# 2026 Healthy Schools Prom Toolkit

WINDSOR-ESSEX COUNTY
**HEALTH UNIT**

Comprehensive Health Promotion Department

WINDSOR-ESSEX COUNTY HEALTH unit
Bureau de santé de Windsor-comté d'Essex

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***All graphics and resources in this toolkit can be downloaded and printed or shared as individual PDFs from our website.***

## About the Prom Toolkit - Celebrate Safer

We are aware that many traditional approaches to addressing youth substance use and risky sexual activity (e.g., zero-tolerance policies, abstinence-only education, etc.) have limited effectiveness and can produce unintended negative consequences. As a result, this toolkit takes a harm reduction approach and aims to reduce the social and health harms related to alcohol and substance use. The goal is to support and encourage healthy behaviours and good decision-making. This resource includes information on the risks of using alcohol and substances and encourages youth to celebrate in a safer, less harmful way on their prom night.

Many of the resources and lessons found in this toolkit can be used at any time to increase teens awareness of the importance of partying safer.

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide school administrators, teachers, students, and parents/caregivers with resources and messaging that encourages students to have fun on their prom night while making decisions to celebrate in safer ways.

The toolkit contains the following components*:

- Student Party PROMise Pledge and Photo Op Card
- Celebrate Safer On Prom Night-Information Sheet
- A Lesson on Consent
- Protect Yourself from Sexual Violence: Tip Sheet
- White Ribbon Resource Card
- How to Talk to Your Teenager About Prom- A Resource for Parents
- Social Media Messages
- Announcements
- Links to Resources

***All graphics and resources in this toolkit can be downloaded and printed or shared as individual PDFs from our website.***

### Evaluation

We ask educators to provide feedback on this toolkit to assist us in making improvements for future editions. A survey can be found at this link or by scanning the QR code below.

## Student Party Promise Pledge

Alcohol and substance use affects decision-making abilities and can contribute to unintended consequences. A "promise," which is sometimes referred to as a "pledge," is an easy way to encourage ownership of an individual's intention to behave or act in a certain way. Students need to value themselves and their friends and classmates. The goal of the PROMise pledge is for students to take responsibility for their behaviour to reduce the risk of harm to themselves and others. The Student Party Promise Pledge can be found in **Appendix A** of the toolkit. Your school or prom committee can create your own Party Promise Pledge using this as a template.

### *How to use this resource:*

**Before Prom**:

- Share using various communication platforms with students attending prom (e.g., send to each student to read in grade 12 homeroom after reviewing the Celebrate Safer on Prom Night-Information Sheet and the Protecting yourself from Sexual Violence tip sheets.
- Share in conjunction with the daily morning announcements.
- Prom Committee can use the "I PROMise" photo op card to take photos of students holding their Party Promise Pledge (from the list **Appendix A** or create their own) and display them on monitors throughout the school, or on school morning announcements leading up to prom, (see **Appendix B**).
- Share with parents/caregivers to review with their teens before prom.
- Print out the Party Promise Pledge (see **Appendix A**) and place these in common areas of the school to be signed by the students who are attending the prom.

**On Prom Night:**

- Day of the prom- place these at the entrance of the prom site and/or print out the Party Promise Pledge and place these at the prom to be signed by the attending students.
- Read out during the welcoming speech at the celebration.

## Celebrate Safer on Prom Night-Information Sheet

It is common for schools to have a zero-tolerance approach to alcohol and substance use for students attending the prom. However, it becomes more difficult to supervise what takes place once students leave the facility and continue celebrating on their prom night. This resource encourages students to party in safer, less harmful ways while highlighting information on the risks of using alcohol and substances. Two versions have been included, a quick version designed with high school students in mind, highlighting important tips, and a second version providing more information that can be used to facilitate discussion at home or in the classroom (see **Appendix C**).

