

PARTY SMART: Avoiding Party Meltdowns

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PARTY SMART: AVOIDING PARTY MELTDOWNS

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INTRODUCTION

The overwhelming presence of alcohol in our world is undeniable, from sex-laden ads for beer to movies and television shows that portray underage drinking as the norm. It's no wonder young people are using alcohol more than ever. In fact, on average, children in the United States now take their first drink at age 12. Nearly 20 percent of 12- to 20-year-olds say they have binged on alcohol, or had four or five drinks in a row.

One of the most disturbing aspects of this underage drinking trend is the damage that alcohol is doing to developing minds. According to the Connecticut Coalition to Stop Underage Teen Drinking, the hippocampus, an area of the brain that controls memory and learning, is ten percent smaller in teens who abuse alcohol. Adults would have to consume twice as much alcohol to cause similar damage. Underage drinking also causes chemical changes that can "hardwire" the teen brain for addiction. People who begin drinking before age 15 are four times as likely to become alcoholics as those who begin after age 21. Even occasional episodes of heavy drinking can cause serious damage, like the drinking that frequently occurs at teen parties.

How are alcohol and other drugs affecting these parties? Statistics help us identify the risk factors that go up when alcohol or drugs are present. Underage drinking increases the likelihood of a teen engaging in risky sexual activity, which can lead to pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Underage drinking and experimenting with drugs also increases the chance of sexual assault and rape. In addition, teens who drink are at a substantially higher risk for drowning, fires, violent incidents and accidents of all kinds. Alcohol, when combined with depression and stress, is also a major factor in suicide, playing a role in more than 60 percent of all teen suicides. And most disturbingly, 10,000 16- to 24 year-olds die from alcohol-related car crashes each year, and more than 4,000 young people die annually as a result of alcohol poisoning.

Although selling or providing alcohol to anyone under 21 is illegal in all 50 states, teens still say they get 65 percent of their alcohol from adults. Much of this booze finds its way to parties, where adults may or may not be present. Although states are beginning to crack down on adults who allow underage drinking, much of the responsibility still rests on young people.

When it comes to other drugs besides alcohol, the consequences of bad decision-making are just as bad, and often worse. Each year thousands of teenagers are rushed to the ER with severe injuries due to drug-related fights, accidents, car wrecks and overdoses. Additionally, with the increasing incidences of teens having their drinks secretly spiked with "date rape" drugs such as Rohypnol and GHB, it is crucial that all young people understand that their safety depends upon using common sense and being aware of hidden dangers.

The video program *Party Smart: Avoiding Party Meltdowns* and its accompanying Teacher's Resource Book were designed to arm young people with the facts and skills needed to make healthy decisions about drugs, alcohol and parties.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After watching the video *Party Smart: Avoiding Party Meltdowns* and participating in the class activities included in this Teacher's Resource Book, your students will be able to:

- understand how using alcohol and other drugs can lead to serious problems for teens
- understand the laws that govern unsupervised parties for teens as well as the legal consequences for parents
- explore ways to confront problem situations at parties, both as a host and a guest
- recognize the responsibilities of hosting or attending a party
- work with classmates and family members to plan safe and responsible drug-free parties
- demonstrate assertive communication and refusal skills when dealing with party situations that could be dangerous
- practice SMART Party guidelines, designed to keep hosts and guests safe
- learn ways to have fun at parties without using drugs or alcohol
- identify the signs of alcohol poisoning and learn what to do if they see them
- examine their own attitudes toward alcohol and other drugs

PROGRAM SUMMARY

The video begins with a montage of shots showing young people at a party. Guests are drinking alcohol, using drugs, passing out and wreaking havoc on the teenage host's house. As the host's parents arrive, it's clear that they are furious about what's going on. Then the police arrive and handcuff the parents. The title *Party Smart: Avoiding Party Meltdowns* appears.

Next, the title *Jonathan* appears on a black screen. Jonathan's mother, Dede Mraz, tells viewers, "It's something that doesn't go away. You wake up the next morning and it's still there." Viewers see pictures of Jonathan at school dances, on the football field and with teen friends. His mom describes the night that he attended a party where alcohol was served. The mother of other teens was present. Jon arrived with beer, and according to his mom, "He drank maybe eight beers and at least five shots of rum." Some time later, he disappeared. Concerned, Jon's mom called her older son, Nathan, who took a flashlight and went looking for his brother. The mother explains what happened later. "Nathan came to my door in hysterics that evening with a police officer."

Detective Keith Guerra of the Greenburgh Police Department says, "In our area, the number of underage drinking parties has increased." Fellow detective John Graves agrees, explaining how parties have recently moved from wooded areas and school properties to parties at home.

