



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
TWENTIETH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

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For Immediate Release
April 25, 2024

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PRESS RELEASE

Eliminate Impaired Driving, including for Prom Night and Graduation Parties

In 2023, Colorado lost 716 lives to traffic fatalities. This includes 218 lives lost to impaired driving, a 23.8% decrease from the 286 impaired driving-related fatalities in 2022. According to the Colorado Bureau of Investigation's Colorado Crime Statistics, there were 16,259 DUI cases filed in 2023. But there is no data on how many lives we can, and will, prevent from being ruined if we eliminate impaired driving.

The District Attorney's Office strongly supports the efforts of parents and community members to eliminate impaired driving, including for Prom Night and graduation parties. The DA's Office has been working with *After Prom*, an organization created by concerned parents and administrators after a series of tragic alcohol- and drug-related crashes claimed the lives of eleven (11) Denver/Boulder Metro area teens in 1995 and reinstated after the tragic deaths on Boulder's Prom Night in 2022.

After Prom provides a community sponsored, fun evening following the Boulder High and Fairview High Proms. The goal is to provide students a safe and memorable night, without putting themselves and community members at risk of life-altering incidents. Interested community members can learn more at the [FHS – BHS After Prom website](#). District Attorney Dougherty met with their group again on Tuesday night.

Although current law in Colorado provides a very limited sentencing range for juveniles who drive under the influence and cause the death of another person, it is a life-altering event for the juvenile, the victims, and their loved ones.

For that reason, following the fatal crash that ended two lives on Prom Night in 2022, the District Attorney's Office investigated and prosecuted the adults who were responsible for facilitating the drinking of alcohol by the juvenile, including the two companies that sold fake identification to numerous high school students, the liquor store that regularly sold alcohol to underage persons, the driver of the party bus that allowed students to drink on the party bus, and several parents who aided in underage persons drinking alcohol on Prom Night.

With any traffic fatality involving an impaired juvenile, Boulder County law enforcement and the District Attorney's Office are committed to investigating and prosecuting the adults who made it possible for the young person to drive under the influence. Adults who aid or abet a juvenile drinking alcohol will be charged with Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor, CRS 18-6-701, and Providing Alcohol to Minors, CRS 44-3-901.

The following are some safety reminders for kids and adults:

- Choose not to consume alcohol or drugs
- Plan ahead to keep yourself and our community safe
- Determine who will be the designated driver
- Forfeit car keys before you start drinking alcohol
- Consider downloading the Lyft or Uber app before you go
- Empower teens not to get into a car with someone else who is impaired
- If you see a driver with erratic, unsafe driving, call 911 or *CSP

District Attorney Michael Dougherty stated, "Adults have an important role and responsibility in keeping teenage drivers, their friends, and other people safe on our roads. When a parent chooses to make alcohol available to a teenager driver, that reckless choice has consequences. I strongly support *After Prom* parents, the schools, and law enforcement in providing safe environments for great celebrations for teenagers – and for every driver's safety."

After Prom Co-Chairs Jes Hartman and Jennifer Dingman stated, "Our goal is to have After Prom be "the place to be" the night of prom, with the hope that this event helps keep our kids and community safe by preventing drug and alcohol-related accidents, and deaths."

After Prom Chair of Donation and Prizes Alissa Simms stated, "The After Prom is not just an event to entertain high school students. It is an opportunity for the community to come together to support an event that helps students from two high schools make lasting memories, keep the students and community safe and build relationships between businesses/organizations families. The amount of support we have seen from businesses and organizations in this community is overwhelming this year. The Boulder High and Fairview staff have been incredibly helpful in communicating to families and creating a seamless night between their individual prom and After Prom. BVSD Administration and the City of Boulder have shown their unwavering support of our effort also. It's a feel good event that so many people can stand behind."

Boulder Police Chief Steve Redfearn stated, “This should be a fun night for young adults to remember happily for years to come and not because of tragedy. We recognize that prom and graduation are big milestones in our children’s lives and we’re asking that they and their parents take a moment to make sure everyone celebrates safely. We will be deploying additional officers throughout the city specifically to look for impaired drivers as part of our mission to keep everyone safe on our roadways.