



party  
smart



# PARTY TIME!

A great party can be something everyone will enjoy and talk about for years afterwards. But a party that goes wrong will be talked about too, for all the wrong reasons.

No-one wants a bad party. The trick is to party smart.

Take a browse through the info in this booklet. There are a few simple steps you can take, before and during the party that'll help make it the great time we all want. It's for parents and supervisors as well as guests and teenage hosts.

Most of all, it's about having fun.

## BEFORE THE PARTY.

### TO PARTY OR NOT TO PARTY?

One of the very first questions to be addressed is whether to party or not at all. With some of the horror stories out there, it can be easy to say no to a party. Or, sometimes parents can say yes too quickly. So the first step is:

#### THINK IT THROUGH THEN TALK IT THROUGH.

If you're a parent, give yourself time to think before making a decision. Then talk through all the issues with the kids. Involve them. Get their buy-in. When you've reached an agreement, you can go forward together to make it happen.

Talk about things like whether alcohol will be served, how many guests should come, timing, and how much involvement of the parents is expected. You may not agree to start with, but these issues need to be raised right at the very start. At the end you should be able to :

#### SET THE GROUND RULES RIGHT AT THE START.

Once you've reached an agreement to have a party, and what rules you won't compromise on, the next step is planning.

## PLAN THE PARTY, (THEN PARTY TO THE PLAN.)

This is the first really important step to hosting a great party. Proper planning goes an awful long way to avoiding problems later on. The first thing to nut out is:

### THE GUEST LIST ISN'T A GUESS LIST.

Plan exactly who you'll invite, and make it a rule that anyone who is not invited does not get into the party. Send them a formal invitation in writing, and avoid systems like the internet or SMS systems. Tell invitees to bring their invitation, as well as having a RSVP register. Encourage guests not to invite other friends. Include definite start and finish times.

You wouldn't let just anyone into your home at other times, don't do it now.

### DECIDE ON THE DRINKS POLICY (AND STICK TO IT).

Few things cause as much concern (or lead to as much trouble) as uncontrolled drinking at parties. Hosts should decide, right up front, what the policy on drink should be before sending the invitations. You can then inform guests about what they can expect. For example:

- No BYO
- Drinks will only be served by an adult, not freely available.
- Intoxicated persons will not be given alcohol.
- Encourage designated drivers to be present.

Of course, under-aged drinking and drug taking of any sort is asking for trouble.

## PICK A VENUE AND SET IT UP

Most parties are at home, and they make great venues. If you are considering a larger party, you should also think about hiring a hall or room. Think about getting the right venue for the sort of party you're planning, and set it up to minimise trouble.

- Have only one official entry point, which is supervised (have other emergency exits).
- No 'pass outs' – no leaving and returning later.
- Keep the alcohol serving area small, away from the door and near to lots of food and alternate drinks.
- Allow a supervised place for smokers.
- Don't allow people to gather on front lawns or public spaces. No 'car parties.'
- Arrange a safe place for bags and coats.

## NOTIFY THE NEIGHBOURS.

It is good sense, and good manners, to tell your neighbours about the party you are planning. You can even invite them.

You should also consider notifying your local police station.

It is also sensible to check on the noise laws and general regulations for the area you are having a party in.



## DURING THE PARTY

Some tricks to a great party happen before the guests get in the door. It's important to:

### SET THE TONE AT THE DOOR.

Greet your guests, check their invitations. Set the tone of the party right at the start. After all, it's better to stop problems before they start than deal with them after. Some suggestions:

- Have guests arrive through a single entry point, and anyone who is not invited should be politely refused entry, whether they are gatecrashers or 'friends of a friend'. If people refuse to leave, tell them you will call the police.
- Enforce the no BYO rule; keep the alcohol where it can be collected later.

## SUPPLY FOOD AND DRINK (NOT DRINK AND DRINK)

A key to great parties is balance – a mix of food and drink, a mix of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, a mix of things to do and be involved in. Some tips for alcohol smart parties might be:

- Provide a range of attractive and fun non-alcoholic or light alcohol drinks.
- Encourage the first drink to be non-alcoholic.
- Provide a range of food for the night – not all salty snacks. Change it around, bring out platters of warm food; later do the rounds with cheeses or sweet nibbles.
- Don't have hosts spend all night 'locked away' from the party. Be seen. Be discreet, but be seen.
- Encourage designated drivers, or better still, provide them yourself. Being strict in not letting intoxicated people drive is a lot better than getting worse news the next day.

