PARENT PARTY TIPS

Suggestions for Parents

If a teen party is hosted at your residence:

- Help your teenager plan the party. Make a guest list and invite only a specific number of people.
- Have your child pass out or send invitations and try to avoid the "open party" situation.
- Don't send e-mail invitations. They can be forwarded to a large number of people quickly and you lose control of who has this information.
- Put your phone number on the invitation and welcome calls from parents.
- Set rules ahead of time such as no alcohol, tobacco or other drugs. Set a start and end time for the party.
- Let attendees know that if they leave, they cannot come back.
- Have plenty of food and non-alcoholic beverages.
- Plan some activities such as music, games, movies, etc.
- Let your neighbors know in advance there will be a party and that you will be there to supervise.
- Familiarize yourself with your community's noise ordinance.
- Limit the party access to a certain area of the house/property.
- Have a plan for dealing with vehicles. Include parking information on your party invitation.
- Call parents of any teen who arrives with alcohol or under the influence of alcohol tobacco or other drugs. If you can't get in touch with the parents, keep the teen there or call the police if necessary. You can be civilly liable if you know they have been drinking and you let them leave.
- Secure all forms of alcohol, firearms and other potentially hazardous items in your home.
- Make regular and unobtrusive visits to the party area with sensitivity to teens' needs for privacy and independence.
- Invite other parents to help chaperone if there will be a large number of teenagers.

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When you're away from home or out of town:

- Set and communicate rules and standards to be followed in your absence.
- Do not allow underage youth to have unsupervised parties or gatherings.
- Remind them of their responsibilities and the consequences of their actions.
- Have a relative or responsible adult stay at your home during your absence, have your teenager stay with a responsible adult or ask a neighbor to watch the house and stop in while you are gone.
- Contact your local police/sheriff's department; notify them that you will be out of town, and request additional patrol. Make it a point to tell your child that you have asked law enforcement to do this.

If a teen is attending a party in someone else's home:

- Know where your child will be. Call the parent in charge to verify the occasion and location of the party and ensure there will be adult supervision.
- Ask how many teens are expected at the party and offer to help supervise or provide refreshments.
- Make certain that the host will not be serving or allowing alcohol. Ask how the parents plan to handle the situation if a teen shows up with alcohol or has been drinking.
- Indicate your expectations to your child and the parent hosting the party that if the teens leave and go somewhere else, you will want to know.
- Set a curfew for your teen and when they arrive home, have them check in with you.
- Know how your child is getting to and from the party. Reinforce the message to your teenager that they should never allow someone who has been drinking or using other drugs to drive them anywhere.
- Assure your child that they can call you to be picked up whenever needed.
- If the activity seems inappropriate, express concern and keep your child home.

Other suggestions:

- Get to know your children's friends and their parents.
- Find out your children's friends and their parents policy on alcohol, drug and tobacco use.
- It is illegal to serve minors, or to allow a minor to have alcohol on your property.
- Encourage alcohol-free and drug-free parties and activities for underage youth.
- If your child is on a social networking site, such as Facebook, be their 'friend' to monitor their posts.

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