

**LT. TIM PARKER ENCOURAGES TEENS & PARENTS
TO MAKE PROM AND GRADUATION SAFE BY FOLLOWING THE LAW**

Lt. Parker wants teens in Hillsdale County to have a fun and memorable experience at this year's prom and graduation open houses. To ensure that teens stay safe, he is reminding them and their parents that underage drinking is not only dangerous but it is against the law. "You can't have a memorable experience at prom or graduation if you are unable to remember any of it because you have had too much to drink," said Lt. Tim Parker of the Sheriff's Office. The consequences of underage drinking are serious. Every year underage drivers under the influence of alcohol kill or seriously injure themselves or others in crashes. In some communities a partnership between law enforcement and school officials prevents students who have been caught drinking from participating in extracurricular activities.

Lt. Parker offers the following tips to prevent underage drinking and keep this year's prom and graduation open houses safe for everyone in the community:

- Parents and other adults must remember that underage drinking is against the law. Not only is furnishing alcohol to someone under age 21 a crime, it sends the wrong message.
- Parents and teens both need to understand that "everybody is doing it" is just plain wrong! Being liked should never mean giving up your personal responsibility or caving in to social pressures. Parents have an obligation to set boundaries that tell teens which behaviors are appropriate and which are not.
- Everyone in a community is responsible for preventing alcohol-related injuries. At prom time retailers, limousine drivers, hotel owners, and others in the community have a responsibility to report suspicious activity to law enforcement. Suspicious activity may include:
 - Drinking and/or visible intoxication of a youth
 - Someone purchasing a large quantity of alcohol, furnishing alcohol to a minor, or a teen using a false ID.
 - Prom parties hosted in hotel rooms

Lt. Parker warns, "Keep safe during your end of school celebrations. If you are a teen, don't drink or use drugs. If you are a parent, remain vigilant about what your teen is doing. By making it inconvenient for kids to drink, you just may save a life."