## WINDING DOWN

Sometimes, the most dangerous times at a party are at the end of a night. You can minimise the risks if you have a clear plan to end the party. Consider:

- Make sure everyone knows what time the party will end, and arrange transport in advance for those that need it.
- Stop serving alcohol an hour before the scheduled end time (a last orders call).
- Start serving tea/coffee and good late-night foods.
- Wind down the music and get lights on twenty minutes before the departure time.

A good 'exit strategy' is as important as planning a smart party.

## IF THINGS GO WRONG – BE FIRM BUT FAIR.

If, despite your best intentions and planning, things start to go wrong – don't panic. React, but don't over-react. Act quickly, be firm with the person causing the problem, and avoid escalating a confrontation. Try talking to the person on their own, avoid put downs, don't touch, and explain that you're just trying to help everyone have a good time. Handling problem people is never easy, but firm, fair dealing may avoid something worse.

## IF THINGS GET WORSE – HAVE A BACK-UP PLAN.

If the planning and strategies above don't help, or something truly unexpected happens, like numerous aggressive gatecrashers, have a back-up plan ready for action.

This should include:

- More than one responsible host who can deal with a situation.
- A first aid kit stocked and on-hand.
- The availability of a car and driver.
- The numbers for all emergency services close at hand, including the police, poisons, and drug info lines.
- A plan to clear the building through multiple exits.

If, despite all this, things look even remotely like they will get out of hand – **CALL THE POLICE.**

Remember, at this stage you've done everything you can to make sure everyone has a great time, partying smart. But there are some situations where you should not hesitate to involve experts. Sometimes, the threat of police involvement is enough to deter any further mishap.

# PARTY SMART.

So that's it; simple tips from planning to preparation to party time and after – to help you party smart. Here it is in a nutshell, along with some important numbers:

## BEFORE THE PARTY

THINK IT THROUGH THEN TALK IT THROUGH.

SET THE GROUND RULES RIGHT AT THE START.

PLAN THE PARTY, (THEN PARTY TO THE PLAN.)

THE GUEST LIST ISN'T A GUESS LIST.

DECIDE ON THE DRINKS POLICY (AND STICK TO IT).

PICK A VENUE AND SET IT UP SMART

NOTIFY THE NEIGHBOURS.

## DURING THE PARTY

SET THE TONE FROM THE START

SUPPLY FOOD AND DRINK (NOT DRINK AND DRINK)

BE DISCREET BUT SEEN

WINDING DOWN – LAST ORDERS PLEASE

ARRANGE TRANSPORT

IF THINGS GO WRONG – BE FIRM BUT FAIR.

IF THINGS GET WORSE – HAVE A BACK-UP PLAN.

## STANDARD DRINKS



= 1 glass of  
champagne  
(100ml)



= 100ml of red  
or white wine



= 2/3 bottle of  
alcoholic soda



= 1 middy of full  
strength beer  
(285ml)



= 1 stubbie of  
light beer



= 2/3 can of  
pre-mixed spirits



= 1 nip of spirits  
(30ml)



= 2/3 stubbie of  
full strength  
beer

# LOW RISK DRINKING

## NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR ADULTS

	standard drinks	
	Men	Women
on average up to per day	4	2
an occasional maximum of	6	4
on any one day (no more than 3 days per week). 1 – 2 alcohol-free days per week.		

## SMART DRINKING

The key to a good party where alcohol is served is smart drinking, not hard drinking.

Opposite is a guideline for low-risk consumption. The thing to watch out for at parties is binge drinking. Binge drinking means more than 6 standard drinks in a sitting for guys, or more than 4 standard drinks for girls. Apart from the obvious risks to safety and security at your party, bingeing can lead to gastro-intestinal problems, headache, nausea, sleeping disorders, depression and sexual impotence. At extremes it will lead to acute intoxication and alcoholic 'poisoning' or overdose, leading to unconsciousness and even death\*. That's not smart.

Help your guests, and yourself, have a great night by observing smart drinking guidelines.

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Jot down important local numbers here

Local Police .....

Local Hospital .....

Poisons Centre .....

Drug Info Line .....

Local Taxi.....

In an emergency, please call 000.

