



MEDIA RELEASE

Investigative Unit

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Agents to parents and students: You booze during prom season, you lose

(Columbus) – Agents with the Ohio Department of Public Safety's (ODPS) Ohio Investigative Unit are commending those parents and teens that make the wise and mature decision not to participate in illegal and dangerous behavior, such as providing alcohol to minors and consuming underage.

"As a parent of two adult children, I can tell you this time in your child's life is one of the most memorable for you and for them," said ODPS Director John Born. "As a retired member of the Ohio State Highway Patrol, I can also tell you this time of celebration can easily turn into a time of tragedy because of the increased occurrences of underage drinking that may tempt your child at after-prom parties and graduation celebrations."

To help foster good choices, parents and teens need to understand Ohio's underage drinking laws.

- It is illegal to provide a place for your child and his/her friends to drink in a "safe" environment. In fact, parents may not provide alcohol to children who are under 21, who are not their own, even in their own home with the other parents' permission. Those convicted of providing alcohol to a person under 21 years of age face maximum sentences of six months in jail and/or a \$1,000 fine.
- It is illegal to purchase alcohol for anyone under 21. Anyone who purchases, sells or gives alcoholic beverages to underage individuals faces a \$1,000 fine and/or up to six months in jail.
- If you are under 21 and are caught driving with a blood alcohol concentration of .02 percent or higher, a level that can be reached after just one or two drinks, you can be arrested. Punishment is suspension of your driver license for at least 90 days up to a maximum of two years, plus four points added to your driving record. Having an open container of alcohol in a motor vehicle is also illegal.

Together, we must commit to making a safer Ohio, by stopping senseless tragedies associated with irresponsible and illegal underage alcohol consumption. If you have information about a bar; store or carryout selling beer and/or liquor to persons under the age of 21; or you have information of an underage house party, please notify the Ohio Investigative Unit by calling the #677 on your cell phone and your complaint will be investigated.

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The Ohio Investigative Unit agents are plain-clothed fully sworn peace officers. OIU is charged with enforcing the state's liquor laws and is the only state law enforcement agency specifically tasked with investigating food stamp fraud crimes. Agents also investigate tobacco violations.

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