

# HC Drugfree Speaker Series

## Senior Week in Ocean City

*Senior Week in Ocean City* is a rite of passage for many Maryland high school graduates who travel to Ocean City for a week soon after graduation to celebrate. Many parents have concerns about this end of school celebration. The HC DrugFree program, "Senior Week in Ocean City", provides information to parents and high school seniors on how to prepare for a safe week in Ocean City, as well as discussing alternative trips for seniors during that week.

Speakers: Barry Neeb, Ocean City Police Officer, Joshua Wasilewski, Ocean City Beach Patrol Crew Chief and Steve Bounds, HC DrugFree Board Member and parent.

### History of Senior Week in Ocean City

- 100,000 18 year olds come to Ocean City each year over a 3-4 week period in June.
- In 1995 Ocean City had a horrible summer with 5 deaths among young people. All 5 were under 21, drunk when the fatal accidents happened, and away from home for the first time.
- This spawned the RAM Project, an award-winning program whose goals are to enforce underage drinking laws, enlist the support of alcohol establishments in that goal, and enlist the support of the lodging industry to enforce the laws.
- Between the summers of 1995 and 1996 a lot of prevention training was done.
- In the summer of 1995, 450 alcohol citations were given (which are an adult civil offense, not a criminal offense). In the summer of 1996 4000 citations were given, reflecting the new approach to enforcement and prevention. No warnings are given, just citations.
- Since 1995 there has been only one death of a young person.
- In June there are lots of plainclothes police officers patrolling Ocean City as well as uniformed officers. They pose as clerks, customers, and tourists.

### Beach Safety

- The Beach Patrol is responsible for safety along 10 miles of beach with 180 personnel.
- Their priorities are water safety and enforcement of all City laws on the beach.
- Surfing is not allowed.
- Alcohol is not allowed in public places, such as on the beach.
- 70% of drownings involve alcohol.
- One of their most important functions is to help prevent neck and back injuries from people diving and doing back flips into shallow water or getting caught in rip currents and undertows.
- Swimming is allowed from 10:00 AM to 5:30 PM. No one is allowed on the beach from 10:00 PM until 6:00 AM.
- The most common injuries are sunburn and dehydration.

→ turn over for helpful tips →

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### **Things parents can do to help their high school senior prepare for a safe week in Ocean City:**

- Help them find a place to stay and go look at the place before June.
- For help in finding decent, approved places to stay call 1-800-OC-OCEAN.
- Call and ask questions of the motel/condo, such as do you have security? Do you have a strict no drinking, no drugging policy? Do you want to do business with these recent graduates (i.e. are they experienced and do they cater to the Senior Week crowd in a safe and welcoming way).
- Discuss fiscal responsibility.
- Meet the teens your teen will be staying with at Ocean City.
- Meet their parents and discuss your expectations for the week.
- Send your senior with a notarized permission slip for medical treatment if he/she is under 18 years of age.
- Consider taking a “coincidental” family vacation in Ocean City that same week, or coming down to visit for a meal or an overnight.
- Get contact information for your teen AND one or more of their friends.
- Call the motel/condo and leave them YOUR phone number.
- Give your teen a cell phone, at least for the week.
- Go over beach, sun and ocean safety.

### **WHAT PARENTS SHOULD NOT DO:**

- DON'T PROVIDE BEER, WINE COOLERS, HARD LIQUOR, MARIJUANA OR ANY OTHER DRUGS FOR YOUR CHILD AND THEIR FRIENDS!

**For more information, visit the website: [www.playitsafeoceancity.com](http://www.playitsafeoceancity.com)**

Note: The schedule for future HC DrugFree programs is in the Winter 2005 Newsletter and on the HC DrugFree website: [www.hcdrugfree.org](http://www.hcdrugfree.org) - click on “Speaker Series”.  
Questions or comments: Please contact Laura Smit, HC DrugFree Executive Director at 410-799-4879 or e-mail at [hcdrugfree@yahoo.com](mailto:hcdrugfree@yahoo.com).

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