

Teen Party Guidelines

Plan the activity with your teenager and discuss who is to be invited. Encourage small informal gatherings. For larger parties, written invitations discourage gatecrashers.

Have a definite start and end time. Plan your event around a specific activity – skating, swimming, rented movie, sporting event, cookout or theme.

Notifying neighbors in advance of a large party is a friendly gesture.

If asked, reassure parents that you will be home during the party.

For a large party, consider hiring an off-duty policeman or a responsible young adult to help with parking and to discourage uninvited guests.

Consider co-hosting a party with other parents or inviting other parents to help chaperone.

Discuss ground rules in advance with your teenager; then decide how these rules can be conveyed to guests.

Obtain the telephone number and address of the gathering and ask your teenager to call if there is a location change. Let your teen know where you can be reached at all times. It's a two-way street.

Call the host parent to ask about parental supervision and guidelines. This is not an issue of parent-teen trust, but recognition of the fact that there are unsupervised parties in the community.

Coordinate transportation to and from the party with your teen and other parents.

For teens of driving age, know who will be driving your teenager to and from the party. Ask your teen to contact you if there is any change in transportation or if he is not coming directly home from the scheduled party.

Let your teen know if she wishes to leave a party for any reason, including the presence of alcohol or drugs, she can call you, another designated adult or Safe Ride (869-8445). Have an understanding with your teen that there will be no questions asked and that she will not be grounded or prevented from going to future parties.

Ground Rules may include:

No drugs or alcohol.

No leaving the party and then returning (teens sometimes leave drugs or alcohol outside the house).

No gatecrashers allowed. Only one entrance/exit may be used. Have a responsible adult at the entrance/exit door.

Establish which areas of the house and grounds are off-limits. Beware that the yard and garage are potential problem areas.

Be home and circulate during the party. You may want to check off-limits areas frequently.

Contact the parents of a teen who is breaking the rules and ask them to come for their child. Anticipate situations, which might occur at parties and discuss specific ways of handling them with your teen.

Include your teenagers in gatherings where they can see adults having a good time without alcohol

Parent-Teen Cooperation Is Vital

Always know where to reach each other by phone.

Be awake (or ask to be awakened) when your teenager comes in at night – this can be an excellent opportunity for open communication.

Don't hesitate to set a curfew. Suggested ending times for teen events have been:

7th grade – 10:00pm

8th grade – 10:30pm

9th grade – 11:00 pm

10th-12th grade- 11:30 p.m.-12:30 a.m.*

*The risk of being hit by a drunk driver increases after 1 a.m. due to early morning bar closings, according to the Greenwich Police.

When you go away for a stretch of time, have a responsible house sitter in order to prevent impromptu, unsupervised parties.

Prepare your teenager for the possibility that uninvited "partying" guests may arrive when you are away. He should know where to reach you, another responsible adult or the police.

Make sure your home is not conducive to the use of alcohol. Lock the liquor cabinet, if you have one. Never leave liquor in open areas such as the garage.

Get to know the parents of your teenager's friends. Friendly, supportive relations among parents will pay dividends if problems arise.