Jeanine Pirro, District Attorney of Westchester County, says, "Kids can't believe that if they're in a home, they're going to be protected from law enforcement. That's not true at all." She says that officers who have probable cause to believe drugs or alcohol are present at a party can get a search warrant and even break into a home. "You're not in a bubble just because you're in a private home."

Next, a narrator appears to discuss how thousands of young people end up in the emergency room each year because of alcohol-related accidents and crimes that occur at parties. These incidents include things like alcohol poisoning, car wrecks, overdoses and date rape. A second narrator points out that parents often take the legal blame, since they are legally responsible for what goes on in their home.

Real teenagers then discuss parties that have gotten out of control because of drugs or alcohol. They describe the scary consequences of these unplanned parties, including violence, property damage and frightening levels of intoxication.

At this point, the narrators begin their discussion of SMART Party concepts by explaining what to do when *You're the Host*. The narrators remind viewers that, "Your home is your parents' home. Parents must bear the legal and financial burden of whatever happens there." Young people who plan parties at home should also know the legal consequences of allowing alcohol or drugs on the premises.

The District Attorney says, “If parents wink and nod, or pretend they don’t see alcohol, they can still be held civilly and legally responsible.”

We return to the story of Jonathan. His mother explains that the woman who allowed the drinking to take place just wanted her kids to be popular and have fun. She explains that Jonathan was discovered by a neighbor walking home highly intoxicated. He found some railroad tracks that led to his house and was trying to walk home on the tracks when a train struck and killed him.

According to the narrators, the first tip for planning a safe party is to include parents. Inform them of everything that is going to happen. An adult chaperone is key to a successful, safe party. A good rule of thumb is to have one chaperone for every ten kids invited. Not having a chaperone is the number one cause of problems at teen parties.

The narrators then explain a list of questions that should be asked while planning a party, such as “When’s it going to happen?” “How many people are invited?” and “What parts of the house will be used?” They also suggest mailing or emailing guest lists instead of offering open invitations. Guests should also be encouraged to bring their invitations with them to the party. Neighbors should be included in the planning process, too, since the party will be happening on their street.

The narrators also suggest keeping out all gate crashers, something that is easiest to do if there is an adult chaperone at the entrance to the party. A solid list of house rules should be explained to every guest before the party begins. Think carefully about which rooms will be open to guests and make sure that “off limit” spaces are clearly communicated. Valuables should also be placed in an area that is secure or locked.

Of course, the most important rule is that no alcohol, drugs or weapons should be allowed. The narrators repeat the warning that parents could be held responsible, even if they don’t know that alcohol is being served at the party. They also mention keg registration laws, which are meant to prevent adults from buying beer and providing it to minors. The experts explain that young people and their parents can both be charged with a crime if they provide alcohol to other minors.

Weapons should never be allowed at a party, and you should never be tempted to bring a weapon of any kind to a party. As Detective Graves explains, some young people think a weapon will make them look cool, and they never actually plan to use it. But this mindset is the same as flirting with disaster. The narrators continue by discussing the importance of keeping drugs away from parties. Since drugs can sometimes be sneaked in, it pays to keep a keen eye on all guests.

The section entitled *What Should You Do?* offers advice on what to do when party guests ignore the rules or when something unexpected happens. The narrators suggest going to the

chaperone immediately with any problems. Emergency numbers should always be handy. If anyone is suspected of drinking alcohol or using drugs, they should not be allowed to drive under any circumstances.

The section titled *When You're the Guest* discusses what party guests should do before and during a party. The narrators ask viewers to remember that they are responsible for their own actions and behaviors at a party. It's important to always respect other guests, as well as the owners of the property where the party takes place. Teens give examples of this from their own experiences.

The narrators also encourage party guests to get all the facts before attending. Who will be there? Who will chaperone? When will the party be over? Why is the party being held? These are important questions to think about in advance. The detectives remind viewers of the consequences of not thinking ahead. Attending a party where alcohol is served can lead to legal problems that include possibly being called to community court or family court. The detectives also explain how answering questions about a crime on job applications can harm a young person's future.

Young people should also communicate with their parents about when they will leave the party, how they will get home safely and what time they expect to be home. Giving parents the address of the party and a phone number is also important, in case of an emergency.

It also helps to make a pact with a friend before going to a party, with both friends agreeing to watch out for each other the entire time. Both should also make sure the other finds a safe way home.

The narrators go on to explain that parents should be informed of all parties, including those that take place at school, like proms and other dances. They discuss the dangers and consequences of bringing alcohol to school events. One girl says she wants to be able to look back on her prom and remember it 20 years from now. Other teens say that most students don't want to be drunk at their prom. The narrators talk about teens who try to get drunk before school events by drinking large quantities of alcohol, a dangerous choice that can result in alcohol poisoning, coma or death.

