

# TEENS MATTER

## A PARENTING TEENS DIGEST

Boone County Step Ahead Council

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The mystical, magical, and magnificently important night is coming soon. Teens often talk about it for months before, and there is so much to do.

You've guessed it **PROM NIGHT!**

Prom is about teenage girls just wanting to be pretty, to feel grown up, and dealing with mothers who have big

opinions. Prom also means dollars and budgets and explaining the necessity of manicures to wallet-weary fathers who do not read *In Style*. Beauty and money: two things that will never understand each other. There is so much to do to get ready to make sure the night is perfect and memorable for your teen. But where do you start? Here are some things to consider when helping your daughter or son prepare for the big event. Try to sit down with your children and decide on a reasonable amount for expenses.

- ❖ Before you begin your quest for the perfect dress, talk with you daughter about dressing appropriately **based on your family's values**. Many of the dresses marketed to young teen are quite risqué and there may be debates and even tears over disagreements about prom attire. The best way to approach a disagreement about clothing is to talk calmly about the dress's features that your teen really likes – maybe it is the material or color. Once you know what is important to her about the dresses, **explain your concerns**—perhaps you don't like the dramatic neckline or short length. Remember, while you may want her to wear a Victorian-like dress, she will want to wear something that looks grown-up and chic. **Discuss possible alternatives that meet both of your requirements**. Don't rule out second hand stores. Some items in these stores are in mint condition. You would never know they were worn and in some instances they haven't. On occasion you will find an item still carries the original sale tag.

- ❖ If you aren't good with hair or “updos” make an appointment with a hair stylist for your daughter's hairstyle. It might not be a bad idea to have a preview a couple of weeks before to make sure the “hairstyle” works for both your daughter and the hairstylist. The hairstyle might work on the model in the magazine, but that does not mean it will look or do the same on your daughter. Salons can fill up quickly around prom season, so don't wait too long to make appointments for your hair, manicure/pedicure. Also allow plenty of time between the hair/nail appointment and prom time for dressing and primping.
- ❖ Not everyone is going to use a limousine, and this is quite an expense..... but if your child is planning on using this service, **rent it yourself**, or be sure you know the teen's parents who have rented it. Do not leave it up to the teens!!! Specify to the driver that there are to be no unplanned stops other than those the parents have pre-authorized. Ask what measures the driver takes to ensure there is no drinking. Some drivers, for example, leave the divider down and require that all bags be placed in the trunk. Be sure to request that you be called if any drinking is observed by the drive.
- ❖ **Talk to your teen** about drinking in advance. Make sure they know your expectations and what the consequences are at home, with the school, and with the law. Remind them **again** about the dangers of driving or riding in a car when someone has been drinking. Let them know that you are **always** willing to pick them up, no lectures involved, at any time during the night if they feel they need to get out of a dangerous situation.
- ❖ **Do Not Host** a prom party that involves drinking! Many times, parents feel that if their son or daughter is going to drink, they might as well allow them to do this in a supervised environment. Indiana has laws against contributing to the delinquency of a minor and parents who host parties where there is alcohol are subject to large fines and possible jail time.

- ❖ When prom parties are located at hotels, **do not rent** a room for your teen and his or her date. You can be held liable for any charges made to the room or any damage done to the facility. In addition, it is **never** a good idea to leave teens unsupervised overnight. If you want your teen to be able to stay overnight, consider allowing them to share a room with some other same sex friends and a responsible same sex adult chaperone. Better yet, host a prom party at your home to ensure a fun, supervised, non-drinking environment.

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### ***PROM-TO-DO-LIST***

**Parents if you can get your teens to follow these crisis-prevention reminders...this means less stress for you!**

**5-6 weeks before** – **Girls:** Begin looking for that one special gown. Schedule appointment to have your hair, makeup and nails done if you're not doing them yourself.

**Guys & Girls:** Make reservations ASAP if you're planning to rent a limo.

**4 weeks before** – **Girls:** Look for shoes, accessories and jewelry. Check at home and with friends for accessories – you may save yourself a little money.

