Tips for Students for a Fun & Safe Midwinter Ball

Tip #1 - Have a plan for the evening!
• Where will I eat dinner? Don’t just rely on the pizza – it is kind of a free for all, and you might not get very much. You need some food in you for energy, so make sure you plan out dinner as part of your evening!
• Who will I go with? If I need to check in with someone, what is the best way to communicate? Do you have a plan to carry your phone with your fancy clothes? If you decide to leave early, do you have someone who can walk back home with you? If your friends leave early, will they tell you?
• Will I check out all the dance floors? Am I wearing clothes that won’t make me nuts an hour into the evening?
• It’s below freezing! Bring a coat because there is a free coat check!
• The Beer Blanket myth is NOT real. Hypothermia is real, beer blankets are not. When you are under the influence of alcohol, the sensory receptors in your skin are particularly sensitive to temperature changes and the redistribution of blood may make you feel warmer but the truth is you’re not. According to the American Association for the Advancement of Science this can be quite dangerous as alcohol reverses your blood vessels’ ability to direct blood to your vital organs in lower temperatures. So although you feel warm, your body’s ability to detect and adapt to the cold are failing.

Tip #2 - Awkward is ok
• As you wonder what other people are thinking of you...they are also wondering what you are thinking of them. Dance like no one’s watching because most likely… no one is.
• You’ll enjoy yourself the most if you can just be yourself.

Tip #3 - Be Yourself! Make Your Best Available Choice (BAC) ;)
• When making decisions for this evening think:
  • Is this best for my wellbeing?
  • Will I be happy with this decision tomorrow?
  • Will this decision hurt someone else?

Tip #4 - Pre-Gaming is Risky
• If you go too hard too early, chances are that you may crash earlier. Avoid missing out on all the fun and consider conserving your dancing energy with pre-game snacks.
• Pre-gaming is often the difference between moderate drinking and high-risk/problematic drinking. If your goal is to have fun, pre-gaming is more likely to increase your chances of the negative effects of drinking.
• In research studies, pre-gaming is associated with more negative consequences of drinking (e.g. being physically sick, not remembering part of the night, saying something that you later regretted, feeling sad or depressed, disappointing others, regretted sexual activity, problems at school/work, passing out, being physically injured, drinking and driving, getting into trouble with authorities/police, accidentally physically hurting someone, or getting into a fight)

Tip #5 - Have a Buddy System
• Know who you are going with. Know who you are leaving with.
• Help each other out. Dance with each other.
• If someone doesn’t want to dance, go hang out with them too.
• If you see someone without a buddy, help a Carl out, Minnesota winters can be scary alone.