

TALKING TO TEENS ABOUT PARTIES

“Many teens want their parents involved in planning a party to take the pressure off them.”



Checklist For Party Planning:

1. A parent should be there for the duration of the party.

Your presence will give you the opportunity to meet your child's friends, and keep the party running smoothly. When possible, keep the party in the main part of the house, so your presence will seem more natural and nonobtrusive. You may want to enlist the help of additional adults to chaperone the party; you'll have more help to keep track of what is happening, and support in the case of an emergency.

2. Do not allow any form of alcohol or drugs.

If anyone arrives at the party and appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, their parents should be called immediately to ensure safe transportation home. Unruly guests, or anyone who tries to bring alcohol, should be asked to leave. YOU are liable both criminally and for damages if minors use alcohol or drugs on your property.

3. Once someone leaves the party, they should not be allowed to return.

This assures that guests don't leave the party to drink, and then come back.

4. Encourage small parties.

Open house parties limit your control over what happens at the party. Make a guest list and set time limits for the party to ensure that children will be home before your local area's curfew. Talking To Teens About Parties "I was relieved that my parents were so on top of things. I felt it took the burden off me to say no or to look uncool, my parents looked uncool and that was fine."

5. Decide on the date and theme of the party with your child.

Set a date that is convenient for you, your child, and the guests. Look at the school calendar and make sure the party is not on a day filled with activities. Leave yourself free time before and after the party date to prepare and follow up. Theme ideas may include a luau or TV show.

6. Sit down with your child and write ground rules for the party.

This is a good opportunity for you to express your feelings and concerns about alcohol. Let your child participate in deciding rules and consequences, which may help him/her be more motivated to enforce them.

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7. Define the area for the party.

Do not allow guests in bedrooms or other private rooms.

8. Send invitations.

Do not have your child distribute invitations at school, but instead find the address of each guest and send the invitations in the mail. Do not allow non-invited guests to attend the party. Talk in advance to guests who are known to drink alcohol.

9. Notify your neighbors.

Have your child contact close neighbors to let them know the date and times they can expect any minor inconveniences. Assure them that it will be chaperoned, and ask them to notify you if there is too much noise.

10. Notify police when planning a large party.

This will help to provide safety for both your guests and neighbors.

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

Create a menu that your guests will enjoy. Keeping your guests satisfied with what you have provided may prevent any desire for alcohol.

12. Plan activities with your child prior to the party.

Include some of your child's close friends in the process of deciding what activities will take place. Decide on appropriate music and preview it. Have your child tell the guests beforehand what type of music you are allowing, so they will not bring inappropriate music. Activities will help keep the focus of the party away from drinking.

13. Plan for the “flow” of the party.

What will happen as guests arrive? When will they eat? When will they do the activities you planned?

14. Homes where parents are absent are frequent party sites.

When you need to be out of town, have a responsible friend or relative house sit, and make it clear to both the house sitter and your child that there should be no parties.

15. Plan for guests getting home.

Parents need to know when to pick their children up after the party. Do not plan to rely on cell phones. Make sure to plan around your local area's curfew laws.