

MICHAEL PARK SCHOOL GUIDELINES

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS WHO ARE HOSTING EVENTS/PARTIES FOR TEENS

Teens and Parties

Michael Park School does not encourage students having access to alcohol or drugs at parties or social events. However, we are aware that there may be occasions where parents choose to host parties and events where teens are present and alcohol will be available. This information is to support you in your decision making and event planning but is not intended for use as a comprehensive checklist or guidance on how to run a party.

If you are hosting a party for your teen, we advise that you prepare thoroughly and access the many resources available on line that give guidance to running a party. The suggestions below are provided to alert you to some of the possible areas that you may need to consider.

IF YOU ARE HOSTING A TEEN PARTY...

- **Plan in Advance.** Go over party plans with your teen. Encourage your teen to plan non-alcohol-related group activities.
- **Keep parties small.** 10 to 15 teens for each adult. Make sure at least one adult is present at the party at all times. Ask other parents to come over to help you if you need it.
- **Don't automatically trust your teen and their friends.** Many parents have been caught out because they wanted to show they 'trusted' their teen. You don't know what the guests will do even if your child is very reliable.
- **Have adults at the party.** Pick out a spot where you can see what is going on without being in the way. You can also help serve snacks and beverages. Always make sure you have adults in the same room as the party and the adults should be actively supervising.
- **Set a guest list.** The party should be for invited guests only. No "crashers" allowed.
- **Set starting and ending times for the party.**
- **Set party "rules" and your expectations.** Discuss them with your teen before the party. Rules should include the following:
 - Whether alcohol is allowed and what sort. Work out how you will monitor this, and how you will respond if there is intoxicated behaviour as teens will attempt to smuggle in non-approved drugs and alcohol.
 - No drugs including synthetic drugs e.g. synthetic cannabis that is currently available in dairies.
 - No one can leave the party and then return.
 - Lights are left on at all times.
 - Certain rooms of the house are off-limits (put away valuables).
- **Have plenty of food and non-alcoholic beverages available.** Make sure there is access to plenty of fresh water. Also, put your own alcohol and any prescription or over-the-counter medicines in a locked cabinet.
- **Have bouncers / security at the door.** Particularly if you are expecting a large number of guests or the party will be noisy. Noisy parties attract extras.

- **Know what you will do to identify and respond to people who are intoxicated or on drugs.**
Consider having contact numbers for parents of other teens attending so you can ring them if a teen's behaviour becomes a problem.
- **Identify safe transport options from the party.**

IF YOUR TEEN IS GOING TO A PARTY...

- **Know where your teen is going and how long he or she will be there.** Have the phone number and address of the party. Ask your teen to call you if the location of the party changes. Be sure to let your teen know where you will be during the party.
- **Call the parent of the party host** to make sure a parent will be home the entire time and supervising the party. Understand the rules around alcohol and check that other drugs will not be allowed.
- **Talk with your teen beforehand** about how to handle a situation where alcohol is available at a party.
- **Make sure your teen has a way to get to and from the party.** Make it easy for your teen to leave a party by making it clear that he can call at any time for a ride home. Discuss why he might need to make such a call. Remind your teen NEVER to ride home with a driver who has been drinking or using other drugs.
- **Ensure your teen eats a good sized meal before they go to the party.**
- **Be up to greet your teen when he comes home.** This can be a good way to check the time and talk about the evening.
- **Overnight stays:** If your teen is staying overnight at a friend's house after the party, verify this arrangement with the friend's parents and that they will be home.

Resources

www.nzdf.org.nz - NZ Drug Foundation

www.alcohol.org.nz

<http://www.youthlaw.co.nz/information/health-wellbeing/alcohol/>

<http://www.cads.org.nz/Sorted/PDF/guidelinesforsafedanceparties-thebigbook.pdf> - guidelines to run safe dance parties.