

PARENT'S GUIDE TO TEENAGE PARTIES

When your teen is attending a party.....

1. Call the parent of the host/hostess to:

- Verify the occasion.
- Be sure that an adult will be present.
- Be certain that there will be no alcohol or other drugs permitted.
- Offer Assistance.

2. Know where your teen will be.

- Have the address and phone number of the house with the party.

3. Know how your teen will get to and from the party.

- Assure your teen that you or a specified neighbor or friend can be called if he/she needs a ride home.
- Discuss with your teen the possible problem situations which might necessitate such a phone call.
- If you are not going to be home, let your teen know where you can be reached.

4. Be sure your teen understands when he/she is to be home.

5. Be awake or have your teen awaken you when he/she arrives home.

- This can be a good way to check the time as well as a way to talk about the evening.

6. If your teen is staying overnight with a friend following a party, check with the parents of the friend beforehand to verify that:

- This is acceptable to them.
- They will be home.
- You both agree on curfew hours.

HOSTING A PARTY

1. An adult should be present throughout the party.

- As a parent, you can bring in snacks, non-alcoholic beverages, etc. Not only will your visibility help keep the party running smoothly, but it will also give you an opportunity to meet your teen's friends.
- When possible, do not have a party in a separate part of the house. When it is in the main flow of the home, your presence will seem more natural and non-obtrusive.
- You may want to ask another responsible adult to help chaperone the party.

2. Alcohol or other drugs should not be served or available

- Be alert to the signs of alcohol or drug use.
- Explain to your teen that you (the parent) are legally responsible for anything that happens to a minor who has consumed alcohol or drugs in your home.
- Uninvited guests or those bringing in alcohol or another drug should be asked to leave. Be ready to notify the parents to ensure their safe transportation home.

3. Anyone who leaves the party should not be allowed to return.

- This will discourage people from leaving with intent to drink and/or use drugs and then return to the party.

4. Encourage small parties.

- Keep parties small (10-15 teens per adult). Go over party plans with your teen prior to the event.
- Avoid open-house parties. This type of party limits the control of both parent and teen over the party.
- Keep a guest list.
- Encourage your teen to plan organized group activities or games.
- Set time limits which will enable teens to be home before their curfew.

5. Set ground rules with your teen beforehand.

- This will give you both a good opportunity to express feelings and concerns.
- Let your teen know your expectations of him/her.
- Help your teen understand your philosophy of non-alcohol and non-drug parties.

6. Plan to have plenty of food and non-alcoholic drinks available.

- Teen favorites are pizza and chips. Food preparation also can be an important part of the fun, such as making popcorn, toasting marshmallows, making pizzas or subs.

7. Graduation parties:

- These parties require special planning because of the unusual mix of ages and relationships. Some families find a brunch works well, as alcohol would not be expected at this time of day. Many parents have decided to serve no alcohol at parties given for teenagers even if adults attend them.

8. Some other ideas:

- Get to know your teen's friends and their parents.
- Many parties occur spontaneously. When they do, it is recommended that the above guidelines be applied.
- If, despite your precautions, things get out of hand, do not hesitate to call the police department for assistance.

Homes where parents are absent are frequently party sites!

- If it is imperative that you be out of town, have a friend or relative live in while you are away, or have your teen stay with a friend's family.
- Tell neighbors about your plans, and if they notice anything suspicious to call the police.
- Encourage your teen not to tell his/her friends that you are out of town.
- Ask friends and neighbors to monitor your house.

References

Wilmes, D. (1988). *Parenting for prevention*. Minneapolis: Johnson Institute.