

# STUDENTS AGAINST DESTRUCTIVE DECISIONS

A message from the SADD Student of the Year...



## Planning a Safe Return by Molly Linn

The plans and decisions to be made for the night of your life start long before the big event: dresses to buy, tuxedos and flowers to order, reservations to make, hair to do — and the list goes on. You can't help but feel like you've forgotten something, can you? There's always something to do at the last minute to make the night perfect. So what decisions are you forgetting to make?

Deciding to have a safe and fun prom is often overlooked in the frenzy of all those other details and choices. But how do those decisions compare to deciding that you and your friends want to be safe on prom night? I doubt your vision of the night of your life includes getting in a car after drinking or getting in a car with someone who has been drinking. Sadly, there are teens who make those choices, and, tragically, too many youth die because of it.

Your idea of the night of your life probably doesn't include alcohol poisoning, either. Not remembering your prom or what happened to you while you were unconscious isn't something you'll want for your scrapbook. Alcohol poisoning can result in brain damage, rape, unwanted pregnancy, and death. Yet every year, thousands of teens experience one or more of these gruesome events because of a poor decision.

As teenagers, sometimes we think we are invincible and we believe that bad things won't happen to us. That's why making healthy, positive decisions is so very important. SADD, Students Against Destructive Decisions, advocates just that on a peer-to-peer level. Students across the country have joined the fight to keep their schools and communities safe by making positive decisions. When you're faced with these difficult decisions this spring, remember that there are hundreds of thousands of students across the country who choose not to make destructive decisions because they know the risks and the consequences.

As I sit at my desk writing this article urging you to make healthy decisions on prom night, I'm surrounded by pictures of my friends, my boyfriend, and myself at prom. Each of these pictures brings back some of the best memories of high school and my senior year. Each prom has a special memory, such as rushing from my sister's college graduation to prom and having to change in a Wal-Mart bathroom stall on my way.

Many people say that prom is over hyped and overrated, and by my senior year I too had begun to believe it was. But, looking back, prom was the last time I was together with all of my friends in the same place, at the same time, living in the moment. It truly was the night of our lives. Realizing that, I can't imagine losing those memories because of a destructive decision.

Here's my challenge to you: Before you go to prom, think about the people in your life. Imagine how they would feel if they woke up to a phone call or a doorbell in the middle of the night and someone telling them that you're not coming home. Think of what you'd be missing in the years to come if that prom night were the last night of your life. You can meet that challenge. And if you do, I'm sure you'll truly have the night of your life.

Remember, **SAFE** really does equal fun! *Pageantry* encourages our young readers to embrace the SADD philosophy and to have a safe, fun Prom Time season.