### *How to use this resource:*

- Provide to students who are attending the prom, and promote it using various communication platforms.
- Use it to facilitate discussion in class or at assemblies.
- Share the resource with parents of students attending prom.
- Turn the tips in the resource into content that can be used during announcements, or communications going out to the school community about prom (see Announcement Section of the toolkit).
- Use adapted materials for social media posts and display monitors at school (see Social Media Section of the toolkit).

## A Lesson on Consent

The Canadian Criminal Code defines consent as the voluntary agreement of the complainant to engage in the sexual activity in question. Understanding what consent is can create healthy boundaries in intimate relationships. Talking with teens about consent, sexuality and relationships can help them make more informed, mature decisions in the future. It is not easy to talk with your teen about consent; however, it is very important to do so.

### *How to use this resource:*

- Use the "Introduction to Consent" video developed by OPHEA (5:55 minutes in length) during an assembly or for class discussion.
- Educators can review the Sexual Violence Prevention Education Resources developed by OPHEA and incorporate information into lessons.
- Other resources that can be shared with students and families include Teen Talk-Content and Sexual Assault and Teaching Sexual Health- Consent.

## Protect Yourself Against Sexual Violence: Tip Sheet

Sexual violence includes unwanted touching up to and including rape. Sexual violence is a serious problem that can have lasting, harmful physical and mental health effects on victims, their families, friends, and communities. This resource highlights tips on how to prevent sexual violence (see **Appendix D**).

### *How to use this resource:*

- Review it with students who are attending the prom and promote it using various communication platforms.
- Use it to facilitate discussion in class or at assemblies.
- Turn the tips in the resource into content that can be used during announcements, or communications going out to the school community about prom (see Announcement Section of the toolkit).

- Use adapted materials for social media posts and display monitors at school (see Social Media Section of the toolkit).
- Refer to it while discussing the White Ribbon & Draw the Line Campaigns

## White Ribbon & Draw the Line Resource Card

The white ribbon is a symbol used by the White Ribbon Campaign to symbolize a commitment to ending gender-based violence. White Ribbon & Draw the Line provide resources for students, parents, and school staff around gender-based violence and tools, including lesson plans and promotional materials to end gender-based violence. A business card size resource (see **Appendix E**) has been developed that includes the white ribbon image which symbolizes the students' commitment to not engage in gender-based violence, along with safe ride home information, 24hr Sexual Assault Crisis Line, and Police contact details.

### *How to use this resource:*

- White Ribbon & Draw the Line website contains lesson plans & promotional materials that can be used with students at school.
- Share the parent portal of the White Ribbon & Draw the Line website with parents through your school's communication portal.
- Print off White Ribbon resources cards and place these on tables at prom or in any prom packages to be shared with students, to promote the messaging to never commit, approve of, or remain silent about all forms of gender-based violence (see **Appendix E**)
- Share White Ribbon resources with the prom committee and allow them to incorporate messaging as they see fit:
    - For example- purchase pins and a white ribbon to pin on the prom attendee's coat/shirt/dress.
- Send to students ahead of time and encourage them to save resources to their phones so they can access them on the night of the prom if they need a safe ride home.

## The Power of the Bystander

Individuals have the power to protect others who may be in a difficult situation. The Sexual Assault Crisis Centre has developed information about how to "Use Your Power As a Bystander", visit their website to learn more.

### *How to use this resource:*

- Share the "Power of the bystander" on the school and school council's social media platforms.
- Use the "Power of the bystander" for the morning announcement.
- Use the "GAME ON: Because Stepping in should be Everyone's Game" video (8:14 mins in length) during an assembly or for class discussion.

## How to Talk to Your Teenager about Prom- A Resource for Parents/Caregivers

Parents/caregivers talking to their teens about their party plans can be tough, but those conversations have been shown to have an important influence when it comes to teens' use of alcohol and substances. Supporting them with information can help them to make safer and responsible decisions. This resource provides some starting points for parents/caregivers to have a conversation with their teen (see **Appendix F**). Many teenagers are attending parties, so it is important for them to feel confident in making safe and responsible decisions. Alcohol and substance use affects decision-making abilities and can contribute to many preventable outcomes. A parent party promise is included with this resource. This promise provides parents with a method to improve communication and trust with their teenagers by promising their teens that they will be there to ask questions or help them when they get in difficult situations.

