

# Under the *Right* Influence Safe & Substance Free

2018

## Educating & Encouraging Teens to Make Life-Long Healthy Decisions

### Engaged Families: A Key to Prevention

Studies show that parents & guardians significantly influence their teen's choices and lives. With this in mind, adults need to continue to effectively communicate with their teen. Learning to talk and listen to your teen can help prevent them from making poor choices, sometimes with devastating consequences. Communicate not only verbally, but also by the way you live.

If you have used alcohol or other substances in the past, be honest, but brief. Set a good example in your own home and socially. "Walk the walk and talk the talk." Set consistent "no use" rules about underage drinking and other substance use. Parents need to provide opportunities for their teen to learn critical thinking and decision-making skills to combat

the peer pressure to use alcohol or other substances.

Teens need to know the risk of each drug and the possible deadly combination of using more than one drug. Even when combining what is perceived to be a "harmless" herbal drug, using them together with another drug can be fatal. It is so important that teens are aware of the possible effects of combining drugs. For instance, marijuana can inhibit the natural feeling of nausea, thus decreasing the body's tendency to reject toxic amounts of alcohol. The unknowing teen could reach the lethal danger of alcohol overdose when using marijuana and alcohol together.

Talking to your teen about drugs will not lead to using drugs, but rather help them make healthy decisions.

For more information visit:  
<http://bit.ly/2vZqRUd>



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#### Sponsored By:

Youth Health Connection/South Shore FACTS  
Plymouth County District Attorney's Office  
Norfolk County District Attorney's Office  
SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions)  
Caron Treatment Centers  
South Shore Health System

#### Special Edition:

**Dedicated to helping to keep youth safe during special seasonal events.**

Content from **Under the Right Influence Safe & Substance Free 2017** edition, to view full 17 page content along with links to resource and content references visit:  
<http://bit.ly/2JdIdkC>



# TIMOTHY J. CRUZ

Plymouth County District Attorney



Dear Parents:

Some of the most important milestones in your children's lives – proms and graduations – are right around the corner. As parents, we want to take in every proud moment, but I encourage you to take a few minutes during this busy season to talk to your children about making responsible decisions as they celebrate and enjoy all their school years have to offer.

As District Attorney, I have seen firsthand families destroyed by a poor choice made with drugs or alcohol at a graduation party or prom. Lives can be lost and teens are suddenly forced into adulthood, facing the potential of criminal and civil charges in the aftermath. The greatest influence on young people's decisions are their family and friends and the environment that they are living in. My Office presents informative discussions geared toward parents and students about the Social Host Liability Law and the responsibilities of those who furnish or serve alcohol to minors.

In addition to educational programming, our office re-invests a percentage of proceeds from drug forfeited seizures to contribute to schools for their all-night parties and senior lock-in events. We want kids to make the right choices and support them in every way, and these are safe, fun alternatives for children to celebrate. Please visit our website at [www.plymouthda.com](http://www.plymouthda.com) for more information or to schedule a Social Host Liability presentation.

I stand together with law enforcement and the schools in Plymouth County urging you to take time out to speak to your children about these important issues and encourage them to be responsible and safe this season. We wish nothing but the best for your children and their continued success throughout their lives.

Sincerely,

TIMOTHY J. CRUZ  
District Attorney  
Plymouth County

[www.plymouthda.com](http://www.plymouthda.com)



Dear Parents,

As we approach the season of high school celebrations, I urge you to reinforce with your children the importance of good decision making. To assist you in this effort, I am pleased to announce Norfolk County Safe Celebrations, a grant program designed to enhance student safety during the prom and graduation season. This \$500 grant is available to high schools in Norfolk County to defray the cost of hosting school sponsored alcohol-free activities and safe transportation for students. The grant application will be posted on my homepage at [www.norfolkda.com](http://www.norfolkda.com).

