

# Parent Guide For Teen Parties

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## Did You Know?

- In the United States, alcohol kills more kids than all illegal drugs combined.
- 34% of high school students binge drink five or more drinks of alcohol in a row (CASA)
- 63% of freshmen say they've had alcohol; and by the time senioritis kicks in, 80 percent have used alcohol (CASA)
- Youth are more likely to begin drinking at times of change such as entering high school

## Kids ARE Listening to Parents.

The best way to influence your child to avoid drinking is to have a strong, trusting relationship with him or her. When parents tell their children that they strongly disapprove of youth drinking alcohol or using drugs, their children are much less likely to drink alcohol or use drugs.

## Hosting A Party

- 1. Set the ground rules WITH your teen when planning the party.**
  - Let your teen know that alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs will not be permitted.
  - Set time limits for the party.
  - Limit attendance to the guest list. Keep the number manageable.
  - Anyone who shows the influence of alcohol will be taken home.
  - Party-goers cannot leave and return.
  - Restrict the party to a certain part of the house.
- 2. Parents' role DURING the party:**
  - Be present and monitor the situation often. Refill snack trays, etc.
  - Be alert to signs of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use. If a guest arrives in an impaired condition, be willing to call his/her parents for safe transportation home.
  - Do not let anyone drive under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.
- 3. Avoid problems.**
  - Remove easy access to alcohol or other drugs (lock up prescriptions).
  - Have plenty of food and non-alcoholic drinks on hand.
  - Get to know your teen's friends and their parents.
  - Encourage shared chaperoning.
- 4. Know your liability.**
  - It is illegal to offer alcohol to guests under the age of 21 or to allow drug use in your home.
  - You may be brought to court for criminal charges and/or have to pay monetary damages in a civil lawsuit.
- 5. Monitor your house.**
  - Make certain your teen knows he/she is never to have a party if you are away.
  - Establish ways to monitor through neighbors, friends, family and law enforcement.
  - Hold your ground! Don't provide, ignore or excuse the use of alcohol with kids.

## Attending a Party

- 1. Know where your teen will be.**
  - Get the address and phone number.
  - Let your teen know that you expect a call if the location changes.
- 2. Contact the parents of the party-giver in order to:**
  - Verify the occasion and offer to help.
  - Make sure that a parent will be present and will be monitoring activities.
  - Be sure that alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs will not be present.
- 3. Know how your teen will get home.**
  - Make sure they have phone numbers of people they can call.
  - Make sure you know how to reach them.
- 4. Discuss with your teen how to handle a situation where alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs are available at the party.**
  - Let your teen know what YOU expect.
  - Devise a "code word or phrase" for the teen to use to exit the party gracefully. This code phrase, such as, "How is Cousin . . .?", tells you that your teen wants to leave the party early and is asking you to come and get them.
- 5. Make sure your teen knows what time to be home.**
  - Be aware when your teen arrives home.
  - Recognize compliance with curfews and enforce consequences if necessary.
  - Have a brief conversation to assess your teen's condition.
- 6. If your teen wants to stay overnight with a friend after the party...**
  - Verify with the friend's parents that they know about the invitation and approve.
  - Confirm that the friend's parents will be home and awake when the teens get to their home after the party.