A graphic lists information that should be left with parents before attending any party, including who is chaperoning and where the party takes place. The narrators discuss the serious dangers of drinking and driving, or accepting a ride from someone who has been drinking. Teens talk about the importance of a "No Questions" contract. By committing to this contract, teens and their parents agree that the teen can call for a ride, with no questions asked until the next morning.

Jonathan's mom says that it's important to think carefully about your decisions. She explains how the shock of losing her son took weeks to comprehend. "He always said, Mom, don't worry. I'm smarter than that. That won't happen to me."

Next the narrators describe the illness and death that result each year from teens unknowingly drinking substances like GHB and Rohypnol that have been sneaked into their drinks. The narrators stress how important it is to never drink from an open can and to never put a drink down once it has been poured.

Detective Graves encourages viewers to be individual thinkers. “You always have a choice,” he says. “You can always turn around and walk back out.”

The narrators conclude by summarizing the importance of planning a SMART Party:

SMART Party Guidelines

Stay safe	Don't allow or bring drugs, alcohol, tobacco or weapons.
Make a plan	Work with parents and make sure they have info.
Ask questions	Find out where, when, who and why of party.
Respect the rules	Respect your own rules or those of the host.
Think fun	That's what parties are all about.

Real teens conclude the show by talking about the importance of having safe parties. One asks friends who claim they can't have fun without alcohol, “How did you have fun when you were a little kid?” Others agree that there are better ways to enjoy parties. They give examples of what they enjoy doing. As the program ends, a narrator reminds viewers that parties can be fun, safe and smart.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Name: _____

1. On average, when do children in the United States take their first drink?
A) age 21
B) age 12
C) age 17
D) age 15
2. A driver under 21 can have his/her license confiscated for a blood alcohol level of:
A) 0.08
B) 0.05
C) 0.01
D) all of the above
3. Empty alcohol bottles in a car are not treated the same legally as open containers.
A) true
B) false
4. Only the driver is subject to legal action if a car is stopped and charged for open alcohol containers.
A) true
B) false
5. If you are alert, you can taste the “date rape” drug spiked into your drink.
A) true
B) false
6. Underage drinking in a private home is perfectly legal.
A) true
B) false
7. Parents can be held responsible for the illegal acts of their children who are 18 or older.
A) true
B) false
8. It takes 5 or 10 years to become addicted to alcohol.
A) true
B) false
9. If a friend seems alcohol poisoned, you should:
A) not leave him/her alone
B) call 911
C) place friend on his/her side
D) all of the above
10. Keeping a fake ID or driver’s license is a problem, even if you don’t use it.
A) true
B) false

Name: _____

Answer Key

- 1. B**
- 2. D**
- 3. B**
- 4. B**
- 5. B**
- 6. B**
- 7. A**
- 8. B**
- 9. D**
- 10. A**

Name: _____

A party with tons of rules and guidelines may not sound like fun. But some rules need to exist to make the party a success for everyone. For this activity, improve the SMART Party Guidelines below. Personalize each one to make it more fun. Find a creative way to help partygoers know that you have their best intentions in mind. The first one is done for you.

SMART Party Guidelines

Discourage gate crashers from attending.

Designate a party guest who is good with people to be the Gate Keeper. Give this person a special reward for taking the responsibility to speak with crashers at the door (a special food treat or a goofy prize). Encourage the Gate Keeper to explain to others that he/she is there to help keep guests safe.

Make the party invitation only.

Let everyone know in advance that there will be no alcohol, drugs, tobacco or weapons.

Include parents in the planning and in the party.

Involve other friends and their families.

This activity continues on the next page.

Name: _____

Choose a location that is safe, familiar and small enough to control.

Settle on an ending time.

Decide on a theme or reason for having the party.

Plan party activities that are fun and safe.

Have plenty of food.

State that all beverages will be provided.

Check bags at the door.

SMART Party Guidelines

- Stay safe—** No drugs, alcohol, tobacco or weapons allowed.
- Make a plan—** Work with parents and make sure they have info.
- Ask questions—** Find out the where, when, who and why of the party.
- Respect the rules—** Respect your own rules or the rules of the host.
- Think fun—** That's what parties are all about.

How do you follow the SMART Party guidelines without looking like a know-it-all or a party-pooper? Here's your chance to make SMART Parties the new trend at your school. By starting a SMART Party Club, you can help your school get party smart.

1. Get a group of volunteers together to start a SMART Party Club at your school. Ask a few teachers to serve as leaders.
2. Find a way to spread the SMART message and get people curious about what it means. Design a SMART logo and put it on posters, T-shirts or buttons. (Have a bake sale or other fundraiser to pay for the materials.)
3. Print up colorful flyers that explain the SMART Party guidelines. Pass them out and talk to people about what they mean.
4. Plan and host a SMART party at least once a month. Invite different groups from your school (different homeroom classes, different clubs, etc.). Keep the guest lists small, but give everyone an opportunity to attend a party. Having small guest lists will make people more interested in getting invited.
5. Recruit new SMART Club members at each party. Find people who are willing to stick by the SMART Party guidelines (have them sign the *SMART Party Contract* fact sheet). Ask them to help host future parties.
6. Watch the SMART Party trend take off!

