

Spring Break Safety for your Teen: Six Points to Discuss before Departure

With Spring Break quickly approaching, thoughts of fun, sunshine and a break from school will be running through your teen's mind; with perhaps one of the last items being safety!

Many teenagers go away for spring break without the supervision of adults, and this most especially usually means without parents. If you feel your teenager is mature enough to go away for a few days of 'fun in the sun' it's important to discuss safety together before he or she leaves.

Here are the top six points that must be discussed before the big trip arrives.

Where is the trip?

Inquire where the trip is taking place with your teen. Explain the importance of you knowing exact location and phone numbers. If there is an emergency at home or on the resort, it is imperative for you to have contact information 'just in case. If your teen doesn't yet know a phone number, you will be able to view contact information by searching the resort website.

The bad and the ugly of alcohol and drugs

Spring break is notorious for drinking alcohol in excess and unfortunately the presence of drugs. Chances are your teen has been around alcohol and maybe even drugs prior to going on Spring Break vacation. Explain the negative effects alcohol can have on judgement and health. Let your teen know that too much alcohol can be dangerous and even deadly. Also let your teen know that drugs should not even be an option. Provide examples of when teens have fallen ill or have died due to overdoses on both illegal drugs and alcohol. Also point out that, especially if your teen is travelling to an international location like Mexico, laws are different and may not be as lenient for certain behavior.

The pressures of sex

Just like alcohol, Spring break tends to be notorious for sexual experimentation. It is important to discuss sex openly with your teen and to provide insight and information on the potential of getting pregnant, contracting a Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) and becoming emotionally scarred.

Be Aware of the surroundings and be with a buddy

It is vital to discuss who your teen will be travelling with. Discuss the risks of travelling anywhere alone and the importance of having a buddy system with friends.

Be wary of strangers

Discuss the risks of being too friendly with strangers while on Spring Break. Your teen may meet people, even potential lifelong friends, at the resort or hotel she or he is staying; however it is still important to inform your teen to listen to his or her gut when meeting locals and other travellers. Many vulnerable people unfortunately have fallen victim to rape, fraud and even murder while on vacation.

Carry ID and have insurance

In case of an emergency, it is vital to carry ID and to have travellers insurance when leaving the country. Inform your teen that insurance will cover medical expenses, trip cancellation and flight accidents. Going through your local AAA may be the best method of obtaining this insurance; however several insurance companies offer the service.