



SUNSHINE COAST  
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

## Safe Celebrations – Some Guidelines for Teenage Parties

Parents will often face the issue of their child wanting to attend or organise a party. Due to the significance of this type of event there is always the opportunity for arguments to develop as all too often there is little focus on the wider aspects of what can happen during a party. Sunshine Coast Grammar School cannot, and does not, take any responsibility for parties organised by parents prior to, or after the end of, a school function or to celebrate other school events. Having said this, it is important that the School provided some general assistance and guidance to help ensure an organised party can be a success for all.

The guidelines set down below are gleaned from discussions with other schools, conversations with parents who have held parties, and in association with advice from Michael Carr-Greg and the Queensland Police Service. The Police have also pointed out that regardless of the amount of pre-planning involved there is always the chance that any party can get out of control. They therefore are supportive of any requests for advice, or even input into, the organisation of the event. You can contact your local Police Station via <http://www.police.qld.gov.au/>

### 1. Attending a Party

One of the most important things in successfully running teenage parties is that all parents take an active interest in the various arrangements for the party. Parents should feel comfortable in phoning the host(s) to discuss the various arrangements for the party and talk about expectations so that they are clear to all. This co-operation between families can make a big difference in reducing anxieties felt beforehand.

Some questions parents ask include:

- Whether your teenager is invited;
- The number of expected guests and the level of adult supervision;
- Security arrangements if applicable;
- The serving of/ or permitting of alcohol at the party;
- The commencement and finishing of the party;
- Transport arrangements.

Some other things to consider include:

- Drive your teenager to the party and introduce yourself to the host and the host's parents. Don't be overridden by an embarrassed teenager.
- You may wish to take the opportunity to see the venue, the level of adult supervision, the presence of alcohol and drugs, the age of the guests and familiar faces..
- Ensure your child has your contact number or leave your contact number with the host. Make sure this number is accessible for the duration of the event.
- Confirm the pick up time and confirm this with your teenager before leaving them at the party.



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### 2. Hosting a Party

Most parties that go wrong are often poorly planned, disorganised, non-structured and go out of control. Parents who want to have a safe and enjoyable party should plan it properly; this will reduce the risk of potential problems, saving you difficulties later.

The more structured and controlled your party is the safer and more enjoyable for everyone. For instance have you thought of:

- Invitations - A Grammar parent explicitly discussed the consumption of alcohol as part of her invitation. Both the party guests and their parents were involved. A note was signed by the parents to confirm whether their children would be drinking or not. This, signed note, was used as the entry ticket to the party. Being upfront about these issues can save a lot of trouble later. It also contained contact details of guests in case of emergency.
- A controlled entry and exit point; the finish time and an exit / transport strategy, will you be allowing people to sleep over?
- Non-alcoholic drink alternatives and food;
- Adult / parent supervisors;
- Have you considered alternative activities so that drinking is not the only thing to do? Even big kids enjoy a bouncy castle.

Pre-planning is the best way to make your party a success. Talk with your child about the issues indicated above in the initial stages of planning so; they can understand that they have an important role and responsibility in organising a safe party. They may be aware of other parties that worked, or did not, and can assist in the planning.

#### Hosting a Party Checklist

The Queensland Police has an excellent website that provides a checklist of items for you to consider when hosting a party.

[http://www.police.qld.gov.au/Resources/Internet/programs/cscp/personalSafety/documents/Before\\_the\\_party.pdf](http://www.police.qld.gov.au/Resources/Internet/programs/cscp/personalSafety/documents/Before_the_party.pdf)

And other information re parties can be found on their website

<http://www.police.qld.gov.au/programs/cscp/personalSafety/youth/partySafe/checklist.htm>

You may also like to consider

#### **Transport**

- Consider how your guests will get to and from the party;
- Encourage parents to pick up their teenagers, this will reduce the chances that neighbouring properties will be damaged as guests walk home;
- Have taxi and bus details to hand;
- Organise a lift, car pool or designated drivers. One successful idea was for drivers to hand in their keys to the host reduces the risk of drunk driving.

#### **During the Party**

- If gate crashers arrive, act quickly by refusing entry and asking them to leave. If they won't leave tell them the Police will be called. Gate crashers are less likely if admittance is by invitation only. Remember you have the right to refuse entry to your property and it is an offence to trespass if you have refused entry.
- Have emergency numbers to hand and carry your mobile with you.



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- Don't spend all night in the kitchen. Prepare food so that you can mingle with the guests and deal with problems that might arise.
- Ensure that food and non-alcoholic drinks are available during the party.
- Locate bands and speaker systems away from neighbours and restrict noise after midnight.
- Plan a wind down time leading up to the end of the party. Consider serving a light breakfast, if the party is running into the early hours, before people depart.
- Make sure the family dog is secure and comfortable to avoid excessive barking.

Remember the Golden Rule –“Plan Beforehand”