



Instead of his  
graduation diploma  
JJ's mom received a  
death certificate.

DO NOT PROVIDE ALCOHOL TO MINORS.



May 2009

Dear Parent,

It's graduation time – a time for celebration that is too often marred by the fatal consequences of underage drinking. New research shows alcohol use affects a teen brain differently than an adult brain and can result in brain impairment and increased risk of addiction. One bad decision can end in tragedy for the young person, his or her family, friends, and our entire community.

Of teens who report they drink, 65% obtain alcohol from their parents, friends' parents, siblings, or older friends. **The good news is that 67% of teens cite their parents as the leading influence for them not to drink.** We are asking for your help in making graduation night safe for teens by following these tips:

- Do not serve or allow alcohol at any party you are hosting.
- Keep alcohol locked up.
- Make sure you know your teen's plan for the night. Verify that there will be parental supervision and no alcohol.
- Make it clear to your teen that you do NOT approve of his or her drinking alcohol. Educate your teen on the risks associated with underage drinking and its proven harmful effects on the brain.
- Do not rent hotel rooms for graduation parties.
- Know who is driving. If it's a limo, check their policy on allowing alcohol in the vehicle.
- The legal age of drinking is 21 – no exceptions. A minor who consumes alcohol is violating the law and risking his or her life, as well as the lives of others.
- An adult who provides alcohol to a minor is committing a crime and risking the lives of that child and others.
- For safe graduation night activities, contact your school.
- For tips on talking with your child about alcohol, go to [www.family.samhsa.gov/stop](http://www.family.samhsa.gov/stop)

Please help protect your child's bright future by providing a safe, alcohol-free celebration.

Sincerely,

Ralph Becker, Mayor of Salt Lake City  
McKell Withers, Superintendent  
Salt Lake City School District  
Sim Gill, Salt Lake City Prosecutor

Chris Burbank, Chief of Police, Salt Lake City  
Kenneth F. Wynn, Director, Utah Department  
Alcoholic Beverage Control