

- It is vital that parents communicate with their teenagers and with other parents, regarding arrangements. They should insist on knowing the venue and should negotiate transport and time of arrival home. It is recommended that parents personally transport their son/daughter between venues.
- At some "After Parties", there is a cover charge and alcohol is sold. The sale of alcohol under the Liquor Licensing Provision is illegal to any person under 18 years of age.

Conclusion

It is important that young people be provided with supervised occasions in which to enjoy their social interactions.

It is hoped that these guidelines will help you to plan appropriately to ensure a successful party.

A safe party provides the opportunity for everyone to enjoy themselves, teenagers and adults. Without adequate planning and preparation, the level of fun for everyone is reduced. We encourage all families to follow the advice offered here and to enjoy the event.

Should you be organising a party or require further information, the following resources may be helpful:

NSW Safe Party Strategy	www.police.nsw.gov.au
Safe Partyng Guide	http://youth.frankston.vic.gov.au
Safe Partyng: 10 Tips for Parents	www.schoolparents.canberra.net.au
Celebrating Safely	www.celebratesafely.com.au
Hosting Teenage Parties	www.adf.org.au
Safe Partyng	www.youth.nsw.edu.au www.alcoholsummit.nsw.gov.au

A GUIDE TO SAFE PARTYING



New England Girls' school

The Armidale School



Presbyterian Ladies'
College, Armidale

These guidelines were compiled by members of New England Girls' School, The Armidale School and PLC Armidale, in keeping with the spirit of the three schools mission statements.

Introduction

From time to time, parents seek information and advice about managing parties or gatherings. There are considerable differences between families regarding what is thought to be appropriate at different stages of a student's development. The different expectations of teenagers and parents can create problems when managing parties and gatherings. A balanced social life is the ideal outcome for adolescents.

It is important that parents get to know their children's friends, and where possible, their parents.

Co-operation between families enables parents to feel comfortable when clarifying arrangements and helps to avoid misunderstandings about standards.

Careful planning is essential for a successful party or gathering. Some of these suggestions may seem extreme, but these guidelines attempt to cover some of the problems other parents have experienced. Be aware that the larger the party or gathering, the greater the risk of problems.

The application of these guidelines, while not exhaustive, will vary according to the circumstances in which the gatherings take place.

New England Girls' School, The Armidale School and PLC Armidale do not condone under age -drinking or smoking nor the use of illegal drugs.

Our schools do not consider the serving of alcohol at parties to school-age people to be appropriate or wise.

The guidelines on alcohol, smoking and illegal drugs are based on the Harm Minimisation approach.

New England Girls' School, The Armidale School and PLC Armidale do not accept responsibility for any injury, loss or damage suffered by a person arising out of, or as a result of the use of these guide lines, or any error in or omission from them.

Discuss with your child how they can manage social pressures and potential problems. Strategies may include:

- That he / she has a safe way to leave the party or gathering at any time.
- That he / she can contact you at any time.
- Advise your son / daughter against joining carloads of young people.
- Offer to pick him / her up.
- Discuss ways to avoid violent and threatening situations.
- Ask him / her to let you know of any change to his / her plans.
- Advise him / her to always get his / her own drinks and not to leave drinks unattended.
- If he / she intends to consume alcohol, to set an agreed limit to his / her drinking.
- He / she should eat before leaving home, and, if consuming alcohol, space his / her drinks with non-alcoholic drinks & food.
- If collecting your teenager, pre-arrange a pick up time.

After Parties

Although "After Parties" are not endorsed, encouraged, or organised by the schools, they have become popular events organised by students and/or parents after some major school functions.

- Parents should realise that "After Parties" are not an excuse to play by a different set of rules.
- "After Parties" are often a cause for concern. For the safety of your son / daughter it is important that all of the above guidelines still apply.

(eg. Observe guest constantly or ring for an ambulance or medical assistance). Alcohol and/or other substances consumed by young people can pose a great risk.

Ending the Party or Gathering

- If alcohol is available to your guests, ensure that the supply ceases at least 45 minutes before the designated finishing time.
- At the designated finishing time, stop the music.
- Parents should supervise the departure to avoid their guests congregating in the street. Preferably guests should only leave when transport is available.