Name: _____

Following SMART Party guidelines can be an art. If you're worried about labels like *stuffy*, *boring* or *goody-goody*, this activity can help. For each line below, write a thoughtful response that explains your point of view without seeming heavy-handed. If you think about your views ahead of time, it's easier to express them clearly.

“Why even bother having a party if you're not gonna have booze?”

“Why tell your folks about it? Just let them enjoy their vacation. They'll never know.”

“You mean there's going to be parents there? Whose great idea was that?”

“I heard you didn't invite Steve and those guys. What's up?”

“I heard your party was invitation only. Can I bring a few guys I met at work?”

“I can't even bring my backpack in? Don't you trust me?”

“Can I just slip into the kitchen and spice up the beverages?”

“No closed doors? Are we in kindergarten or what?”

Name: _____

When you're invited to a party, you have the right to ask questions. (Just think of the lives that have been wrecked because of one unsafe party.) What if someone answered your questions with comments like the ones below? What would you say? Think about it now and you'll be fast on your feet later.

“Why do you care if my parents are going to be there? You know I always give great parties.”

“You sure are asking a lot of questions. What's up?”

“The party might move downtown if things get slow. There's this apartment where we can crash. That's cool, right?”

“It's at this guy's house. I don't really know his family, but he seems okay. Wanna go?”

“Hey, I don't like to plan things where parties are concerned. Whatever happens, happens.”

“I don't know if there will be beer, pot or whatever. Just depends on who shows up.”

“Here. I got you a refill.”

“I can drive you home. I just had a few beers, and that was a long time ago.”

Name: _____

STICKY PARTY SITUATIONS — HOST

For each situation below, list two possible solutions—one using your own resources and the other using an adult at the party. Try to make the solutions reasonable and respectful, while placing your safety and the safety of your friends first.

1. Joe and Kia are talking quietly at your party. Joe seems to be hitting on Kia pretty strongly. She has been drinking beer and now she’s giggling a lot. Later, they disappear. You notice that your parents’ bedroom door is closed.

With adult:

Without adult:

2. Bo brings a large plastic water bottle to your party. He says it’s just a sports drink, but you’re not convinced. A few minutes later, he slips into the kitchen where the punch bowl is.

With adult:

Without adult:

This activity continues on the next page.

Name: _____

STICKY PARTY SITUATIONS — HOST

3. You told your friends the party was by invitation only, but your friend Cheri shows up with her college boyfriend and two of his fraternity brothers. They're already drunk when they arrive.

With adult:

Without adult:

4. Most people have already left your party and you're ready to call it quits. But Sid and his friends want to stay. They're so hyped up, you wonder if they took some kind of stimulant drug.

With adult:

Without adult:

This activity continues on the next page.

Name: _____

STICKY PARTY SITUATIONS — HOST

5. Ty shows up looking for a fight with his ex-girlfriend and her new guy. You know he usually carries a knife in his back pocket, and you're worried there might be trouble.

With adult:

Without adult:

6. Was it easier to handle the situations yourself or with an adult present? Explain.

7. Summarize one good reason to have adults at a party.

Name: _____

STICKY PARTY SITUATIONS — GUEST

Just because you aren't the host of a party doesn't mean you aren't responsible for what happens. As a party guest, it's your job to speak up when things get out of hand. For each situation below, write a possible solution using common sense and respect. While your own safety should come first, you should also consider the well-being of other party guests.

1. Your friend Cathy throws a small party at her house, with her parents present. Halfway through, everyone decides to secretly move the party to the apartment of an older guy down the street. What do you do?

2. You go to a party that is supposed to be invite-only. Around 9 o'clock, some older friends of the host show up and start spiking people's sodas with tiny bottles of rum. The host's mom is upstairs asleep. What do you do?

3. You go to a party at your friend Marta's. She told you her parents would be chaperones, but when you get there, her mom is offering glasses of wine to everyone, including kids. What do you do?

This activity continues on the next page.

Name: _____

STICKY PARTY SITUATIONS — GUEST

4. You're getting ready to leave a party at your friend Jack's house. No one's been drinking (that you know of) but Jack and his brother have been sneaking into the bathroom with a few other kids. They offer to start driving people home. As Jack is loading up his car with some friends, you smell liquor on his breath. What do you do?

5. At a class party, the host and her parents lay out a strict "no closed doors" policy. Later, when everyone is watching a scary video, you see your friend Gwen disappear upstairs with an older guy you've never seen before. What do you do?

Name: _____

Research one of the news topics below and write a brief paper on your findings. You can gather information at your school or local library or on the Internet. Use a *Resource Tracker* (Activity Sheet 9b) to keep track of your information.

