



Parties at home

PLANNING STAGE:

Work with your group of friends/parents and decide firstly what kind of party you will have, the venue, how many people you will invite, what's your budget, how much do you want to be involved and are there any laws you need to keep in mind.

This is a really important stage – discuss and agree on everything and if you want – write it down – so there are no tannies on the night!

REGISTERING:

You should register your party with the Police whether it's at a hall or home. Visit your local station and ask for a Party Safe Registration Form. Details about how many people will be attending, start and finish times and a range of other information will be required on the form

If you let them know a couple of weeks before your function, they will roster on enough staff to drive past your place and make sure everything is okay. If something goes wrong at your party you can call them, they know where you are immediately and will get to you as quickly as possible. Also, they are aware of the set up of the party and who is who when they get there.

THE LAW REGARDING SUPPLY:

In November 2011 a new law regarding adults supplying alcohol to young people was implemented.

“Adults are no longer permitted to serve alcohol to a person under 18 unless their parent or guardian has given permission.”

For more information click here <http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/teendrinkinglaw>

INVITATIONS:

Most young people will prefer to invite by Facebook or Text Message.

Make sure the Facebook event is a Private event, do not allow guests invited to bring a “plus one” and mention the following things on the event:

1. Party is registered with the Police
2. Invitation Only – guest list
3. Security present.
4. No Pass Outs.

If you are preparing written invitations:

Ideally your invitations will be as unique and as “unphotocopyable” as possible. Young people will sometimes get hold of invitations, photocopy multiples and hand them out. If this happens you will have no idea how many people could arrive at your party.

I presented my program in Mildura and a parent told me of an 18th birthday being held at a local hall. Around 100 people were invited, however some young people photocopied the invitation and 1500 copies were circulated. Over 800 people showed up at the hall! The whole thing was totally out of control – drunken people everywhere, fences broken, fights, burn outs in cars etc

On your invitations think about having:

- ❖ What the function is for
- ❖ Start time
- ❖ Finish time
- ❖ Name of invited guest only – i.e. not ‘Sonya and guests’.
- ❖ If you will serve alcohol or not (so parents can decide whether they will allow their child to attend and give permission (See Law Regarding Supply).
- ❖ RSVP – so you will know exact numbers.
- ❖ Dress code
- ❖ Whether you will allow people to BYO.
- ❖ Request that the invitee bring the invitation to gain entry
- ❖ No pass outs – meaning you will not allow young people to leave and then come back to the party.

HOME:

Let your neighbours know you are having a party.

Have one entry and exit point – only. Preferably it would be the same. Gatecrashers will look for an alternative way in.

Have a relative or trusted friend eg. ‘Uncle Bob’ (who is 6 foot 47 & built like the proverbial) on the front door checking invitations. Uncle Bob will remain sober so he can make judgements about who to let in. If a person is intoxicated, or doesn’t have an invitation, then he would refuse admission.

If you want to hire security - look up “Security” in the yellow pages and search for a company who advertises crowd controllers. **You** tell the security what you want them to do and what behaviour you will accept from them and from guests. Have a plan together to combat any negative situations from arising.

Remember this – “your house, your rules”.

If people try bringing in alcohol and you don’t feel comfortable with this – tell them you will put it into the cloak room and they can pick it up on the way out. You don’t

want people bringing in alcohol or drugs – or worse still taking alcohol or anything else out!!

Any backpacks or large bags you suspect may be holding alcohol – check them into the ‘cloak room’ – a room where their property will be safe and no-one can access without your permission.

A parent I spoke to had an 18th for her son. She provided the alcohol. The guests all arrived with backpacks and had one drink and put one in their backpack! She was upset because she thought she had plenty of drinks. She realised the young people all left with their backpacks full of alcohol she'd paid for!

ALCOHOL:

Decide if you want to have it at all. There are heaps of ways you can still have a great party and not have alcohol.

If you do allow it – then **you** decide whether you let people bring it themselves or provide it for them (SEE NEW LAW INFORMATION ABOVE).

Providing alcohol for your guests can be expensive – but it's a way of controlling how much goes out and when it stops.

If you serve it – then it needs to go out from **one place only**. You may like to have Uncle Ben who is Uncle Bob's brother and he is 6 foot 57 and built like a twin door fridge serving the alcohol. He also stays sober. He will have an idea of what an intoxicated person looks like –and will be quite confident to refuse further service. Some people prefer to use wrist bands to determine whether they are permitted to consume alcohol according to the new supply laws.

Actively promote soft drink, mocktails and low alcohol beverages too – light beer, ½ shot drinks & cocktails.

Make sure you serve standard drinks so if someone is monitoring their consumption – they will know exactly what they've had.

Keep in mind:

- ❖ You have to make sure that everyone at your party leaves safely from your property. You have a duty of care for a reasonable distance from your house. Make sure they have a cab or a lift or a safe way of getting home. If something happens to them and they were given alcohol at your house – guess who their parents are going to sue?
- ❖ Police may get involved for a range of things – noise issues, drunk and disorderly behaviour outside your property, property damage.
- ❖ If you are going to allow alcohol to be served to under 18's – you should ensure you have their parent's permission.

About an hour before the party finishes, stop serving alcohol and actively promote coffee, tea, soft drink and dessert.

What do you do if someone drinks too much?

Stop serving them alcohol.

Offer water (allow them to sip it slowly).

Remember that alcohol will leave the body over time – you cannot do anything to make a person sober.

Keep an eye on them.

Recovery position and call an ambulance immediately if the person loses consciousness.

Make sure they have a safe way home.

FOOD:

Have plenty of food and ensure that it is low or no salt. Salt makes you thirsty and encourages more drinking.

Food slows down the absorption of alcohol into the system – so full tummies means less likelihood of over intoxication.

Food is a good way of allowing you to monitor what is happening at the party. As you serve the food to guests – you get to see what's going on!

ENTERTAINMENT:

Music – singing comps, Karaoke (believe it or not).

Make sure the emphasis is not on drinking all the time.

Make sure games do not involve alcohol.

GETTING HOME:

Have taxi's called to come at about the time the party ends. Don't let everyone congregate outside your home – this can be extremely dangerous especially if any of your guests are intoxicated and stumble out onto the road.

When the taxi arrives, get the drivers name and taxi number before putting your guests in the cab. This does two things

- ❖ The cab driver knows you have their details (and is less likely to act inappropriately).
- ❖ If something happens on the way home – you have the drivers' information to give to the Police.

Wherever possible check the person driving your guest home isn't intoxicated.

CHECKLIST

- Is the party registered with the Police
- Laws re secondary supply (see above)
- Security – Google providers
- Invitations
- Permission from parents of under 18 year olds
- Wrist bands if serving alcohol
- Low alcohol alternatives
- No alcohol beverages
- Guest list decided and confirmed
- Food
- One entry/exit point
- Gatecrasher plan
- Safety check of house – no dangerous items
- Possessions secured
- Friends/family/helpers enlisted
- Entertainment confirmed
- Emergency Numbers handy
- Taxi's ordered for end of party
- Noise restrictions noted
- Neighbours notified
- First Aid Kit
- Enjoy!!

The above measures are strategies to employ to try and prevent problems. Most parties are wonderful occasions where nothing at all goes wrong – so remember to.....Have fun!!!

Also – these are not hard and fast rules – just my suggestions to try and make your party enjoyable and a bit safer!