### *How to use this resource:*

- Share with parents/caregivers of your school communities before prom using your communication platforms and social media.
- Use sections of this resource to share as social media messages.
- The Links in the Resource section can be shared with parents to support conversations with their teens.

## Communications for Schools and Prom Committees

Messages have been developed for social media and school wide announcements to reinforce the harm reduction strategies provided in this toolkit and encourage students to celebrate safer on their prom night.

### *How to use this resource:*

- Post on social media accounts managed by your school and school committees, the target audience for these accounts can be both students and parents.
- Display on school monitors.
- Read on morning announcements.

## Social Media Messaging

| Facebook | Twitter | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| It's almost Prom! You have been planning and looking forward to this night for months. Think about the consequences of your actions, have fun, and make this a night to remember! Don't make decisions that you will regret. #WEPartySafe | It's almost Prom! You have been planning and looking forward to this night for months. Think about the consequences of your actions, have fun, and make this a night to remember! Don't make decisions that you will regret. #WEPartySafe | |
| Have you found a party partner? Pick a friend that will: be around for the whole night, be responsible for you and you for them, step in if something is happening that doesn't seem right to make sure that you both get home safely. #WEPartySafe | Have you found a party partner? Pick a friend that will: be around for the whole night, be responsible for you and you for them, step in if something is happening that doesn't seem right to make sure that you both get home safely. #WEPartySafe | |
| What's your plan for prom night? Have a plan, stick to it, stay with your group, and look out for each other. #WEPartySafe | What's your plan for prom night? Have a plan, stick to it, stay with your group, and look out for each other. #WEPartySafe | |
| More teens say no to alcohol than you might think. Don't be afraid to say no, it's always your choice.<br><br>If you need help dealing with peer pressure, try talking to someone at Kids Help Phone. You can text, chat online, or call – for free. | More teens say no to alcohol than you might think. Don't be afraid to say no, it's always your choice.<br><br>If you need help dealing with peer pressure, try talking to someone at Kids Help Phone. You can text, chat online, or call – for free. | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Respect your own boundaries as well as the boundaries of others. Learn more about consent! https://teentalk.ca/learn-about/consent-2/ | Respect your own boundaries as well as the boundaries of others. Learn more about consent! https://teentalk.ca/learn-about/consent-2/ | |
| What are your teens' plans for prom night? Ask who they are going with and what their plans are for the evening. Make sure they have a back-up plan in case they end up in an uncomfortable situation. #WEPartySafe | What are your teens' plans for prom night? Ask who they are going with and what their plans are for the evening. Make sure they have a back-up plan in case they end up in an uncomfortable situation. #WEPartySafe | |
| Check-in throughout the night & work out a safe code with your teen, something they can text you if there's trouble. Some kids simply text an "x" to their parents to indicate that they need to be picked up. | Check-in throughout the night & work out a safe code with your teen, something they can text you if there's trouble. Some kids simply text an "x" to their parents to indicate that they need to be picked up. | |

## Announcements

- It's PROM. Let's watch out for each other. Come up with a code word you or your friends can say or text to let each other know when needed. Uncomfortable situations can happen. Let's have each other's back.
- Every choice we make and every action we take has the power to make a difference! Alcohol is involved in almost 1/3 of teenage car accident fatalities. It's your PROM, Don't Drink and Drive!
- Sadly, IMPAIRED driving is real! Don't crash your memories on prom night. PROMise to have a plan in place to get home safely!
- NEVER feel obligated to do more with someone if you don't feel right or comfortable.
- Know your limit and DRAW YOUR LINE. Know that when alcohol/drugs are consumed, it makes it more difficult to:
    - Think clearly
    - Set limits and make good choices
    - Think about long-term consequences and control impulses
    - Determine when a situation is dangerous
    - Say "no"
- Use the True & False Questions from the Sexual Violence Tip Sheet (see **Appendix D**) to create announcements.

