

June 2004

Dear Senior Parents,

Each year the senior class officers spend many hours planning safe and healthy activities for the senior class, especially during graduation week. Nevertheless, each year some seniors spend an evening in Tijuana during that week. Three years ago, several buses were rented to go to Tijuana, and three students were still arrested on the street.

Given the present climate, it is not the best time for our sons and daughters to be going to Tijuana. Students may feel safe there, but Mexico is a foreign country with a different set of laws.

According to U.S. law, you must be at least 18 years of age to go across the border without your parent. Border guards will check identification. Offenders will be given citations, and parents will be called. The legal drinking age in Mexico is 18 years. Tijuana is strict and will arrest individuals with fake identification.

In Mexico, driving under the influence is a major violation of the law, and there are many DUI checkpoints. Police will make arrests for this and for drinking in public, being a public nuisance and disorderly behavior. Rape is a big problem in Tijuana, even for males. Date rape and designer drugs have contributed to the problem. If a person is caught carrying drugs, there is a minimum ten-year jail term.

Mexican officials are not sympathetic to teens entering their country, getting drunk, and misbehaving. Ten to fifty U.S. citizens are arrested weekly, especially in the 18- to 20-year old range. They can be held for 72 hours without being charged. If arrested, a U.S. citizen only has the same rights as a Mexican citizen. He can call someone to arrange for bail. He can call the American Consulate, but only to make sure his rights are protected and to get help finding a lawyer.

Please take the time to talk to your son or daughter about participating in safe and sober activities. Give a clear, consistent message about not drinking. As parents, we want our children to be safe and rested, able to enjoy all the planned events for graduation week, especially graduation and Grad Nite.

Sincerely,

Faye Detsky Weil
Chairperson
Student Success Services

Judi Strang
Executive Director
San Dieguito Alliance for Drug-Free Youth