

Party Safe for Parents

Everyone wants to enjoy themselves at a party and have a night they remember for all the right reasons. This information sheet contains some strategies to help parents and guardians equip their children with the information they need to enjoy a safe party experience.

- Inform yourself, speak with the party host and find out: how many people will be attending the party; who will be supervising the party; if alcohol will be available at the party, and if so, how it will be managed; if food will be available at the party; what time the party is expected to finish; if the party will be registered with police.
- Get the phone number of the house where the party is being held or mobile phone number of the host.
- Reach an agreement with your child about how they will be getting home, and who might accompany them home. Discourage them from walking home alone.
- Discuss what they should do if there are unexpected delays or problems with getting home, including how they might contact you to let you know of the delay or problem.
- Let your child know that you are prepared to go and pick them up. Whilst this can be inconvenient, it can reduce the risk of assault or other problems.
- Talk to your child about how to have a good time at a party without coming to any harm, and reinforce with them that they can enjoy themselves without alcohol or other drugs.
- Discuss backup plans should the party get out-of-control, and the importance of following any directions given to them by a police officer. It is an offence not to comply with the directions of a police officer, and if charged and convicted, could see your child facing a significant fine or imprisonment.
- Encourage a strong sense of responsibility in your child to do the right thing and look after themselves and their friends. For example, your child could facilitate an early and safe exit for a friend who is intoxicated.
- Remember, it is an offence to supply alcohol to a person under 18 in a public place. If you are caught supplying alcohol to any minor in a public place you could be slapped with an on-the-spot fine or have to attend court, where maximum penalties can apply.
- It is an offence to supply alcohol to a person under 18 on private property, unless you are a responsible adult for the minor (i.e., a parent, step-parent, guardian or adult with parental rights and responsibilities for the minor) and are responsibly supervising the minor. If police are called to a party and see the irresponsible supply of alcohol to a minor police may seize all alcohol, and if you supplied the alcohol you could be facing charges in court and a significant fine.
- Talk to your child about the standard of behaviour you expect from them at the party. If your child becomes involved in any out of control conduct that causes or contributes to a party becoming out-of-control they could be committing an offence and could face a significant fine or imprisonment. They could be ordered by the court to contribute to any costs incurred by police in responding to the out-of-control party, and if your child is unable to pay these costs you (as their parent) could be called upon to pay.
- Actively monitor your child and what they are doing.
- Discuss what your child should do if they are asked by the party host or organiser to leave the party. If it happens, they should leave immediately without incident.
- It is generally illegal to drink alcohol in a public place (including a park or beach) and if found drinking in public you could be fined or have to attend court. It is also illegal for a minor, under 18 years of age, to possess or consume alcohol in a public place; it is even illegal for a minor to carry a bottle of wine for you across the road.