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Letters to the Editor

Editor:

The school year is winding down but party time is winding up with graduation and summer right around the corner. We all want our young people to have fun and to enjoy their celebrations but we also want to strive ensure their safety and well-being.

Parents play a major role in their children's choices about alcohol and other drugs. A recent national survey of parents and teens by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University found one third of teen partygoers have been to parties where teens were drinking alcohol or using other drugs while a parent was present. By age 17, nearly half of teens have been at such parties where parents were present.

FACT: As a parent, you cannot give alcohol to your teen's friends under the age of 21 under any circumstance even in your own home, even with their parent's permission. You also cannot knowingly allow a person under 21, other than your own child to remain in your home or on your property while consuming or possession alcohol.

Here are a few ideas for parents (and teens) planning celebratory parties:

- Create a party plan, including a guest list, with your teen.
- Invite just the friends on your list and let them know in advance the party is "invitation only"
- Make regular and unobtrusive visits to the party area
- Be 'present' in every way

Let's all work together as a community to ensure that our kids stay safe!

The Lamorinda Alcohol Policy Coalition meets the second Wednesday of every month. For more information contact Jaime Rich at Jaime@chd-prevention.org.

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