I would also like to encourage you to take a few minutes to watch a short video my office produced, "What Parents Should Know About Social Host Issues". This video highlights the civil and criminal legal consequences for parents when their children engage in substance use. The video can be found on the home page of my website at [www.norfolkda.com](http://www.norfolkda.com) or on our YouTube channel (NORFOLKDATV) at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUWlfQp3k14&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUWlfQp3k14&feature=youtu.be)

I see far too frequently the devastation that follows unsafe decisions involving underage drinking and drug use. We must all work together to prevent these tragedies.

I wish you and your family safe and successful celebrations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael W. Morrissey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Michael W. Morrissey  
Norfolk District Attorney

**MICHAEL W. MORRISSEY**  
NORFOLK DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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# Know the Facts about Underage Drinking & Substance Use

According to the results of the Monitoring the Future (MTF) Survey in 2017: Sixty-one percent of high school seniors reported using alcohol in their lifetime while thirty-three percent of high school seniors reported having an alcoholic beverage in the past 30 days (current use).

According to the MA Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2015: Nearly one-fifth of MA high school students (18%) reported binge drinking (having five or more drinks of

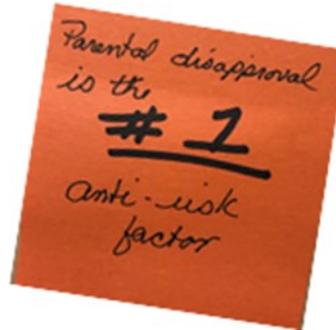
alcohol in a row, within a couple of hours,) in the past 30 days.

In 2015, forty-one percent of all high school students reported having used marijuana in their lifetime and one quarter (25%) used marijuana in the past 30 days

**To read more** from Monitoring the Future visit: <http://bit.ly/2J8cErP>

**For information from MA** Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2015: <http://bit.ly/2HuMT7T>

*The MTF survey is funded by the NIDA, a component of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and conducted by the University of Michigan.*



## Massachusetts Social Host Liability

The following are a few key consequences of Social Host Liability in MA.

*Sale, delivery, furnishing alcohol to a person under 21 years old*

**Penalty:** maximum prison term 1 year, maximum \$2,000 fine; or both. MGL ch 138 §34 (*MGL=MA General Law*)

Contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

**Penalty:** Maximum 1- year prison; \$500 fine; or both. MGL ch. 119 § 63

Link to MGL's: <http://bit.ly/2vpN7Zc>

### **FAQ's for Students:**

*"I am under 21; does the Social Host Law apply to me?"* Yes, the law states "whoever" furnishes alcohol to a person under 21, "whoever," means everyone.

*"I am having a party, but not providing alcohol. If some of my friends bring their own alcohol, can I be held liable as a social host?"* Yes, the law extends beyond the actual supplying to simple allowing an underage person to consume alcohol on the premises the host controls.

MGL information is brought to you through collaboration with: Plymouth County District Attorney's Office, The Brockton Police department & Brockton Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol: Health Imperatives.

Social Host information is from [socialhostliability.org](http://socialhostliability.org)

## Consequences of Underage Drinking

Youth who drink alcohol are more likely to experience:

- ◆ School problems (higher absence and poor or failing grades)
- ◆ Social problems (fighting and lack of participation in youth activities)
- ◆ Legal problems (arrest for driving or physically hurting someone while drunk)
- ◆ Physical problems (such as hangovers or illnesses)
- ◆ Unwanted, unplanned and unprotected sexual activity
- ◆ Physical and sexual assault
- ◆ Memory problems
- ◆ Changes in brain development that may have life-long effects

- ◆ Higher risk for suicide and homicide
- ◆ Death from alcohol poisoning
- ◆ Abuse of other substances



# Open Communication as a Tool for Healthy Decisions

Open communication is one of the most powerful tools parents can use to connect with and protect their teen. But, when discussing tougher topics such as drugs and alcohol, just figuring out what to say can be a challenge.

- ◆ Talk early and often, in developmentally appropriate ways, about your concerns and theirs, regarding alcohol and drugs.
- ◆ Remind them that you will not tolerate underage drinking and that it is illegal.
- ◆ Ask your teen if they have ever been in a situation in which alcohol/drugs were available or offered to them and then use their answers as a springboard for further discussion.
- ◆ Teach your teen how to avoid, remove themselves and decline alcohol and other substances in a risky situation. Make sure they choose the best way for them. Use role-playing.
- ◆ Make sure you balance your conversations about the dangers of alcohol

and other substances with care and support .

