

# What Parents Can Do

1. Be your kids' greatest fan. Compliment them on all of their efforts, the strength of their character and their individuality.
2. Get your kids involved in adult-supervised after-school activities. Ask them what types of activities they're interested in and contact the school principal or guidance counselor to find out what activities are available. Sometimes it takes a bit of experimenting to find out what your kids are best suited for, but it's worth the effort-feeling competent makes kids much less likely to use drugs.
3. Help your kids develop tools they can use to get out of alcohol or drug related situations.
4. Get to know your children's friends and their parents. Call them and check to make sure they share in your views on alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.
5. Call kids' parents if their home is to be used for a party. Make sure that the party will be alcohol-free and supervised by adults.
6. Set curfews and enforce them. Let kids know the consequences of breaking curfew.
7. Encourage open dialogue with your children about their experiences. Make sure your children understand that they can ask you anything and that you will give them an honest answer.
8. Set a no-use rule for alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.
9. Sit down for dinner with your children at least once a week. Use the time to talk-don't eat in front of the TV.
10. Get-and stay-involved in your children's lives.

## **When You are Out of Town**

**When you go out of town the word gets out quickly!** It only takes about 10 seconds for information to spread around a school (at least it seems like that's all it takes!).

How do you keep your house from becoming a party house while you are gone? First of all it is important to realize that situations can quickly get out of hand even for the most responsible teenager.

**Many times a small select group of close friends turns into a large out of control beer bash.** A group of popular guys show up and how many teenage girls are going to be able to refuse to let them in? A little later, one goes out to the car and brings in a case of beer. Now you have the makings of a lot of trouble!!!

**Have a responsible adult live in your house while you are away.** Explain to them the family rules about parties. Inform your neighbors about your absence and ask them to contact you, the adult living in the house or the police if they see a party starting.

## **Safe Teenage Parties**

**The most important ingredient to a safe and fun party is the PARENT!**

You can help insure everyone at your child's party is safe if you follow this checklist.

1. Plan in advance and make sure there is a guest list. You want to avoid the "open party" situation
2. Make sure there are agreed upon rules ahead of time, for example
  - no drugs, including alcohol

- Some rooms in the house are off limits
  - No gate crashers
3. Are there responsible adults visible and aware? Remember it is illegal to serve alcohol to a minor (child under 21 years of age). The second offense in the State of Idaho is a felony! So make sure all the alcohol is locked up and don't let any backpacks into the party.
  4. Anyone who leaves the party should not be allowed to return. This will prevent people from leaving to go drink alcohol or use drugs and returning to the party.
  5. Notify your neighbors about the party and that it will be supervised.
  6. Plan to have plenty of food and not-alcoholic drinks.
  7. Plan activities ahead of time; movies, dancing etc.
  8. Discuss the party afterward with your teenager and share your observations and anything you feel you could have done better.

**What about when your teenager is attending a party at someone else's house?**

The first order of business is to **know where the party is**. Get an address and phone number and check to make sure they are correct. Don't fall into the old game of teenager 'A' says they are going to 'B's' house, 'B' says they are going to 'C's' house and so on. Make sure your child is where they are supposed to be. You might have to invest a little time but it will be worth it if it keeps your child safe.

**Talk in person to the parents of the child giving the party.** Offer to help supervise, verify the party and location, make sure the parents will be present the whole time, be certain there will be no alcohol or other drugs permitted.

**Plan transportation with your teenager.** Know how they will get to the party and home again. Arrange for an emergency ride if something happens and they need another ride home, yourself, a family friend etc. Discuss the dangers of getting into a car with someone who has been drinking alcohol or using drugs.

If you find out your teenager has been to a party where alcohol or drugs were present, it is important to **discuss the situation with the parents who were hosting the party**. Share your information with other parents so everyone is informed of the potential danger of letting their children go to a party there. Consider informing the police of the violations.

*D.A.R.E. envisions a world in which students everywhere are empowered to respect others and choose to lead lives free from violence, substance abuse, and other dangerous behaviors.*