Mardi Gras with an Adolescent

Helpful Hints and Suggestions

Think about parameters and guidelines now so you aren’t facing “on-the-fly” decisions when your teenager asks to go out during Mardi Gras.

- Talk with your spouse / co-parent and any other pertinent adults in your child’s life before discussing guidelines with your child. You want to make sure all of the adults are on the same page first.
- It doesn’t matter what other parents are doing; you must be comfortable with your own guidelines for your child. Some things to consider . . .
  - Will you allow your child to be on his or her own on the parade route?
  - If so, how far away or where will you allow them to go? Set physical boundaries that are very clear.
  - Are there any places that are off limits while they are out at parades?
- Talk to your child about the guidelines you have established for him / her in a calm environment before you set out for the parades.
- Discuss a Plan B if the cell phones aren’t working.
- Discuss an “exit strategy” with your teenager in case s/he ends up in a situation that is uncomfortable and wants to leave.
- Consider social media and Mardi Gras . . .
  - Emphasize to your teenager the importance of not tagging any locations, if they are posting photos anywhere online.
  - Remind your teenager that they should never post photos or quotes / status updates that would 1) make others feel left out or 2) damage their own reputation.