



# Leading By Example

Jessica Roscoe of North Dakota was named SADD's Student of the Year and will represent her peers in promoting national safety and drug and alcohol awareness



**JESSICA ROSCOE**  
2010-2011 SADD National Student of the Year.

## SADD'S STUDENT OF THE YEAR

Jessica Roscoe of New Rockford, North Dakota, is SADD's 2010-2011 National Student of the Year, serving a one-year term as spokesperson for the nation's leading youth-based, peer-to-peer prevention, education, and activism organization. SADD has more than 10,000 chapters and hundreds of thousands of active participants in schools across the country.

A recent graduate of New Rockford-Sheyenne High School, Jessica is a freshman at Concordia College in Minnesota. On the state level, Jessica has served for two years on the Northern Lights Advisory Board and was the Northern Lights Student of the Year in 2009. She has been an advocate for policy change, providing testimony during legislative committee hearings and initiating letters to policymakers.

On the local level, Jessica has shown extraordinary leadership. She served as student council president, North Dakota Girls State representative, and both chapter and district president of FCCLA (Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America). She is also an active member of the Northwest Choir.

"I'm excited about this opportunity to make a difference and help influence teens across the nation to make better life choices," said Jessica. "I believe in and am passionate about SADD's mission, and I hope to accomplish as much as possible within the next year. I hope to bring the 'small town' perspective to the national level as I help SADD to understand the many difficult issues that youth of today face."

Let's face it. Prom is a huge deal, and almost any high school student understands the thrills that come with the big night. There are dresses to buy, flowers to choose and dinner reservations to make. Oh, and finding a date typically takes a high priority as well, but in the midst of taking care of every detail imaginable, it is always important to take a step back and envision the bigger picture.

Prom, while it might turn out to be the most majestic night of one's high school career, is exactly just that: one night. There is life before and after as well. Beyond prom, there are hopes of graduation, a college education and beginning a life on one's own, but sometimes at our age, it seems as if we are invincible. We forget the true magnitude of each choice that we make.

For this reason, it is crucial for any teen to think twice before they grab a drink, dabble with drugs or enter a vehicle where the driver may not be completely sober. Each of these decisions has the potential to alter one's life forever, whether it is through a car crash or a trip to the county jail, and let's be completely honest. Is it really worth it?

The whole concept behind prom is to give young people a chance to feel beautiful and make some final memories with their best friends, but the type of memories that one makes is up to only one individual—you.

Being a teenager myself, I understand the pressures, and sometimes it's easy to slip into conformity. "Everyone else is doing it. Why can't I?" "It's just one time. What is wrong with having a bit of fun?" The truth is, however, that not everyone is doing it. As a spokesperson for the organization SADD, Students Against Destructive Decisions, I can give you proof that thousands of young people across the nation are choosing to stay away from drugs and alcohol, not only on prom night, but throughout their entire high school career. These same students can also stand and testify that such substances are completely unnecessary to have fun, especially on prom night, and I can certainly promise that if you choose to stay clean on prom night, you are not alone.

As prom night begins to approach and the planning process begins, think twice about your plans. Where will you go after the dance? Are you with people you can fully trust? If not, make a backup plan just in case, so in the odd chance that you are put into a situation that you do not want to be in, you have a safe way to enter back into your comfort zone. Don't be afraid to say no; that simple word has the potential to save both your life and the lives of your friends.

Remember, this is your prom night and these are your decisions, and only you can make it exactly what you want it to be. The choice is yours! □