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2005-2006 SADD National Student of the Year

To Be Your Best, Make Safety a Top Prom Priority

Alcohol and drug use are only going to blur your memories, and could lead to life-taking accidents. SADD's National Student of the Year encourages students to make a leadership decision by celebrating substance-free.

For years, probably like most of you, *Pageantry's* prom issue has been my favorite. Flipping through the pages, you always find up-to-the-minute dresses, trendy tuxes, hairstyles, makeup ideas, and fitness tips from leading experts throughout the country. Pageant competitors like most (or many) of you have the beauty edge when it comes to applying the techniques used in *Pageantry* to obtain that perfect look for prom. As you continue to dig deeper through the pages of this magazine, you'll also find articles on maintaining health and developing communication skills and see pictures of titleholders and pageant competitors making a difference in their communities. As a pageant competitor, I have learned that pageantry is about being the best you can be, being a role model, and, most importantly, leadership.

Prom can be one of the most important events in your high school experience — it is a special night to look forward to. There are so many details to consider when planning your prom. Dress, tux, tickets, flowers, earrings, hair and nail appointments, dinner plans, and, of course, a location where everyone will meet for pictures. This is a night that you will never want to forget and every detail will be well thought out. Unfortunately, one thing many of us forget to plan for is the safety of our friends and the safety of ourselves. Many people feel pres-

sure from their friends to drink or do drugs on prom night. It is no secret that drugs and alcohol impair judgment and can seriously hurt you or your friends. Quite simply, underage drinking and drugs are illegal — and the last place you'll want to spend prom night is in an emergency room or lockup center. While making your prom plans, take a minute to think about how you'll avoid getting into an unwanted situation. By having a plan, you will feel more confident and in control if the unexpected arises.

Be sure you have a safe ride home, whether it's from a friend, sibling, parent, or maybe even a rented limo. It's also a good idea to bring along extra money in the event you have to opt for a cab, and don't forget to bring a cell phone to make that unanticipated call in case you end up in a situation that compromises your safety.

Be prepared and be a leader! Making positive decisions is important. In fact, if



you educate your friends and help them understand the consequences and dangers of underage drinking, drug use, and driving under the

influence, it will be easier for you all to say "No." You will not be alone — there are hundreds of thousands of students nationwide who are choosing to celebrate prom and graduation substance-free. SADD, Students Against Destructive Decisions, advocates peer-to-peer education and support. Students across the country are demonstrating their leadership and keeping their schools and communities safe.

You have so much to look forward to — envision your future! Prom can be an amazing experience, but there will be an abundance of other life-defining events as well. Don't let anyone use prom night to pressure you into drinking, taking drugs, or doing anything else you don't want to. It's your prom; make the memories yours and enjoy your night the way *you* want to. □