

The East and Mid Devon Community Safety Partnership

A Partnership between East & Mid Devon District Councils, Devon & Cornwall Police, Devon County Council, Northern, Eastern & Western Devon Clinical Commissioning Group, Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service, Dorset, Devon and Cornwall Community Rehabilitation Company.



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Dear Parent or Carer,

School Proms - Safety of Young People

For the last three years as we approach the summer months I have written to parents and carers across East Devon about the above because as a Community Safety Partnership we take this issue very seriously.

We are now approaching a very exciting time in the life of your son or daughter. They will take exams over the next few weeks after which celebrations will take place to mark their progression into adulthood and then moving on into further education or employment.

Official School Proms are likely to be part of those celebrations and these will be well supervised, alcohol free events attended by many young people. However, past experience has shown that some young people have put themselves in vulnerable positions at 'after proms parties' organised by friends or parents. Many of these events are unsupervised by adults and alcohol is freely available to all those who attend. There have been incidents in East & Mid Devon where young people have become very ill due to consuming too much alcohol. Also, some have become involved in anti-social behaviour or have been left alone in a public open space whilst being incapable of looking after themselves. This has put them at greater risk of becoming the victim of a serious offence.

Members of the East and Mid Devon Community Safety Partnership which comprises all the agencies shown at the top of this letter, want young people to celebrate and enjoy themselves. However, we need your support to ensure that they do so safely.

Please take precautions to ensure that your children remain safe and we ask that you, as parents / carers, follow some common sense guidelines:

- If you do supply alcohol, either for their own use or for others to consume and we would advise that you don't, be sensible as to what you do supply. Some

types of drink are a lot stronger than others and remember: **There is no recommended safe measure of alcohol for those under 18 years.** It takes a young person much longer to process alcohol and to sober up than it takes an adult to do so.

- Know exactly where they are and how/when they are getting home. Arrange to collect them at a set place and time. **They are your children and you are still responsible for their welfare.**
- Ensure your children know that they should always be in the company of their friends. Also, that they do not leave a drunken friend alone and vulnerable.
- When your children book taxis they must make sure that only correctly licensed vehicles and drivers are used. Whether the vehicles are Private Hire or Hackney, they should be licensed by the council as this is the public's guarantee that the vehicle and driver have passed a strict vetting process. This ensures that they are fit for purpose and are properly insured. East Devon District Council is the licensing authority for East Devon and can be contacted on 01395 516551.

Stretch limos add glamour and fun to the evening but beware as few are registered correctly with the appropriate authority. A reputable and genuine operator will readily provide details of the licensing authority and their Private Hire Operator's Licence number. East Devon have no licensed stretch limos and experience has shown that where they are used many are not properly licensed or insured for carrying paying passengers.

It is the driver's responsibility not to exceed the permitted total number of passengers and he or she should refuse to carry any extra ones. There is a plate on the vehicle detailing the maximum number of passengers that can be carried. Being in an over-crowded vehicle is not only uncomfortable but dangerous for the vehicle, its passengers and other road users. It may also invalidate the vehicle's insurance.

- Make sure your children know how to call for help if they are in any kind of trouble. The emergency services are there to help and they won't get into trouble for asking for help when it's needed. They should dial 999 for an ambulance or police attendance in an emergency.

We hope that with your support incidents of drunkenness, assaults and anti-social behaviour remain low during this season of celebration.

Yours sincerely

Gerry Moore

Gerry Moore
Community Safety and Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator.