
- **Code Enforcement** 480-312-2546
- **Child Safety Seat Installation** 480-312-BABY
- **CPR/First Aid Classes** 480-312-1817