

“Parents Who Host, Lose The Most: Don’t be a party to teenage drinking”

Parents play a major role in their children’s choices about alcohol, tobacco or other drugs. In a recent national survey of parents and teens by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, one-third of teen partygoers have been to parties where teens were drinking alcohol, smoking pot, or using cocaine, Ecstasy, or prescription drugs while a parent was present. By age 17, nearly half (46 percent) of teens have been at such parties where parents were present.



Drug-Free Action Alliance has developed the **“Parents Who Host, Lose The Most: Don’t be a party to teenage drinking”** public awareness campaign to provide parents with accurate information about the health risks of underage drinking and the legal consequences of providing alcohol to youth. The campaign encourages parents and the community to send a unified message at prom and graduation time that teen alcohol consumption is not acceptable. It is illegal, unsafe, and unhealthy for anyone under age 21 to drink alcohol.

Here are the facts:

- Parents who give alcohol to their teen’s friends under any circumstances, even in their own homes, are breaking the law.
- Parents who knowingly allow a person under 21 to remain in their home or on their property while consuming or possessing alcoholic beverages can be prosecuted and everything associated with such a violation can be confiscated, including personal property.
- Parents can be sued if they give alcohol to anyone under 21 and they in turn hurt someone, hurt themselves or damage property.

Underage use of alcohol is a serious problem that too often leads to harmful consequences for youth and their families. Parents can protect themselves and their teens by following these guidelines when hosting parties for their children:

- Host safe, alcohol-free activities and events for youth during prom and graduation season
- Refuse to supply alcohol to children or allow drinking in your home or on your property
- Be at home when your teenager has a party
- Make sure your teenager’s friends do not bring alcohol into your home
- Talk to other parents about not providing alcohol at youth events
- Report underage drinking

More information about **“Parents Who Host, Lose The Most: Don’t be a party to teenage drinking”** is available at www.DrugFreeActionAlliance.org.

Suggestions for parents

If your teen is giving a party

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, drugs, or tobacco. Set a start and end time for the party.

Let attendees know that if they leave, they can't 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 the noise ordinance in your area.

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 in possession of alcohol or under the influence. 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 in a safe place.

Make regular unobtrusive visits to the party area with sensitivity to teens' needs for privacy and independence.

Invite some other parents to help chaperone if there will be a large number of teenagers.

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.

If you are concerned that your child might have a party anyway, you can call your local police and ask them to drive by at some point over the time you are gone. Make it a point to tell your child that you have asked the police to do this.

If your teen is attending a party

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 they 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 or go somewhere else you will want to know.

Set a curfew for your teen to be home 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 is drinking or using other drugs to drive them anywhere.

Assure your child that they can telephone you to be picked up whenever needed.

If the activity seems inappropriate, express concern and keep your child home.

Other ideas

Get to know your children's friends and their parents.

Find out their policy on alcohol, drug and tobacco use.

Remember, it is illegal to serve minors, or to knowingly allow a minor to have alcohol on your property.

Encourage alcohol-free and drug-free parties and activities for underage youth.

Fact Sheet	Underage Drinking Laws
<p><u>Public awareness campaign</u></p> <p>Subject: Underage Drinking</p> <p>Target audience: Parents of teens</p> <p>Objective: Inform parents that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is illegal to host or allow teen drinking parties in your home. • It is unhealthy for anyone under age 21 to drink. • It is unsafe and illegal for teens to drink and drive. • Parents can be prosecuted under the law. • Everything associated with a violation such as personal property, can be confiscated. 	<p>What parents should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a parent, you cannot give alcohol to your teen’s friends under the age of 21, under any circumstance, even in your own home, even with their parent’s permission. • You cannot knowingly allow a person under 21, other than your own child, to remain in your home or on your property while consuming alcohol. <p>If you break the law:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can face a maximum sentence of 6 months in jail and/or a \$1,000 fine. • Others can sue you if you give alcohol to anyone under 21 and they, in turn, hurt someone, hurt themselves, or damage property. • Officers can take any alcohol, money or property used in the committing the offense. <p>Things you can do as a parent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refuse to supply alcohol to anyone under 21. • Be at home when your teen has a party. • Make sure that alcohol is not brought into your home or property by your teen’s friends. • Talk to other parents about not providing alcohol at other events your child will be attending. • Create alcohol-free opportunities and activities in your home so teens feel welcome. • Report underage drinking to local law enforcement.