Date Rape

How can a host prevent date rape or sexual assault from happening at his/her party? What methods are used to make victims more susceptible? What can a party guest do to prevent becoming a date rape victim?

Teen Alcohol Poisoning

What are the statistics on teen alcohol poisoning? What are some of the factors that typically lead to alcohol poisoning fatalities? How can the risk be reduced?

Drugs and Juvenile Crime

How does alcohol and other drugs affect the risk of a juvenile crime being committed? What types of crimes are committed most often by young people who drink or use illegal drugs? What are the consequences of these crimes?

Teens and Drunk Driving

When are teens most likely to drive drunk? What is the connection between parties and teenage drunk driving? What can be done to lower the risk of drunk driving after a teen party?

Rave Dangers

What kind of risks face teenagers who attend raves? What are the problems with controlling illegal substance abuse at a rave? Is it ever realistic to use the term “safe rave”?

Teen Clubs

Does your area have a teen or youth club? If so, what kind of drug-free social events does it host? How are events like these affecting local youth? Are they helping to lower teen drug abuse (including drinking) and the problems associated with it?

Name: _____

Read the article below, which is based entirely on facts, and then answer the questions on the following page.

A Party Gone Wrong

—Harrison, New York

When the power went out at Harrison High School on April 23, 2002, the students couldn't believe their luck. They were released early from school with the entire afternoon to themselves. Elizabeth P., then 16, invited a few friends to her family's home. With no adults around, they would have the entire place to themselves.

Elizabeth and her friends couldn't have imagined that in a few hours, their lives would be changed forever in a way they never imagined. And for one party guest, that fateful afternoon would prove to be his last.

17 year-old Robert V. and his 18-year old friend Nicholas R. arrived at the party with beer that they had purchased using fake I.D.s. A partygoer later told police that Robert was "chugging" from a 40-ounce bottle of beer during a drinking game, and that he also saw him drink one or more 12-ounce bottles of beer. Robert was later found to have a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) level of 0.14 percent—way above the legal limit for intoxication.

Around 2:45 in the afternoon, Robert and Nicholas began arguing over a dollar. Some teens said the money was owed for the beer purchase, while others claim it was related to a bet. Either way, Robert began taunting Nicholas about his father, who was serving time in jail. Nicholas' 16-year-old brother Pat, who was also at the party, asked Robert to follow him outside.

A few seconds later, a single punch by Pat knocked Robert out, causing him to collapse without the ability to break his fall. His head smashed on the concrete patio floor and he lay motionless. Pat yelled for someone to call 911, but no one did.

For nearly 20 minutes, not one of the teens at the party would take responsibility for calling an ambulance. Although many of the teens had cell phones, they spent valuable time arguing about what they should do to avoid getting in trouble.

Meanwhile, Robert's lips began to turn blue. His brain was swelling out of control. Eventually, the teens carried Robert to a car, dropping the 6-foot, 203-pound athlete several times, and causing him to hit his head on the ground at least once.

The person who drove Robert to the hospital was pressured by other partygoers to say that the accident took place at a local park. Others were instructed to clean up the alcohol. Concerned about police discovering booze at the scene, they dumped the beer bottles at a local grocery store.

Some of the teens would later lie to police about what happened, before eventually changing their stories. Six teens were eventually charged with obstruction of justice, while Pat was arrested for second-degree felony assault.

At the hospital, tests showed that Robert was in a deep coma with a fractured skull and a bruise on his brain. A week later, the respiration machines keeping him alive were turned off and Robert was pronounced dead. He was 17 years old.

Robert's parents shared this statement with the local newspapers in the hopes that their only son's death will be a lesson to others: "We pray that young people, despite possible short-term consequences with their parents, will be more apt to dial 911 if one of them becomes injured or sick," the family said. "Precious moments and precious lives may be at stake."

This activity continues on the next page.

Name: _____

After reading the article “A Party Gone Wrong” on the previous page, answer these questions on a separate sheet of paper.

1. How many factors in this event might have been prevented if alcohol had not been present?
2. Do you think a person’s personality when sober is an accurate predictor of how they will act when drunk? Explain your answer.
3. At what point would you have left the party described above? Why? Would you have done anything further? Explain.
4. Which SMART Party guidelines did Elizabeth break? Aside from possible legal complications for her and her parents, what kind of consequences do you think she suffered later?
5. Elizabeth’s parents were out of town at the time. Imagine you are Elizabeth. You must call your parents to explain what happened. What do you say?
6. Some of the teens said cell phones were yanked from their hands and that others yelled at them not to call for help. How difficult do you think it would be to stand up to a frightened, intoxicated group of people?
7. How do you think alcohol influenced the teens’ ability to make a decision? Do you think it made it easier or more difficult to avoid calling for help?
8. Do you think that Pat R. should be found guilty of felony assault? Do you think he should be found guilty of manslaughter? Do you think the other partygoers should be charged with a crime? If so, what crime? Explain your answer.

