

A COMMUNITY WORKING TOGETHER TIPS FOR TEEN PARTIES

Hosting and attending parties can be fun for everyone. Teenage gatherings provide important opportunities for our children to mix and gain experiences in social situations and teaches them how to be responsible guests and hosts.

Planning is the key to hosting a safe and enjoyable party: talk to your teenager to establish some strong ground rules. Appropriate adult supervision and firm restrictions of drugs, alcohol and uninvited guests are important considerations.

SHOULD I ALLOW ALCOHOL AT MY TEEN'S PARTY?

- It is not advisable to allow children under the age of 18 to drink alcohol. We now know that it is important to delay the introduction of alcohol to young people for as long as possible.
- As a parent you have certain responsibilities when holding a party for teenagers so saying "NO" is appropriate.
- You are responsible for providing information to parents of children who are attending your party.
- You must provide a safe environment for your guests.
- You have a responsibility to ensure the party is adequately supervised at all times.
- You should be aware of your "duty-of-care" There may be legal implications if you do not act responsibly when you host a party for teenagers.
- Be prepared to look after another person's child as you would wish your own child to be cared for in the same situation.

AN ALCOHOL FREE PARTY IS THE BEST OPTION

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF ALCOHOL IS BROUGHT TO MY TEEN'S PARTY?

- If a guest arrives with alcohol, confiscate it and call the parents to inform them and have them collect it.
- As a safeguard you can collect bags and coats at the entry point and store in a safe place until guests leave. This will reduce the chance of alcohol and drugs being present at the party.
- If a teenager arrives at the party under the influence of alcohol, call their parents to arrange collection and keep them safe until their lift home arrives. (Do not leave an unwell child alone. Call an ambulance 000 if you have any concerns.)

DISCLAIMER

These guidelines are not intended to reflect all strategies for dealing with the challenges of hosting parties with adolescents, but are designed to serve as a resource for parents, students and schools. The information contained herein is not intended to replace professional advice, whether medical, legal or other. Each individual situation is different. John XXIII College disclaims liability of any kind resulting from the use of these guidelines.

CHECKLIST FOR HOLDING A PARTY

CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR CHILD ATTENDING A PARTY CAN BE REDUCED BY:

- Knowing your children's friends and their parents.
- Holding high expectations of your child's behaviour
- Confirming invitation details with the parents of the host.
- Organising definite transport arrangements to and from the party.
- Always 'sighting' the adult host and checking that supervision will be provided throughout the party.
- Always knowing where your child is and being wary of ad hoc extensions e.g. sleepovers
- Having an emergency plan – what to do if something goes wrong.
- Being prepared to say 'NO' if arrangements are not to your satisfaction.

REFERENCES

Loreto Alcohol and Party Guide
Santa Maria College Alcohol & Party Guide
www.drinkwise.com.au
www.druginfo.adf.org.au
www.alcohol.gov.au
www.deewr.gov.au
The Trinity Parent's Alcohol & Drug Resource Book
St Kevins Alcohol & Party Guidelines

- Decide on the format, number of guests and what time the party will start. A finish time should be appropriate for the child's age e.g. Year 10 – 10:00PM.
- Draw up a list of invited guests with home phone numbers. (A valuable resource is the JTC Year Contact List).
- Plan food, drinks and entertainment. Although teenagers usually don't request food it is important to provide a substantial amount of water, non-alcoholic drinks and food.
- Invitations: Need to be selective since communication is usually via social networking sites such as Facebook. Events posted should be closed/private. Text messaging should not be used as it increases the risk of numbers escalating.
- Consider appropriate security at the venue. E.g. dads/adult friends. You can provide a list of attendees at the door.
- Supervision is crucial. A suggested ratio can be 1:10 guests. Although you don't want to be too intrusive, be aware of what is happening.
- Notify neighbours and inform the local police in case there are any difficulties. See party registration form online www.police.wa.gov.au/whatsnew/pdf/party-safe-web one weeks notice is required.
- Establish a single entry and exit point.