**Guys:** Pick out the perfect tux and get fitted. Remember, the best-looking tuxes are rented early.

**3 weeks before** – **Girls:** Buy makeup and nail polish, if needed. Experiment with hair and makeup, if you're doing them yourself. **Guys:** Make an appointment for a haircut. Think about whether you want to try something new or will feel more comfortable sticking with your usual cut.

**2 weeks before** – Talk with your friends and date to figure out what you're doing for dinner and after the prom. Make dinner reservations if needed.

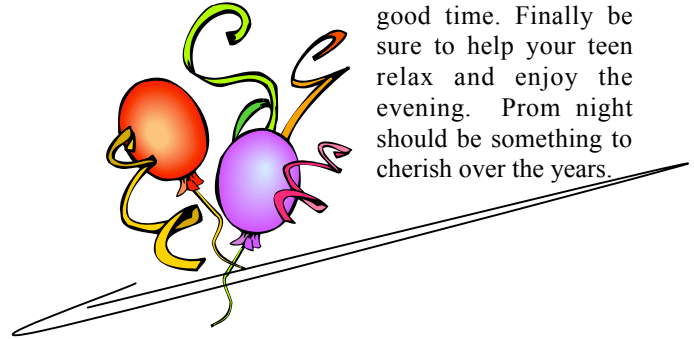
**1 week before** – Order corsage or boutonniere. Usually the corsage and boutonniere are designed to go with the colors of the girls dress. Flower choices within the arrangement will influence the overall cost. Carnations can be tinted almost any color, they will outlast a rose or orchid and do not cost as much.

You can combine a rose with other flowers rather than having a spray with all roses. Ask your florist for help...they are the professionals.

**1 day before** – **Girls:** If you're doing your own hair, style it the way you want and wear it around for a while. It's better to find out your hair won't stay the way you've dreamed of the day before. Lay your clothes, shoes, and accessories out so you know where everything is. **Guys:** Pick up your tuxedo and try it on once you get it home. You have plenty of time to stop by the rental shop and get any mishaps corrected rather than racing to the store to find out it's closed. **Girls & Guys:** Get a full night's sleep. Tomorrow's going to be a long day with lots of stress potential. **Don't forget that corsage or boutonniere you ordered!**

Parents remember this is your child's prom, not yours. Sometimes parents have higher expectation and bigger plans than their teens and want to go all out when the teens are content with more simple ideas. Spending a lot of money does not guarantee a

good time. Finally be sure to help your teen relax and enjoy the evening. Prom night should be something to cherish over the years.



### **JUDGE DAVID'S COMMUNITY IN-SERVICE**

On March 24<sup>th</sup>, our office attended Judge David's 6<sup>th</sup> annual community in-service. Even though the public has always been invited, this was my first time to attend this event. There were two speakers, each addressing vital but disturbing topics... Violence & Abuse. Dr. Wayne Duehn, Ph.D. addressed traumatic aftermath, intervention, case management and protection for abused children. He also gave me an insight on how to look at reaction and labeling from another perspective. The second speaker for the day was U.S. Army LTC (Ret) David Grossman. Colonel Grossman addressed human aggression and the roots of violence and violent crime. He (among other things) gave us a look as to how certain materials, whether it is TV, video games, music and even watching interaction between family members, can be interpreted as normal behavior. Both men, whether they knew it or not, said that until we intervene and change a whole generations thinking and what their perspective as 'normal' is, things will not get any better but worse. Children were especially vulnerable to this 'normal' observation from birth to 6 or 7 years old. Both speakers were energetic and full of information. The Ramada Inn did a wonderful job with the continental breakfast, lunch and desert. Several information booths were set-up with giveaways and good information. The day went fast and I feel that it was well worth my time. Next year when you see the notice, you may want to check it out.



### **DID YOU KNOW**

True to its motto, "Crossroads of America," Indiana has more miles of interstate highway per square mile than any other state, and more major highways intersect in Indiana than in any other state.