Mobile Phones

Whilst mobile phones are useful for personal security, be aware that they are a very effective means for young people to communicate with others at different parties or gatherings to ascertain "where the action is", leading to potentially difficult situations.

It is essential for parents to be able to have telephone contact with a responsible parent at the party venue.

Attending a party or gathering

Parents should telephone the host parent regarding:

- Whether parents will be present at all times
- Precise start and finishing times
- Whether alcohol is to be served
- Transport arrangements
- Their contact phone number for the duration of the party or gathering
- Any other concerns

Hosting a Party

Legal Considerations

- Parents have a duty of care to teenagers under their supervision attending at their residence whether for a party or any other purpose.
- Parents are at risk of claims for damages if they fail to provide adequate adult supervision of minors and injury results.
- Although supplying liquor to minors in a residence is not an offence, it would be wrong to do so without the knowledge and prior consent of their parents.
- Where the venue is not a residence, it can be an offence to supply liquor to minors.
- It is wise to inform the local police of the address at which the party is to be held and invite a drive-by during the course of the evening.
- It is wise to obtain advice from the local police as to whether the proposed venue is located in a suburb or neighbourhood where there have been reports of forced intrusion or gate-crashing and to obtain advice on appropriate precautions.
- It is wise to check the public-liability component of your home insurance before agreeing to hold a party or gathering.

Invitations

- Make sure that invitations to private parties or gatherings are personal and in writing.
- Individualise and number the invitations – avoid ones that can be photocopied, faxed, emailed or put on the internet.
- Group invitations are not advisable.
- Decide whether or not partners should be invited. If so, both individuals could be named on the invitation.
- Give specific start & finish times appropriate for the age group.
- Consider the size of your function and how you will adequately supervise guests.

- Mail invitations.
- RSVPs are essential for compiling a list of those expected to attend (provide date and phone number).

Security

- Provide only on entry/exit point. There should be a responsible person at the door at all times. Invitations should be checked on arrival.
- Be mindful of security of personal possessions and property – extra adults to assist with supervision may be required.
- It is recommended that all bags be stored in one area and supervised by adults.
- Consider hiring a professional security service.
- Find out before hand which guests are being collected by parents and which require taxis.
- It is essential for supervising adults to circulate frequently and keep focus on the young people.

Drinks including Alcohol

(see legal considerations)

- Supply plenty of soft drinks and water.
- Consider age of guests, size of group and knowledge of your teenager's friends when deciding whether or not to allow alcohol.
- If you decide to allow alcohol, it is preferable for the host to supply it in order to maintain some control on the type and quantity.
- If alcohol is provided, it is important that this is mentioned on the invitation. Parents of under-aged guests need to be aware of this.
- If BYO, place strict limit on quantity and type brought by each guest, and be aware that this is extremely difficult to control.
- Whether alcohol is BYO or supplied, have a reasonable adult control the distribution at all times.
- Ensure substantial food is offered when alcohol is served.

- Be vigilant in monitoring consumption of alcohol to avoid any problems caused by drunkenness.
- Be alert to the possibility of interference with pre-poured drinks: whenever possible drinks should be provided or poured in the presence of the user from a freshly opened container.
- Avoid glass containers.

Smoking (see legal considerations)

- Consider whether or not cigarette smoking should be discouraged or forbidden. The hazards to health are well known.

Illegal Drugs (see legal considerations)

- Take particular care and vigilance to prevent situations where illegal drugs may be used, and be alert to changes in behaviour.
- Drugs and alcohol combined are particularly harmful and can lead to inappropriate and dangerous behaviour.

Entertainment

- Check with the local council to see if there are any by-laws controlling volume of music, general noise and time restrictions.
- Notify neighbours about the party or gathering, including start and finish times, to reduce the likelihood of any complaints.
- Be aware of age appropriateness of entertainment provided, including restricted viewing guidelines of any videos being shown.

Behaviour

- Consider the standards of behaviour you expect and stand firm about these expectations.
- Consider how to deal with a situation where a guest is behaving inappropriately (eg.call parents, isolate from main party or gathering call Police).
- In an uncontrollable situation develops don't hesitate to call the Police.
- If a guest is unwell, drunk, vomiting, etc. Contact the parents immediately. If the parents are unavailable, have contingency plans