## Links to Resources

- Windsor-Essex County Youth Services Card
- Kids Help Phone
- White Ribbon
- Sexual Assault Crisis Centre
- MADD: Information for Parents (Facts & What You Can Do)
- Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health, Public Summary: Drinking Less Is Better
- Canada's Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines
- Cannabis Talk Kit
- Parents Matter: Strategies for Parents to Prevent or Delay Alcohol and Other Drug Use
- OPHEA's Sexual Violence Prevention Resources for Educators
- Ontario Government-Talking with your teen about sexuality

## Appendix A: Prom Pledge

## Appendix B: *I PROMise photo op*

# Appendix C: Celebrate Safer-Substance Use Tip Sheet

**Shorter Version for Teens:**

## CELEBRATE SAFER ON PROM NIGHT

You can have a fun night without using alcohol and other substances. This information is to help you make wise choices. Remember it is illegal for individuals under 19 years of age to use or possess alcohol and cannabis. The safest way to celebrate is to avoid using alcohol and substances.

Above all - be safe and make it a good night to remember.

**Kids Help Phone**
kidshelpphone.ca
Call: 1-800-668-6868 | Text: 686868

**Rethink Your Drinking**
www.rethinkyourdrinking.ca

**Follow the rules set by your school/prom committee.** Think about the consequences of your actions, have fun, and make this a night to remember!

**Make a plan, set limits, and stick to it.** If you don't plan to use substances, don't let your peers influence you. If you are feeling pressured to use substances, try saying no by suggesting another activity or saying you don't want to get in trouble

**Have a Party Partner,** a friend that will: be around for the whole party, look out for you, step in if something is happening that doesn't seem right, and make sure that you both get home safely.

Keep it fun, have some mocktails or non-alcoholic champagne, along with some water. If you are drinking, **keep track of your intake and drink slowly,** and for every alcoholic drink have one non-alcoholic drink.

**Avoid using more than one substance.** Mixing alcohol with cannabis, vapes, or other substances can make you more impaired, impact your decision making abilities, and increase your risk of harm.

If you are on any type of medication, avoid using substances.

*Remember, legal does not mean safe. All drugs change the way you think, behave, and act.*

**Know what's in your drink and substances.** You can't always tell what is in a substance by looking at it. Don't take something from someone you don't know.

**Save a life, carry naloxone.** If you or someone else is having a party make sure there is a naloxone kit on hand. Learn more at wecoss.ca

**Think about how you are feeling** (your body weight, mood, health, amount of sleep you've had, and the amount of food in your stomach) as it can change how substances affect you. Everyone responds to substances differently.

**Make a plan to get home safely.** Don't drive or get in a car with someone who has been using substances. Call for a ride if you need one.

**Alcohol and other substance use affects your decisions** and can lead you to do things you might have avoided if you were sober. Be careful of getting into sexual situations when you've been drinking or using other substances.

*Adapted with permission from the Sexual Assault Crisis Centre Safe Partying Tips https://saccwindsor.net/party-safe/safe-partying-tips-1/

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**Long Version for Teachers:**

# CELEBRATE **SAFER** ON **PROM NIGHT**

**You can have a fun night without using alcohol and substances. This information is to guide you and help you make wise choices. Remember it is illegal for individuals under 19 years of age to use or possess alcohol and cannabis. The safest way to celebrate is to avoid using alcohol and substances.**

**Follow the rules set by your school/prom committee.** You have been planning and looking forward to this night for months, don't make decisions that you will regret and end your night before it even starts. Think about the consequences of your actions, have fun, and make this a night to remember!

