



OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE
SERVICE DE POLICE D'OTTAWA

Working together for a safer community
La sécurité de notre communauté, un travail d'équipe

The Ottawa Police Service in conjunction with the Ottawa Carleton District School Board and the Ottawa Carleton Catholic District School Board wish to inform parents and guardians about an unsanctioned annual event of which we feel you should be aware. On the night before the last day of regular classes, a vast number of students of local schools partake in an all night gathering commonly known as “Tequila Sunrise”. This event began decades ago as an informal opportunity for the graduating students from local schools to gather in their individual groups, to quietly spend a full night together before they part their ways. It has changed over time to become a night identified for any student to gather in public settings such as local parks and neighbourhoods where drug use, excessive consumption of alcohol, mischief and general disturbances generally take place. While Tequila Sunrise tends to be held on the night before the last full day of regular classes, there are some schools where students arrange similar events on earlier dates. In addition there are other activities that occur such as car rallies and scavenger hunts where violations of criminal, provincial and municipal laws not only occur, but are encouraged by the participants.

It is the intention of the Ottawa Police Service, the Ottawa Carleton District School Board and the Ottawa Carleton Catholic District School Board to educate parents and guardians about this event and to dispel any myths that these events are condoned or sanctioned in any way by the school boards or the police. As a result we are taking this opportunity to advise all parents and guardians that the event in its present form **will not be tolerated**.

The Police Service will be addressing Tequila Sunrise and any other events with a strict enforcement policy. Appropriate charges **will** be laid on any person where it is warranted and parents will also be held accountable under the Parental Responsibility Act for any damages caused by their children. The Children’s Aid Society will be consulted or involved in any incidents involving a minor. The schools will also be taking a strict approach in imposing sanctions where permitted. The students will be made aware of the police response through their respective schools and/or their School Resource Officers. Parents and guardians are encouraged to communicate with their children about the dangers of participating in activities where alcohol, drugs, mischief or other violations of the law occur. Parents and guardians are also encouraged to monitor the activities of their children at all times but particularly in the time approaching and around the end of the school year. We are hoping that parents discourage their children from participating in any of these events for their own safety.

It is not the intention of the Ottawa Police Service or either of the school boards to discourage all activities related to the end of the school year. It is our intent to promote community safety and public peace. We would encourage parents and guardians to involve themselves in the monitoring and chaperoning of year end activities to ensure that the children’s behaviour is safe and law abiding.