

# Parents' Guide to Safe and Legal Teenage Parties

## Tips for Parents:

- Include your child in the planning.
  - Set the ground rules with your teen before the party. Let your teen know what you expect. Ask your teen to inform his or her friends about the rules before the party. Stress shared responsibility for hosting the party.
  - Check coats and backpacks at the door.
  - Be home during the party. Agree on an area of the house where guests will be comfortable and where you can supervise adequately.
  - Allow no alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs. (In Virginia, it is illegal for anyone under 21 to possess alcohol, for anyone under 18 to possess tobacco, and for an adult to permit alcohol or tobacco possession or consumption by anyone who is underage.) Criminal charges may be brought against the parent if a violation of law occurs.
  - Immediately call the police if you suspect or find weapons. Do not attempt to handle the situation yourself.
  - Limit attendance by sending invitations or making personal phone calls. Do not allow uninvited guests to crash the party. Anyone not invited should be asked to leave. If you have a problem with crashers refusing to leave, call the police.
  - Set time limits for the party. Drop-in parties are hard to control.
  - When a guest leaves, do not allow him or her to return. This will discourage guests from leaving the party to drink or to use other drugs elsewhere and then return.
  - Notify your neighbors that there will be a party.
  - Invite other parents to help chaperon.
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- Encourage your teen to plan activities, music, videos, or games in advance of the party. Drinking and drug use are sometimes the result of boredom.
  - Plan to quietly circulate among the guests. Do not isolate yourself.
  - If you suspect that a guest has used drugs or alcohol, contact his or her parents immediately. Request that the child's parents pick up their child as soon as possible.

## Tips for Parents of Teenagers Going to a Party:

- Call the host parents to confirm the location of the party, when it will start and end, and that the parents will be present throughout the party.
- Check to make sure it is an alcohol and other drug free party.
- Volunteer to help chaperon the party.
- Make sure that your child knows that he or she should call you for a ride home if alcohol or other drugs are present.

# PARENT/STUDENT CONTRACT

## STUDENT PROMISE

Because it is illegal, I promise not to drink alcohol, particularly during the dangerous prom and graduation season. I commit myself to celebrating in a safe and healthy way. I pledge not to get in a car with someone who has been drinking alcohol. If I find myself in a situation where I feel unsafe or uncomfortable, I promise to call you, my parent or guardian, for a ride home. I commit to this pledge and recognize there are consequences for every decision I make.

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Youth Signature

## PARENT/GUARDIAN PROMISE

As your parent/guardian, I promise to make myself available to you during this season of celebration. I promise to provide a safe, alcohol free environment for you and your friends. You can count on me any time, day or night. I promise that I will agree to pick you up, no immediate questions asked. When we are safe at home, I pledge to respect you and listen to what has happened and help in any way I can.

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Parent/Guardian Signature