**Make a plan and set a limit up front.** Make a plan with your friends that everyone agrees on and try stay together during the night to take care of one another.

If you don't plan to use substance, don't let your peers influence you. If you are using substance or drinking alcohol, know how many you are going to have and stick to it. If you are feeling pressured to use substances, try saying no by suggesting another activity or saying you don't want to get in trouble

**Keep track of your intake and pace yourself.** You can keep it fun, have some mocktails or non-alcoholic champagne, along with some water. If you are drinking, keep track of how many you are having, drink slowly, and for every alcoholic drink have one non-alcoholic drink.

**Eat something.** Food slows the absorption of alcohol and other substance. Snacking will reduce your risk of getting too drunk.

**Avoid using multiple substances at once.** Mixing alcohol with cannabis, vapes, or other substances can make you more impaired, impact your decision making abilities and increase your risk of harm.

**Cannabis** Mixing cannabis with alcohol and other substances increases your impairment of judgment and also increases the risk of negative physical and psychological side-effects.

**Vaping** When drinking alcohol you might be more likely to engage in other risky behaviours like vaping. Remember vapes often contain nicotine an addictive substance.

**Other substances** If you are on any type of medication, avoid using substances. Remember, legal does not mean safe. All drugs change the way you think, behave, and act.

**Know what's in your drink and substances.** You can't always tell what is in a substance by looking at it. Don't take something from someone you don't know.

**Think about how you are feeling.** Be sure to consider your body weight, mood, health, amount of sleep you've had, and the amount of food in your stomach. These all play a role in determining how substances will affect you, but understand everyone responds to the same substances differently.

**Make a plan to get home safely.** Have a plan and under no circumstance should you drive or get in a car with someone who has been using substances. Know who the designated driver is or call a parent, someone you trust, a cab or ride-share.

**Alcohol and other substance use affects your decisions** and can lead you to do things you might have avoided if you were sober. Be careful of getting into sexual situations when you've been drinking or using other substances. Don't hassle your friends when they want to be sure you are safe and that you get home safely.

## Above all - be safe and make it a good night to remember.

**Kids Help Phone** kidshelpphone.ca | Call: 1-800-668-6868 | Text: 686868

**Rethink Your Drinking** www.rethinkyourdrinking.ca

*Adapted with permission from the Sexual Assault Crisis Centre Safe Partying Tips https://saccwindsor.net/party-safe/safe-partying-tips-1/

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## Appendix D: Protect Yourself from Sexual Violence: Tip Sheet

# PROTECT YOURSELF from Sexual Violence

### TRUE OR FALSE?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Sexual violence is when someone is forced or pressured to do sexual things without consent. | T | F |
| 2. One in four girls and one in eight boys have been sexually abused by the time they are eighteen. | T | F |
| 3. Male students have higher rates of physical and sexual violence than female students. | T | F |
| 4. You can ALWAYS say no to a kiss, a touch, or whatever, even if you said yes before. | T | F |
| 5. If someone does not say yes, any sexual contact is not okay. | T | F |
| 6. Once consent is given it cannot be taken away. | T | F |

### TIPS on how to avoid Sexual Violence

- Be respectful towards each other.
- Draw the Line. Set your boundaries and respect others boundaries.
- NEVER feel pressured to do more with someone if you don't feel right or comfortable.
- Don't use force, threats or violence in your relationships.
- Get consent. Only a sober 'yes' means yes.
- If you feel uncomfortable exit the scene as quickly as possible.
- Stand up for yourself, trust your instinct and get help when things don't feel right.
- If someone looks like they are at risk for sexual assault...do something.
- Let's work together and **STOP** sexual violence.

### YOUTH SERVICES

For emergencies contact **911**

Sexual Assault Treatment Centre, Domestic Violence and Safe Kids Program
*24 hr Windsor Regional Hospital ER Metropolitan Campus*
519-255-2234

Sexual Assault Crisis Centre
*daytime* 519-253-3100
*24 hr* 519-253-9667

Windsor Essex Community Health Centre Teen Health
*age 12- 24 yrs*
519-253-8481

Every choice we make and every action we take has the power to make a difference!

