

LOCATION: Sometimes parties end up 'moving'. Make sure that you know where your teenager is and, should the party location change, make it a rule that they let you know.

SLEEPOVERS: Very often sleepovers are part of a party. It's always a good idea to meet with the parents of the youth who is having the party, and check the sleeping arrangements, and if there is a curfew time and how it is going to be invoked.

BACK-UP: You can help them to cope with situations that get out of hand, if you arrange before hand some simple strategies:-

- A buddy. Encourage them to go with a friend or buddy – and to look out for each other throughout the party.
- A "safe" word or sign. If they get into trouble or want to leave, being able to communicate the urgent need for your help can save them from losing face in front of their friends.
- A mobile phone with credit for use in an emergency.

While your teenager is out partying, there should be someone who will be available to be called upon if they need help – no matter what time or what happens. If your teenager calls you for help, no matter what time, be available, understanding and calm. Unless your teenager is clearly distressed, the time for questions is the next day, after a good night's sleep.



EVEN WITH THE BEST PARENTS IN THE WORLD, YOUNG PEOPLE CAN STILL GET INTO TROUBLE

WHEN THINGS GO WRONG

Most teenagers will experiment with alcohol and getting it wrong is not uncommon.

While some young people may periodically drink heavily, most get through it okay!

WHAT IF YOUR TEENAGER ...

- goes to a party when you have forbidden it?
- steals alcohol from your drinks cupboard?
- comes home drunk, vomiting?
- is completely wasted and you have to collect them from a party?

Remember ...

- Go back to any agreements you had made earlier. If consequences were agreed upon, they must be carried out. Give them the opportunity to explain what happened.
- Don't try to reason with a drunken teenager. Wait until the morning when they are sober and you are less angry.
- Explain to them why their behaviour is unacceptable to you and how you feel about it.

If your teen does get very drunk, is unconscious or vomiting continuously, don't leave them alone. Put them on their side in the recovery position, make sure they are breathing and their mouth is empty. Keep them warm.

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO WAKE THEM, DIAL 111 FOR AN AMBULANCE IMMEDIATELY.

If you are concerned that your teen has a drinking problem, seek out professional help and advice. **The Alcohol Drug Helpline** is a great place to start and is free to phone between 10am and 10pm daily on **Ph 0800-787-797**.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand – ALAC - www.alac.org.nz

Now part of the Government's Health Promotion Agency. The website provides access to a wide range of alcohol-related resources and information.

New Zealand Drug Foundation - www.drugfoundation.org.nz

Their free Drugs in Focus booklets are aimed at parents, older teenagers, treatment workers, schools, public health units and other agencies needing good, factual and honest drug information. These can be ordered from their website, which also has a range of alcohol and drug related information.

www.parentingstrategies.net

Free personalised online parenting strategies designed to prevent adolescent alcohol misuse.

www.teentools.co.nz

A site that gives parents tools, guidelines and local contacts to assist in your children having a safe and happy journey through the teenage years.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND FURTHER READING

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¹⁰ ALAC website <http://www.alac.org.nz/alcohol-you/your-drinking-okay/low-risk-alcohol-drinking-advice>

¹¹ "Booze death warning to parents". The New Zealand Herald, Wednesday Apr 20, 2011.