Name: _____

Choose one of the following debate statements. Write a paper arguing for or against your chosen statement. Then use your paper to debate the topic with other classmates. If possible, use newspaper, magazine and Internet articles to back up your opinions.

Teenagers should not be allowed to have a party without adults present.

OR

Teenagers are responsible enough to have unsupervised parties, as long as adults know the details and can check in on the party.

A successful party depends on good planning and a solid no-drugs-or-alcohol policy.

OR

A successful party depends on spontaneous energy and hosts who are prepared to handle the unexpected.

An open party is an invitation for trouble. Teen parties should be by invitation only.

OR

It's not realistic or polite to expect people to stick to an invitation-only rule.

Adults who buy kegs should have to register the purchase, making them legally responsible if they later give the alcohol to minors.

OR

Young people who want to get large amounts of cheap alcohol will get it no matter what.

FACT SHEETS

Name: _____

SMART Party Guidelines

- Stay safe— No drugs, alcohol, tobacco or weapons allowed.
- Make a plan— Work with parents and make sure they have info.
- Ask questions— Find out the where, when, who and why of the party.
- Respect the rules— Respect your own rules or the rules of the host.
- Think fun— That's what parties are all about.

If you are hosting a party, use these guidelines to make sure you're partying smart:

Discourage gate crashers from attending. Make the party invitation only.

Let everyone know in advance that there will be no alcohol, drugs, tobacco or weapons.

Include parents in the planning and in the party.

Involve other friends and their families.

Choose a location that is safe, familiar and small enough to control.

Settle on an ending time.

Decide on a theme or reason for having the party.

Plan party activities that are fun and safe.

Have plenty of food.

State that all beverages will be provided.

Check bags at the door.

Name: _____

SMART Party Guidelines

- Stay safe— No drugs, alcohol, tobacco or weapons allowed.
- Make a plan— Work with parents and make sure they have info.
- Ask questions— Find out the where, when, who and why of the party.
- Respect the rules— Respect your own rules or the rules of the host.
- Think fun— That's what parties are all about.

If you are invited to a party, use these guidelines to make sure you're partying smart:

Know where the party will take place.

Make sure you know and trust the person/family having the party.

Find out if adults or chaperones will be at the party.

Find out who else is invited or if there's an open invitation.

Find out if there will be a drug-free and alcohol-free policy.

Find out when the party will end.

What is the purpose of the party (theme, occasion, etc.)?

Let your parents/guardians know where the party is and who is hosting it.

Let your parents/guardians know how to get in touch with you.

Let your parents/guardians know when to expect you home. Call them before you leave the party.

NEVER ride with anyone who has been drinking alcohol or using drugs.

ALWAYS pour your own drink and never leave it unattended.

Name: _____

Having a party is a bigger responsibility than most people realize. Just look at all the dangerous things that can happen when alcohol or drugs and a party are mixed.

Drinking and driving

Car crashes are the leading cause of death for 15 to 20 year-olds. An average of six young people die in alcohol-related crashes every day.

High-risk sex

Teens who drink or use drugs are less likely to use condoms or other forms of birth control, leading to unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV.

Sexual assault

Alcohol or drug consumption—by the offender or the victim—increases a teen’s risk of sexual assault. Alcohol is involved in 90 percent of campus rapes.

Accidents and injuries

Teens who drink or use drugs are more likely to engage in reckless behavior or take dangerous risks.

Fires and drowning

Alcohol is reported as a factor in 60 percent of fires and burns and 68 percent of drowning deaths.

Violent crimes

Alcohol, which can lead to aggressive behavior, contributes to 70 percent of violent behavior on campuses and 64 percent of all homicides. The use of illegal drugs is also highly associated with criminal behavior.

Alcohol poisoning

Thousands of young people die each year as a result of alcohol poisoning and many more become brain damaged.

Legal problems

Minors who drink, buy or provide alcohol to other minors can receive jail time, heavy fines, loss of driving privileges and a permanent criminal record. Anyone who uses an illegal substance is also risking being arrested for drug possession and use.

Personal problems

About 50 percent of all binge drinkers report doing something they later regretted. Nearly one-third have had an argument with friends or family as a result of drinking.

Name: _____

This contract was developed by Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) to help parents and their children talk about potentially destructive decisions related to alcohol, drugs, peer pressure and behavior. This contract does NOT imply permission to drink or use illegal drugs—it is a promise to be safe.

Teen:

I recognize that there are many potentially destructive decisions I face every day and commit to you that I will do everything in my power to avoid making decisions that will jeopardize my health, my safety and overall well-being, or your trust in me. I understand the dangers associated with the use of alcohol and drugs and the destructive behaviors often associated with impairment.

