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## HC DrugFree is keeping Howard County *In the KNOW!!!*

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### Local Mother Thinks "Not My Kid..."

A local mother shares her journey with her son's addiction. Not my kid, not my kid. How many times have I said that in my head and out loud. When the truth was, it is my kid. I am a daughter, a sister, a wife, a friend, a nurse and a mother of a heroin addict. This journey was fast and furious starting with marijuana at age 14 and ending with IV heroin by age 17.

I remember early in my nursing career in the ICU caring for overdose patients. The frustration and eventual disdain over IV addicts who we called *repeat offenders*. Fast forward 20 years and here I am - my son is a heroin addict. Throughout his journey, our journey, my mantra changed to *at least he's not doing* (fill in the blank).

Unfortunately, it took only 3 short years to get to the point of serious heroin addiction. [Click here](#) to read the blog.

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### Alcohol Use Disorder

During Alcohol Awareness Month, HC DrugFree wants to share the following information from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA):

Problem drinking that becomes severe is given the medical diagnosis of Alcohol Use Disorder or AUD. Here are some questions to ask yourself. **In the past year, have you had any of the following:**

- Had times when you ended up drinking more or longer than you intended?
- More than once wanted to cut down, stop drinking or tried to, but couldn't?
- Spent a lot of time drinking? Or being sick or getting over the aftereffects?
- Experienced a craving - a strong need or urge, to drink?
- Found that drinking - or being sick from drinking often interfered with taking care of your home or family? Or caused job troubles? Or school problems?
- Continued to drink even though it was causing trouble with your family or friends?
- Given up or cut back on activities that were important or interesting to you or gave you pleasure in order to drink?
- More than once gotten into situations while or after drinking that increased your chances of getting hurt (such as driving, swimming, using machinery, walking in a dangerous area or having unsafe sex)?
- Continued to drink even though it was making you feel depressed or anxious or

- adding to another health problem? Or after having had a memory blackout?
- Had to drink much more than you once did to get the effect you want? Or found that your usual number of drinks had much less effect than before?
- Found that when the effects of alcohol were wearing off, you had withdrawal symptoms such as trouble sleeping, shakiness, irritability, anxiety, depression, restlessness, nausea or sweating? Or sensed things that were not there?

Again, if you have any of these symptoms, talk with your healthcare provider about receiving a formal assessment of your symptoms.

## Partnering with PTSAs for Safe Proms and After Proms

As we approach prom season, HC DrugFree is proud to partner with the PTA Council of Howard County and the public high school PTSAs. Once again, HC DrugFree has donated \$25 gift cards to all twelve public high school afterproms.

We encourage all parents, guardians, and grandparents to talk with your child about your expectations of staying safe on prom night, not using drugs/alcohol, and having a back-up plan to contact you if the evening does not go as planned.

## Additional Hidden Costs to Prom

If you're the "Not So Cool Parent" hosting the after-prom party and buying the beer for teens, be prepared for additional costs.

# The Cost for PARENTS Hosting An After-Prom Party



**Anticipated Costs**  
 Food: \$100–\$500  
 Soft drinks: \$30–\$50  
 Alcohol: \$100–\$300



**Unanticipated Costs**  
 (providing alcohol to minors or allowing underage consumption)

- Fine: up to \$5,000
- Court costs, attorney's fees: \$1,500–\$10,000
- Civil lawsuit if someone is injured/killed
- Embarrassment of police coming to your house
- Embarrassment of having to come to criminal court
- The possibility your child won't walk across the stage at graduation
- Your child's college acceptance and/or scholarships revoked

**Be a Parent  
 Not a Friend**

**Don't make  
 alcohol available  
 to teens**

**Years of Regret ...  
 The Price Is High**

HC DrugFree is a proud partner of: PTA Council of Howard County, Howard County Public School System, Howard County Police Department, Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services, Howard County Health Department and the Howard County Library System.

**HCDrugFree**  
 Empowering the Community

443-325-0040  
[www.hcdrugfree.org](http://www.hcdrugfree.org)

Funded by BHA and SAMHSA

[Click here](#) for a printable PDF of the parent ad above. [Click here](#) for a printable PDF of the teen ad below.

# What Can Prom Night Cost in Howard County?



## Girls

Hair: \$50-\$80  
Nails: \$20-\$40  
Dress: \$150-\$400  
Shoes: \$80-\$100  
Boutonniere: \$10-\$25  
Jewelry: \$40-\$100  
(free if borrow Mom's jewels!)



