

Have you ever caught yourself parenting in a way that you vowed not to? Do you hear words coming out of your mouth that you hated hearing from your parents? I have experienced this occasionally in parenting my two children, surprisingly it is more often now that the oldest is in college and the youngest is a senior in high school. I want to protect them from parties that get out of hand and from exposure to drugs and alcohol. In order to do this I repeat some of the lectures that my mother gave me. I hated listening to them and I hate preaching them, but my children seem to be staying out of the party scene so it must be working.

When my son was home for winter break he mentioned that he was getting together with a group of friends from high school. They had all gone to different universities so they had not seen each other for a while. As he was leaving he said they were going to coordinate going on a spring break cruise. When he left my husband and I discussed this. When I first heard him say spring break cruise I felt a panic in the pit of my stomach. I know that not everyone gets into trouble during spring break and I also know that my son has made responsible decisions so far in his life, but I did not like the idea of him being away from home, in foreign countries, at nineteen. My husband did point out that with spring break cruises they would not be driving anywhere so that took out the concerns about vehicle problems or accidents. Also there are many activities that are available on cruises that he enjoys. We have been on cruises in the past and know that the alcohol can add up fast, so we decided we would warn him about running up a bar bill and make it very clear that we would not pay for a bar bill.

When my son came home from visiting with his friends he said that the spring break cruise may not happen because each of the universities has a different week off. They were going to try to plan the trip at a time when the majority of kids were available to go. He said that if it turned out to be during a time when he was in school he would make different plans with friends from college. We decided to save the lecture about being responsible until we know what he is doing.