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Arrive Alive

Jenny has very strict parents. They call to make sure she gets places alright and on time, and she calls no matter what time to let them know that she is on her way home. They keep her busy after school and on weekends with voice lessons at the nearby College of the Arts, and community work at nearby nursing homes and hospitals. Jenny has been said to have a voice that comes straight from heaven. She wants nothing more than to please her parents and to do as they wish, however sometimes it becomes too overwhelming. She excels in all of her classes and has been recently accepted to finest University in the state with a full scholarship.

However she all about having fun. She admits she buckles under peer pressure and does things just to be accepted by the people around her. Jenny always knew she was a party girl at heart, but could never let her parents suspect because in their world it was unacceptable. It was very easy for Jenny to lie about her whereabouts because both of her parent had a very demanding job, and now that it was the end of her high school career Jenny wanted to rebel a little. All she wanted to do was hang out and have a little fun. She decided to tell her parents that she was going over a friends house to do a little last minute studying for the finals that were going on in the next coming week. Little did her parents know that it was instead a little celebration for the last week of high school, ever. Jenny had one drink too many. It was the

most she had ever drank, but she thought she could handle it. A couple hours later there was not one sober person in the whole house. It was late, however Jenny's parents were not worried because she had stayed out late studying before. They both fell asleep in the living room watching television, waiting for Jenny to arrive. At about 1 in the morning Jenny looked at the clock and decided it was time to leave. Since no one there was anywhere near sober, Jenny got behind the wheel herself. Not even one person tried to stop her.

Jenny didn't call home that night, and with 1 mile left to go till she was home, Jenny's car went into a ditch. She died on impact. She was found a couple hours later by a passing car. Her body was unrecognizable and the police almost couldn't identify her, until they found her acceptance letter to the University in shreds scattered throughout the car. At 5 in the morning, Jenny's parents were awakened by a knock on the door. When Jenny's mom heard the knock she knew something wasn't right. She rushed to the door. As soon as her eyes saw the policeman at the door, she collapsed. Her parents didn't believe it when they were told that alcohol was the cause. But their lives will no longer be the same.

Jenny's parents were very cautious, but they didn't communicate. Jenny kept her life to herself. Her parents never thought to ask because they thought they kept her busy enough. They thought she was happy being the way she was. They thought they knew all of her friends. Her grades were great and she always had a positive attitude. Her parents thought that they

had nothing to worry about. But they were kept in the dark just like a lot a parents today. You may keep your teen busy and think that you know where they are every second of every day. But do you know who is there with them? How old everyone is? What they are being exposed too? Peer pressure can be a lot greater then the pressure of pleasing the parents.

Teens go through high school not wanting to be an outcast. Outcast to them get made fun of and bullied. So most teens will do just about anything to fit in with a crowd. Every parent and teenager should have talked about the use of drugs and alcohol. Let them know that there will be consequences but if they are going to drink, let them know that you want them to be safe. You don't want them to be stupid, however you don't want to scare them away. If teens get scared chances are they are going to hide just about everything they do. If it is made absolutely clear that drinking will not be tolerated the chances are greater that your teen will rebel. We enjoy hiding. Teens are lead by the rush they get from doing things they know are wrong. Let your teen know that if they are ever in need of a ride home after they have been out, you will be there to get them, no questions asked. Make it known to them that you are grateful that they are being safe.

Talk to your teens about school and what's going on with them. Most teens are bound to drink while in high school. As a parent you need to keep them under control, but at the same time give them the freedom they need. If a teen is pulled too close they are bound to pull away. High school is a time

for experimenting. Talk to them about what high school was like for you but let them know, that you know, it is very different today. We teens like being our own person. We don't like being compared to other people or being expected to do just as the parents did when they are in high school. In our minds we like to know that we can have different experiences and that our parents will be there to back us up when we need them. Trust becomes more important to us every single day.