Answers to True and False questions:
1. True 2. True 3. False 4. True 5. True 6. False

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## Appendix E: White Ribbon Campaign Resource

## Appendix F: How to Talk to Your Teen about Prom Parent Tip Sheet

# PARENTS & CAREGIVERS OF TEENS

It's spring and there are going to be many parties including prom night and graduation parties. Before your teen and their friends head out, talk with them about making safe and responsible decisions.

### DISCUSS YOUR TEEN'S PLANS WITH THEM; IT MAY BE UNCOMFORTABLE BUT IT HAS TO BE DONE.

### CONSIDER THESE POINTS TO HELP GUIDE YOUR TALK

- Setting a curfew.
- No after-parties in rented hotel rooms/homes.
- Discuss the importance of being reachable, that is keeping a cell phone turned on and charged.
- Discuss having a Party Partner. A friend that will: be around for the whole night, look out for each other, step in if something is happening that does not seem right, and make sure that the other gets home safely.
- Plan transportation options and offer non-judgemental support to get home safely. Stress to your teens to never get into a car with a driver who has been using substances.
- Remind your teen to always keep an eye on their drink to make sure nothing is slipped into it.
- Discuss consent including knowing and respecting their own boundaries as well as the boundaries of others.

### ARE YOU AN ADULT HOSTING THE PARTY? HERE ARE SOME FACTS FOR YOU.

- It's not the role of the police to monitor parties on behalf of parents.
- If an adult/ parent provides alcohol/drugs to those who are underage, they can be charged.

### Commit; take the Parents' party pledge . . .

I promise you the unconditional option of calling me at any time for help or advice. That includes picking you up at any time of the day or night, with a promise not to shame or embarrass you in front of others. I always welcome the chance of being part of your smart and safe decisions.

You may feel like your teen is tuning you out but, the truth is, they are listening more than you think. In fact, parents have been shown to have an important influence when it comes to teens' use of alcohol and other drugs. Visit MADD's Parent Action Pack (http://madd.ca/media/docs/parent-action-pack.pdf) for stats and info for your talk.

For more information visit the following websites:

Sexual Assault Crisis Centre-Party Safe Tips
https://saccwindsor.net/party-safe/safe-partying-tips-1/

Prevnet.ca- Addressing Youth Dating Violence
https://youthdatingviolence.prevnet.ca/#:~:text=As%20Canada's%20Healthy%20Relationships%20Hub,and%20reduce%20youth%20dating%20violence.

WECHU Youth and Relationship Violence
https://www.wechu.org/school-health/violence-and-bullying/youth-relationship-violence

*Thanking you in advance*

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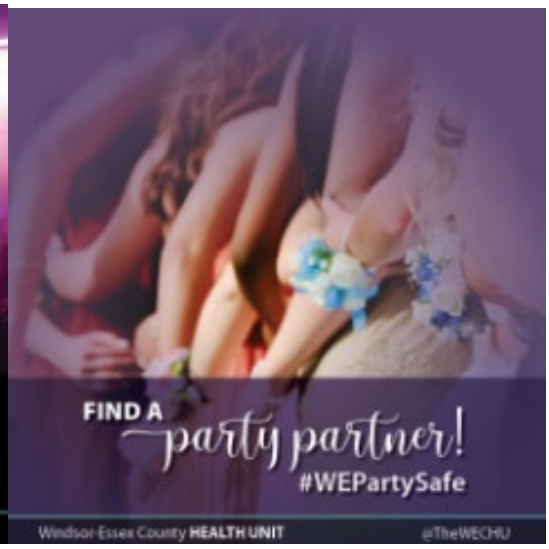
## Appendix G: Social Media Images



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