

NWT HEALTHY COMMUNITIES Toolkit



Dry Grad Events

SMART MANAGEMENT PRACTICES



What is a Dry Grad?

A Dry Grad is an event which provides students with a safe, drug and alcohol-free environment to celebrate their graduation. It is a fully supervised fun event where the grads can celebrate their graduation with their friends in a safe environment.

Dry Grads take place after the prom. Typically the students are transported directly from their prom dinner and dance to the Dry grad venue. The Dry grad party typically offers an exciting and entertaining variety of activities as well as music, food and lots of photo opportunities.

The concept of Dry Grads started in the 1980s to address the issues of drinking and driving at graduation parties. Schools started to work with parents to organize safe grads.

These parties eventually evolved to a "Dry Grad" concept that is celebrated today. The goal of a Dry Grad is to keep the students entertained, busy and having a wonderful time with their friends.

A successful Dry Grad is one where students have a wonderful celebration and a fun, entertaining and memorable night with their friends without alcohol.



Why have a dry grad?

- Acknowledges graduates achievements
- Encourages a (new) tradition of drug and alcohol free celebration
- Reduces risk of harm to graduates
- Reduces risk of harm to the community

How does a dry grad work?

- Immediately follows formal ceremonies, dinner/dance
- Runs until 5:00 or 6:00 am
- No in-and-out privileges (once the students arrive at the event they will not be permitted outside the event to ensure no alcohol or drugs are used or brought into event)
- Tickets sold to grads, escorts and guests – pre-registration is required
- Bags with change of clothing are dropped off prior to event

Who organizes a dry grad?

- Parents are the primary organizers
- Community Volunteers
- Students
- In some communities the school and teaching staff take a role of organizing dry grad events. However, dry grad is considered an extracurricular activity that happens outside of school hours.

Where do dry grads take place?

- Self-contained and easily monitored
- Large enough for a variety of activities and entertainment
- Recreation Centre
- Schools
- Sports arena, etc

Entertainment Ideas:

- Live Band/DJ Music
- Photo Booth
- Inflatable Fun (bungee run, sumo suits, etc.)
- Magicians, hypnotists, comedians
- Ice skating, swimming, bowling
- Funny money casino

How can your community support a dry grad?

- Waive or reduce rental fees from the facility hosting the event.
- Provide any equipment (i.e.: speakers, sound system, DJ, inflatables, etc.)
- Celebrate the grads and the event organizers at the Dry Grad.
- Staff & Council can volunteer for Safe Grad preparation and event.
- Community Government donate prizes (i.e. pool passes, skate passes, exercise class passes, pool party, etc)

Important to Remember:

Dry grads will take planning. Allow your dry grad committee enough time to properly plan the event with student engagement, arrange for fundraising to cover costs for the event and book the venue for the Dry Grad.

Dry grad is more than just a party. Dry grad values a young person's life and can be a milestone for the whole community!