



News Release

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Thursday, April 19, 2012

Underage Drinking starts with an excuse Keeping teens alcohol-free this Prom and Graduation Season

Portland, OR – The Oregon Liquor Control Commission and [Pernod Ricard, USA](http://www. Pernod Ricard, USA) are launching a Public Service Announcement campaign on TV, internet and in stores to remind parents how dangerous underage drinking can be.

Prom and graduation are two of the biggest memory-making events in a teenager's life. Many parents get involved by helping pick out special clothes or extending curfew for the night. One area where parents can make the greatest impact is setting firm expectations against underage drinking.



The campaign, "**Underage Drinking doesn't start with a drink. It starts with an excuse,**" focuses on things some parents may say to justify their teens' drinking behavior.

A few excuses pointed out in the PSA include:

- *We drank when we were that young and we turned out OK.*
- *I don't mind if he's drinking with his friends. Just as long as they're doing it at our house.*
- *These kids are under so much pressure, I say let's cut them a break.*
- *It's fine if he takes a sip. My son knows the limit.*

"Parents are influential on the choices teens make. The messages we send to our kids can have a life or death impact," says Rudy Williams, Public Safety Director. "Our partnership with Pernod Ricard, USA is a valuable tool in educating parents on the vital role they play in helping teens make good decisions."

When it comes to underage drinking, 74 percent of teens ages 13 to 17 say their parents are the number one influence on their decisions about whether they drink alcohol, according to the Roper Youth Report.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) more than 21 percent of fatalities involving alcohol and drugs in 2010 had a driver between the age of 15 and 20.

The [30-second PSA](#) will air on KPTV, Fox 12 from April 23 through Memorial Day weekend. [Window clings](#) with a graphic from the TV spot (attached below) will be displayed in various liquor stores in Oregon as a reminder to parents when they purchase alcohol.

More information on minors and alcohol can be found on the [OLCC website](#), and information on drinking responsibly can be found at [AcceptResponsibility.org](#)

Prom & graduation tips for parents

- **Set clear rules about not drinking** and consequences for breaking them.
- **If you are hosting a graduation or prom after party, do NOT serve alcohol** to anyone under age 21. Read about [Oregon's alcohol laws](#) and minors.
- **Take inventory of the alcohol in your home** and secure it if needed.
- **Find out who is driving.** One-third of the alcohol-related traffic fatalities involving teens each year occur during prom/graduation season (NHTSA). And if a limo is rented, check their policy on allowing alcohol in the vehicle.
- **Remind your teens to ALWAYS wear their seatbelts** – it's the law. 70% of teens killed on prom weekends were not wearing their seatbelts (NHTSA).
- **Discuss the school's prom rules with your teen** and the consequences for violating them.
- **Don't rent hotel rooms for your teens** or allow them to attend parties that do not have chaperones.
- **Talk to other parents about post-event activities** to ensure alcohol won't be present.
- **Be available to provide a timely and safe ride home if needed.** Let them know that they should call you if they need a ride home or get into a situation they know isn't safe — no matter what time it is, no matter where they are.

"Promoting Responsible Alcohol Sales and Service"

Did you know that in the last two years, the OLCC distributed more than \$343 million to Oregon's General Fund, Cities, Counties, and Drug and Alcohol Abuse Programs? [See the distribution of dollars on OLCC's Website.](#)



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Find out the
truth about underage drinking
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