I acknowledge that the legal drinking age is 21. By signing below, I pledge my best effort to remain alcohol-free and drug-free, I agree that I will never drive under the influence of either, or accept a ride from someone who is impaired, and I will always wear a seat belt.

Finally, I agree to call you if I am ever in a situation that threatens my safety and to communicate with you regularly about issues of importance to us both.

Signature

Parent or Caring Adult:

I am committed to you, and to your health and safety. By signing below, I pledge to do everything in my power to understand and communicate with you about the many difficult and potentially destructive decisions you face.

Further, I agree to provide for your safe, sober transportation home if you are ever in a situation that threatens your safety and to defer discussion about that situation until a time when we can both discuss the issues in a calm and caring manner.

I also pledge to you that I will not drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs, I will always seek safe, sober transportation home, and I will always remember to wear a seatbelt.

Signature

Source: SADD "Students Against Destructive Decisions"

Name: _____

Recent medical research has shed light on what happens to the brain when a teen drinks alcohol. For instance:

- Since their brains are still developing, teens that drink heavily are more likely to significantly lower their mental abilities than adults who drink heavily.
- The part of the brain most at risk appears to be the hippocampus, a structure responsible for learning and memory. Also at risk is the prefrontal cortex, an area responsible for decision making.
- The effects on the brain can include loss of motor skills, a lessened ability to perform on tests, and a greater difficulty learning new things.
- The average size difference between the hippocampus of a teen who drinks and the brain of a healthy teen is about 10 percent smaller for a teen drinker.
- Young brains are also more vulnerable to changes that can lead to alcohol addiction. Forty percent of alcoholics began drinking before age 15, while only 10 percent began drinking at age 21 or 22.
- Alcohol decreases the transmission of nerve signals. During withdrawal from intoxication, the brain attempts to recover by increasing transmission. Scientists believe that this over-stimulation of the brain causes neurons to break down inside their own membranes and die.
- Research shows that a teen's brain is more easily damaged than an adult's brain in the areas that regulate the storage of memories.
- Alcohol can also cause emotional changes during a time when the brain is learning to deal with new and powerful feelings. That can lead to problems with friends, cause low self-esteem and raise stress levels.
- It takes five to 10 years for an adult to become addicted to alcohol, but a young person can become addicted in just one to two years.
- It takes half as much alcohol to affect the teen brain as it does to affect the adult brain.
- Hundreds of kids under 15 are taken to emergency rooms each year for alcohol poisoning. In addition to death, alcohol poisoning can cause heart, liver and brain damage.

Source: The Connecticut Coalition to Stop Underage Drinking

WARNING SIGNS OF ALCOHOL POISONING

Watch out if a friend or acquaintance:

- drinks excessively (four or five drinks in one sitting)
- does not respond to being talked to or shouted at
- does not respond to being pinched, prodded or poked
- won't wake up despite repeated attempts
- vomits while passed out and doesn't wake up after vomiting
- has slow breathing (fewer than six breaths per minute)
- has bluish or purplish skin, or skin that appears flushed
- has clammy skin, or skin that feels cool to the touch
- has an irregular pulse rate, or if the pulse becomes slower than 40 beats per minute
- has an irregular heart rhythm, with the heart beating unusually slowly or unusually quickly

If a friend shows signs of alcohol poisoning, following these steps could save a life:

1. **DON'T LEAVE YOUR FRIEND ALONE!**
2. Call 911 for medical assistance immediately.
3. Place your friend on his/her side to reduce the risk of choking on vomit.
4. If your friend's breathing becomes slower than six breaths per minute, perform mouth-to-mouth resuscitation immediately!
5. If you are no longer able to feel a pulse, or if your friend's pulse goes below 40 beats per minute, perform CPR until medical help arrives.
6. Wait with your friend until help arrives.
7. Explain what you know about how much alcohol your friend has ingested.

Name: _____

Q: Could I be held legally responsible if one of my guests got into an alcohol- or drug-related accident?

A: Your family could be held responsible for the costs associated with the accident, including medical bills and property damage. You and your family could also be sued for emotional pain and suffering.

Q: What happens to my parents if a crime is committed at my house during a party?

A: Your parents can be arrested and taken to jail, even if they did not know about the party. They may also face large fines, lose their jobs, or face other consequences of criminal charges.

Q: Will my parents take all the blame if something happens?

A: No. You can also be held legally responsible. That could mean spending time in juvenile detention or jail, or losing privileges such as the right to vote or drive.

Q: Is it legal for young people to drink in the privacy of their own homes?

A: No. It is always illegal for people under 21 to drink alcohol, even in their own homes with their parents' permission. Parents can and have been arrested for allowing their children to drink alcohol or use illegal drugs.

Q: If I'm charged with a crime as a minor, won't it come off my record when I turn 21?