Concerned your teen may be using substances? Find tips and information at: <http://bit.ly/2HzikOe>



## Quick Tips for Parents *provided by Caron Treatment Centers*

- ◆ Keep alcohol, tobacco, prescription drugs and toxic chemicals locked up and out of reach.
- ◆ Appropriately dispose of unused prescriptions. Call local police to ask about self-service medication return kiosks.
- ◆ Know where your teen is at all times, especially during the hours of 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.
- ◆ Be aware of your teen's spending habits and limit their disposable income.
- ◆ Educate yourself and be aware of the signs and symptoms of substance abuse.
- ◆ Create a contract with your teen with a promise to not use drugs and alcohol with clear consequences outlined. (See page 6, Contract for Life)
- ◆ Discuss the dangers of substance use with your teen.
- ◆ Set a clear curfew and enforce it.
- ◆ Provide your teen with specific refusal statements.
- ◆ Create a code word or phrase that your teen can use when in an uncomfortable situation involving drugs and/or alcohol. **To learn more visit:** <http://bit.ly/2HaqsS1>
- ◆ Be in touch with other parents and ask about adult supervision at social gatherings.
- ◆ Pay attention to frequent sleepovers and social gatherings at the same home.



## Driving Safety: The Basics

There are a few basic safety considerations for any event that your teen may be driving themselves to or if they are a passenger in another teen's car; it is always good to review these safety concerns as a routine.

**Vehicle:** Make sure the vehicle has a full tank of fuel as well as wiper fluid, jumper cables, spare tire, phone charger and consider investing in a roadside assistance membership. During winter months make sure there is a shovel, a window scraper

and a blanket.

**Communication:** Ask for phone numbers of the friends they will be with and also their parent's contact information. Ensure that both yours and your teen's cell phone is fully charged before they head away from home. Know their planned destination and confirm the expected time they will return home. Remind any driver still on a Junior Operator License of the Night Restrictions which prevents driving between

the hours of 12:30 A.M. and 5 A.M. (Commonwealth of MA Driver's Manual, Ch. 1, pg. 21. <http://bit.ly/2HF3e7q>)

**Venue:** Is the location one your teen has not been to before? Consider a practice drive, preferably at the time of day they will be driving.

# CONTRACT FOR LIFE

## A Foundation for Trust and Caring

*This Contract is designed to facilitate communication between young people and their parents about potentially destructive decisions related to alcohol, drugs, peer pressure, and behavior. The issues facing young people today are often too difficult for them to address alone. SADD believes that effective parent-child communication is critically important in helping young adults to make healthy decisions.*

### YOUNG PERSON

I recognize that there are many potentially destructive decisions I face every day and commit to you that I will do everything in my power to avoid making decisions that will jeopardize my health, my safety and overall well-being, or your trust in me. I understand the dangers associated with the use of alcohol and drugs and the destructive behaviors often associated with impairment.

By signing below, I pledge my best effort to remain free from alcohol and drugs; I agree that I will never drive under the influence; I agree that I will never ride with an impaired driver; and I agree that I will always wear a seat belt.

Finally, I agree to call you if I am ever in a situation that threatens my safety and to communicate with you regularly about issues of importance to both of us.

---

YOUNG PERSON

### PARENT (or Caring Adult)

I am committed to you and to your health and safety. By signing below, I pledge to do everything in my power to understand and communicate with you about the many difficult and potentially destructive decisions you face.

Further, I agree to provide for you safe, sober transportation home if you are ever in a situation that threatens your safety and to defer discussions about that situation until a time when we can both have a discussion in a calm and caring manner.

I also pledge to you that I will not drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs, I will always seek safe, sober transportation home, and I will always wear a seat belt.

---

PARENT/CARING ADULT



#### Students Against Destructive Decisions

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