## Guys

Tux: \$75-\$100  
Tickets: \$100-\$150  
Dinner for Two: \$80-\$150  
Shoes: \$50-\$95  
Corsage: \$15-\$45  
Transportation: \$80-\$150  
(free if borrow Dad's car)

## Optional Prom Night Expenses:

**Arriving intoxicated:** The embarrassment of being sent home, missing memorable moments, school suspension and possibly not walking across the stage at graduation

**Driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs:** up to 1 year in jail and/or \$1,000 fine with court costs of \$57.50

**Possession of alcohol:** \$500 fine with court costs of \$57.50

**Possession of drugs:** up to \$25,000 fine with court costs of \$57.50

**Having fun with friends:** Priceless

If you think Prom night is expensive, please don't drain the college fund by adding up to \$25,000 in fines, court costs and legal fees to the evening.

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Public Service Announcement created by  
HC DrugFree's Teen Advisory Council

Funded by BHA and SAMHSA

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## Does Your Family Have a Secret Code?

Now is a good time to be sure you (parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, trusted neighbors, babysitters, etc.) have a secret code(s) or saying so if your child calls, you know they need you to hurry to rescue them from a dangerous or unpleasant situation.

For example, if your child never feeds the family dog and they call you to say they forgot to feed the dog, don't ask any questions and assume the phone is on speaker and all his friends can hear the conversation. Just say you are on your way to get them and hurry to get there. Be grateful your children or grandchildren called you as their trusted person and before it was too late to ask for help.

Remember, secret codes aren't just for kids. If your adult friend or sibling is on a date with a new friend or at a party where the designated driver drank, they too may find themselves feeling uncomfortable and need your help.

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## Don't "Fake It" by Using Someone's ID

Don't assume your kids know better! Talk to your high school and college age children about not sending their real information (name, birth date, address, social security number, photo, credit card information, etc.) to companies across the world who make very good fake IDs. Yes, these IDs look very real, but your kids have no idea who is using their contact information not just to get into bars, but possibly to engage in criminal activities.

Your teen needs to KNOW the many consequences of borrowing an ID from an

older friend or sibling or purchasing a fake ID through the internet. Your underage child may be charged with possession of stolen property and receive points on their drivers license.

While you're having this discussion, be sure to remind the young adults in your life that it's not worth it to "lend" their IDs to friends or siblings under 21. Older sibling or friend may find themselves in trouble with the law and receive points on their licenses for providing the ID to a minor.

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### **Play Like No One Is Watching**

Dust off your bat and glove and play like no one is watching! Play in the 2nd annual Home Run for Recovery on Saturday, May 4 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Centennial Park North in Ellicott City.

For more information or to register, [click here](#) or call 703-475-7454.

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### **TAC Meeting Monday, May 13**

All Howard County high school students are invited to join HC DrugFree's Teen Advisory Council (TAC) and community service hours are available for all meetings/events. The next meeting will be on Monday, May 13. New members are accepted throughout the year. Email or mail signed registration form and photo. Forms can be found on our website at <http://www.hcdrugfree.org/teen-advisory-council-1>.

TAC follows the Howard County Public School System's weather policy. If school is closed or evening activities are canceled, there will be no TAC meeting. Unless otherwise notified, all meetings will be held at The Barn/Teen Center in the Oakland Mills Village Center from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. If you have any questions, please email [Admin@hcdrugfree.org](mailto:Admin@hcdrugfree.org).

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### **Bring Your Meds/Sharps and Volunteer: Saturday, April 27**

The next convenient drive-thru medication and sharps (needles, syringes and EpiPens) collection. HC DrugFree's team will take your unwanted and expired over-the-counter and prescription medication as well as any sharps.

No need to remove medication or labels from the bottles and no need to get out of your vehicle. Join us 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 27 in the Wilde Lake Village Center parking lot in Columbia.

Medications are guarded and transported by the Howard County Police Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). Community service hours available for student volunteers. Please contact HC DrugFree for more information or visit our website at [www.hcdrugfree.org/drug-take-back-day-1](http://www.hcdrugfree.org/drug-take-back-day-1)

For more information about volunteering on Saturday, April 27 between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., email your name, phone number and times you are available to [Admin@hcdrugfree.org](mailto:Admin@hcdrugfree.org).

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Celebrating  
50 years

