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Jackson County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition

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## APRIL IS ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH

### Prom and Graduation: A Season for Celebration and Choices

#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JACKSON (April 2, 2013) – Proms and graduations are times for celebration, but even more importantly, times to make wise choices. Since 1987 the month of April has been designated as Alcohol Awareness Month in an effort to increase public understanding of the impact of alcohol and its related problems. As the Jackson County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (JCSAPC), we are especially concerned about the impact alcohol has on young people. It is our hope that the month of April also serve as a reminder to teens and parents of the dangers of underage drinking and the legal consequences.

One third of all alcohol related traffic fatalities involving teens happen during the prom and graduation season. Tragically, many teens lose their lives much too early. Alcohol is the number one drug used by our youth in Michigan and Jackson. It is a powerful, mood-altering drug that can have a significant impact on a teen's judgment, thus leading to destructive behaviors such as physical and emotional violence, sexual misjudgments, alcohol overdose, accidental injuries and death.

#### **What can parents do to keep their teen safe during this fun and memorable time?**

1. **Show by good example.** Nearly three out of four youth say their parents are the leading influence on their decisions about drinking.
2. **Talk to your teen.** Set firm ground rules before they leave the house for these events.
3. **Ask your teen for a complete itinerary** of their plans. Where will they be going, and who will they be with? Set a curfew.
4. **Offer your teen the unconditional option of calling you for help**, advice or to pick them up at any time. Make it clear you want to be part of their smart and safe decision.

Prom and graduation are treasured traditions to celebrate. Parents please help your sons and daughters safely bring home memories they will cherish for years to come.

The Coalition will be providing all local prom and graduation times and alcohol prevention posters to: local law enforcement, schools, hotels, florists and limousine providers.

#### **More information about:**

- *Jackson County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition* and its activities, please contact Kelsey Haynes at (517) 796-5133 or via email at [khaynes@uwjackson.org](mailto:khaynes@uwjackson.org)