

Teenage Parties

Having parties, being invited to parties and going to parties are all very important parts of the life of adolescents. But they can be a worry for parents.

What are parties all about?

Parties are for:

fun;

an opportunity to share;

a help for teenagers in making friends and being accepted by the group;

an opportunity to show off their friends to their family (please don't criticise their friends - even if they do wear their earrings in strange places);

an opportunity for parents to see their children growing up and socialising (you might be in for some nice surprises);

an opportunity to learn the skills of entertaining;

a celebration of milestones in growing up. Milestones need to be marked!

What parents can do

When your teenager is invited to a party, here are some things you might want to do:

Speak to the parents beforehand to make sure they will be at home.

Ask the parents if there will be alcohol at the party. Decide whether you think that it is appropriate for your teenager (you may have to make a decision based on health and safety which will be unpopular with your teenager in the short term).

Decide to pick up and deliver your teenager (and some of his friends).

Don't be afraid to go to the door when you collect your teenager. It is often acceptable to teenagers because they get to stay longer, and you get to meet parents (who may become friends). Going to the door when you drop them off can sometimes embarrass teenagers. However, you may need to if you are not sure whether the parents will be home.

Discuss with your teenager a time when you expect them to be home. Don't be too different from what other parents decide (talk it over with a friend who has teenagers if you feel unsure).

Check with your teenager that you are both clear about the rules (what is OK behaviour and what is not acceptable).

What your teenagers might expect to do

Decide what they will wear.

Have a say in what time they will come home.

Decide whether they want to go or not.

Go with someone. It is sometimes difficult for teenagers to go to parties alone. Make it possible for them to go and come home with a friend, even if it means going out of your way.

Sometimes have a friend to sleep over after the party – reliving the party can be half the fun.

Have a friend over so that they can get ready together.

Choose and buy the presents themselves if it is for a birthday party.

If your teenagers are older these responsibilities can gradually be taken over by the teenagers themselves. Eventually, they will be making their own decisions. Practise with you in the "passenger seat" is a good idea.

Parents have the right to remind older teenagers about being safe, such as not drinking and driving and not being alone in dangerous situations.

Parents have the right not to be worried and to be told of changes in plans such as homecoming time.

When your teenager is giving a party

If you have young teenagers, here are some things you could reasonably expect to do.
Older

teenagers might decide not to give a party with these same suggestions.

Work out with your teenager how many friends will invited and what time the party will end. Be specific on the invitations.

Expect visitors to obey house rules about smoking. Don't be too heavy handed when you talk to the teenagers about rules.

Take away alcohol. Watch out for bottles that look like soft drinks but are alcohol in disguise.

Warn the neighbours about noise beforehand and turn the noise off at midnight.

Keep an eye on proceedings without being obvious (e.g. bring in a plate of food occasionally).

Make sure the bedrooms (beds) are occupied by younger children and not available for party guests to sneak into.

Ask another couple (parents) over for moral support.

Teenage Parties

Occasionally, check the garden and boundaries.

Expect your teenagers to help prepare and clean up.

Expect your property to be respected (although accidents may happen).

Taken from Parent Guide #13