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

The purpose of Germantown Youth Futures is positive youth development through education and activities. There is no greater influence on positive youth development than parents of youth. Therefore, the Germantown Youth Futures Board of Directors takes seriously the role of providing parents with the information they need to be great role models for their children and to be successful in their parenting role. Prom time is an exciting and sometimes stressful time for youth and for parents. This fact sheet will provide parents with information and strategies to help guide youth through this memorable event. Questions or comments-please contact Patti Heinen, 250-4710.

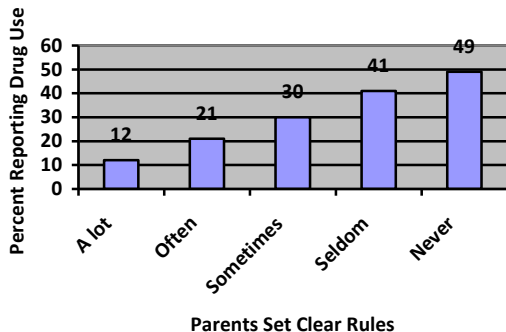
### Monitoring Your Kids Especially Important At Prom Time

Many teenagers consider prom time one of the highlights of their year. But their parents worry about pressures to engage in risky behaviors such as sexual activity, drug use, or drinking and driving on prom night.

Parents who have consistent household rules and make a point of knowing where their children are and who they are with are more likely to raise teens who don't engage in high-risk behavior, according to research on parental monitoring from the University of Wisconsin Extension.

### Percentage of Students (grade 6-12) Reporting Drug Use in the Past Year, by How Often Their Parents Set Clear Rules, 2008-09

(N=122,243 students sampled from 25 states)



Source: Center for Substance Abuse Research, University of Maryland, Oct. 19, 2009

Parental monitoring means establishing guidelines and limits with your child in order to keep track of what's going on in his or her world. Having some expectations and limits in place is especially important before a big event like a prom.

Parental monitoring does not mean demanding obedience or attempting to control your child's choices and behaviors. Instead it means knowing where your kids are, who they are with, what kinds of things they plan to do and what kind of transportation they will use. Parental monitoring also involves letting your children know what your expectations are and what they should do in an emergency.

It's normal for adolescents to want and need more independence. That's why they can be easily offended when they feel parents are limiting their freedom and asking them a lot of questions

It may be easier to establish ground rules early on, letting them know that you consistently need to know who they are with, where they are going and when they will get back. Then your questions may not seem as intrusive. Also, kids need to know that parents are motivated by love and concern when they ask questions; they are not just trying to curb a teen's independence.

Parental monitoring can help young people form strong bonds with their families. And teens who have strong family ties are at the lowest risk of developing

drug abuse problems and engaging in other risky behaviors.

Parents whose children are least likely to abuse alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs have several characteristics.

- They take time for their children. They listen to what their children say. When kids seem worried, they show that they are willing to listen and support their children.
- They let their love shine through. Children need to know that no matter how they behave, their parents love them. Hugs and kisses are important, as well as saying, "I love you."
- They know what their children are doing and who their friends are.
- They set clear limits for behavior, including rules for homework, television use, curfew, alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Parents may appear to be strict, but they are not harsh.
- They use praise and encouragement to reinforce good behavior.
- They model good problem-solving skills.
- They have realistic expectations for their children.
- They help their children develop strong self-concepts and social skills by supporting friendships outside the family and teaching kids how to get along with others

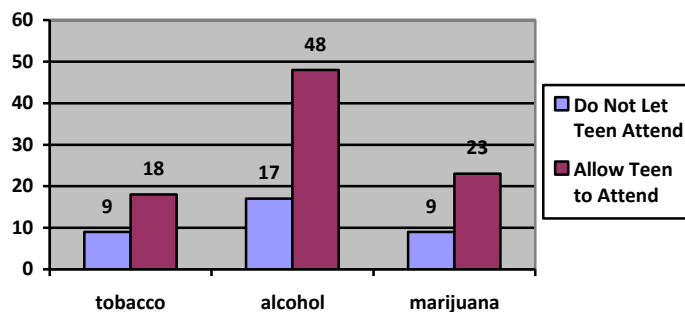
### Parents Have Big Impact On The Likelihood of Teen Drinking

If you monitor your children and follow all the rules, does that mean you can breathe a sigh of relief? Not necessarily. Your child is living in a pretty risky world and has to deal with the effects of messages from the community, school, and peers. That is why allowing youth to attend parties where alcohol is available or hosting such parties creates more pressure on youth today. Everyone has a role to play in helping kids grow up healthy and drug-free.



Sometimes parents may not be aware of the laws regarding teen alcohol or substance use. But it cannot be denied that parents are a powerful force in helping youth to avoid alcohol and drug abuse. Parents who host parties for youth where alcohol is served are not only breaking the law, but are negatively influencing youth risky behaviors.

**Percent Teens Who Have Tried Substances by Whether Parents Allow Attendance at Parties With Alcohol**



Source: National Survey of American Attitudes on Substance Abuse XV: Teens and Parents, National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, Columbia University, August, 2010.

### What Parents Should Know About the Law:

- As a parent, you cannot give alcohol to your teen's friends under age 21 under any circumstance even in your own home, even with parent's permission.
- You cannot knowingly allow a person under 21, other than your own child, to remain in your home or on your property while consuming or possessing alcohol.

### If You Break the Law:

- You can be sued and found liable if you give alcohol to anyone under 21 and they, in turn, hurt someone, themselves, or damage property.
- You can lose your house, job, freedom, life savings and reputation by serving to minors
- Officers can take any alcohol, money, or property used in committing the offense.

### Things You Can Do as a Parent:

- Refuse to supply alcohol to anyone under 21.
- Be at home when your teen has a party.
- Make sure that alcohol is not brought into your home or property by your teen's friends.
- Report underage drinking to local law enforcement