

# NEEDHAM YOUTH COMMISSION

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## PARENTS GUIDELINES FOR TEEN PARTIES

### *When your teen is having a party...*

-  **Plan in Advance**  
Check party plans with your teenager and know the guest list; if you agree with who is invited, you can curb an "open party" situation.
-  **Set a Time Limit**  
Set a definite start and end time. Consider daytime parties as an alternative to evening ones or plan an activity such as swimming, skating, or renting movies.
-  **Agree To Rules Ahead of Time**  
No drugs, including alcohol; No smoking; No leaving the party and returning; No gate crashers allowed; Lights should be left on; Some rooms in your house are off limits; etc.
-  **Know Your Responsibilities**  
Adults at a teenager's party should be visible and aware. Remember, it is illegal to provide drugs, including alcohol, to minors. You are legally responsible for anything that may happen to a minor who has been served drugs or alcohol in your home.
-  **Invite Another Parent Or Couple Over**  
Plan to stay home during the entire party. Other adults are company for you during a long evening and can help with any problems. If parents have driven teenagers to your house, you might consider inviting them in to meet you.

### *When your teen is going to a party...*

-  **Call The Host**  
Before giving consent that your teenager be allowed to attend a party, make sure of the basic rules, such as parental supervision and that no alcohol will be allowed.
-  **Check Party Plans Beforehand With Your Teenager**  
Know where your child is going and with whom. When taking your teenager to a party, wait to see that he/she is inside the house. If you don't know the host parents, introduce yourself.
-  **Make It Easy For Your Teenager To Leave A Party**  
Prearrange with your teenager to call you (or a designated adult) for a ride home, if there is drinking, drug taking or any reason that he or she wishes to leave the party. Urge your teenager never to ride with a driver who has been drinking. You might have an understanding that there will be no punishments or restrictions for a call letting you know that things are getting out of hand.
-  **Be Up to Greet Your Teenager When He/She Comes Home From a Party**  
Monitor and process with your child when they return from a party.

## **GENERAL ADVICE FOR PARENTS REGARDING ALCOHOL & DRUGS**

- ✚ Cooperate with the schools, law enforcement agencies, and youth to create a healthy atmosphere in which the use of alcohol and other drugs is no longer considered the "norm."
- ✚ It is a parent's responsibility to be home on the weekends or provide adult supervision.
- ✚ There is a difference between being nosy and being concerned---find your place as a concerned parent.
- ✚ If you are unable to deal with a misbehavior or problem, you may need some help. There are school personnel and town agencies available for professional advice.
- ✚ Youth like to be acknowledged when they have handled themselves well and expect to be dealt with when they have made mistakes. Be fair in giving out both praise and disciplinary action.

### **Suggested Hours For Ending Parties**

6th Grade	9:00 P.M.
7th Grade	9:30 P.M.
8th Grade	10:00 P.M.
9th & 10th Grade	11:00 P.M.
11th & 12th Grade	12:00 A.M.

### **Questions and Answers**

- Q. Are the police ever called out to assist at a party that is out of hand?**
- A. Yes. Most problems arise at parties involving youth and usually in situations where parents are absent. The two major problems are uninvited guests and the consumption of alcohol.
- Q. What are parents' responsibilities when their child has a party in their home?**
- A. Most parents are unaware of the law. Parents should know that criminal charges can be brought for serving alcohol to minors and for risking injury to minors. Penalties of up to one year in prison, fines ranging up to \$1,000, or both, may result if a parent is caught allowing minors to consume alcohol.
- Q. What advice would you give to parents who want to allow their child to have a party?**
- A. First, there must be parental supervision. Parents are legally responsible for what happens in their home. Second do not allow alcoholic beverages to be served. Limit the number of guests and let the party be "by invitation only." A word-of-mouth general invitation brings party crashers.