A: No! Your chances of future employment, scholarship or college financial aid will be damaged if:

- you are convicted of possessing a fake ID
- you are cited for providing alcohol to a minor
- you are guilty of driving under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- you injure someone in a crash caused by alcohol or drugs
- you are found in a car with open containers of alcohol—even empty bottles
- you provide false personal information in order to purchase a keg of beer

UNDERAGE DRINKING: A LOOK AT THE LAWS

Many states and communities have been updating and strengthening their alcohol laws over the past few years. It's important to know what the laws are in your state. These are some of the most recent legislations that have been passed around the country:

- The Minimum Legal Drinking Age (MLDA) is 21 years of age in all 50 states. It is against the law for minors to drink, buy or provide alcohol to other minors.
- A growing number of communities and states are creating laws that hold adults accountable for “hosting” parties where minors are allowed to consume alcohol.
- The legal Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) limit for any driver under 21 is 0.00 percent. All 50 states have passed Zero Tolerance laws that allow police officers to immediately confiscate the driver’s license of any minor caught driving with a BAC above 0.00 percent.
- Breaking the Zero Tolerance law can also lead to a Driving Under the Influence (DUI) charge on your permanent criminal record.
- Anyone—an adult, a family member or even another teen—who provides alcohol to a person under 21 can be charged with “contributing to the delinquency of a minor.” If convicted, the person may be sentenced to up to a year in jail.
- Anyone who owns a fake identification card or falsified driver’s license is committing a class D felony, which is punishable by up to seven years in prison.
- Open Container laws: Many states have passed laws that forbid open alcohol containers anywhere in a motor vehicle—even empty bottles. This law usually applies to drivers and passengers alike.
- Keg Registration laws: More than 20 states already have laws requiring keg purchasers to sign a statement saying they will not allow underage people to drink the beer in the keg. Purchasers face criminal charges if they provide false personal information to retailers or deface the keg’s ID number. If minors are caught drinking beer from the keg, the purchaser can be held accountable and sentenced to up to a year in prison.

Name: _____

NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Next time you're hosting a party, try one of these non-alcoholic drinks:

Texas Sunrise	Tropical Coolie
<p>8 ounces chilled orange juice ¾ ounce grenadine syrup Cracked or shaved ice (optional)</p> <p>Pour orange juice in glass and add the grenadine. Let it settle on the bottom or stir, as desired. Add ice.</p>	<p>¾ cup unsweetened pineapple juice ½ banana 2 to 3 packets sweetener 1 teaspoon lime juice ¼ teaspoon coconut extract 3 to 4 ice cubes</p> <p>Combine ingredients in blender. Blend on high for 30 seconds until smooth and creamy. Pour into glass and serve with straw.</p>
Lime Breeze	Holiday Nog
<p>½ pint (1 cup) lime sherbet, softened 1 can (6 ounces) frozen limeade concentrate, thawed 2 bottles (7 ounces each) ginger ale, chilled 2 cups water</p> <p>In punch bowl, stir together all ingredients. Serve in punch cups.</p>	<p>1 large bottle cranberry-grape juice 1 liter bottle ginger ale 1 container orange sherbet Whole cranberries</p> <p>Combine juice and ginger ale. Add sherbet by small scoops. Top with cranberries.</p>
Peach Fuzz	Hot Cider
<p>1 cup peach daiquiri mix 1 ½ cups 7-Up® 2 tablespoons lemon juice</p> <p>Add ingredients and ice cubes. Blend on high for 15 seconds.</p>	<p>2 quarts apple cider 1 ½ quarts cranberry cocktail ¼ cup brown sugar cinnamon sticks 1 ½ teaspoons whole cloves</p> <p>Combine ingredients and heat to boiling. Reduce heat and simmer 15 to 20 minutes. Strain the cider before serving.</p>

Name: _____

Giving a party a specific theme is a great way to make things more interesting.

Regression Party

Play all the traditional party games you loved as a kid, like pin the tail on the donkey, three-legged sack race, musical chairs and hot potato. Ask your parents to help you prepare the foods and drinks you loved when you were younger.

Limo Party

Hire a limousine and pick up the party guests. Take them to a restaurant or back to your house. Make sure the limo is stocked with soft drinks, music and disposable cameras for recording the fun.

Disco Party

Rent a disco ball and strobe lights. Ask your parents and their friends to loan you some 70's movies, records and CDs. Then invite them to the party to show you and your friends how to boogie. Ask everyone to dress 70s style and serve retro food.

Oscar Party

Use a roll of colored craft paper to make a red carpet. Ask friends to dress up like their favorite celebrities and interview them as they arrive. Vote on who will win and give a prize to the person who gets the most categories right.

Winter Beach Party

Ask everyone to wear summer clothes or swimsuits for an indoor beach party. Serve seafood and play beach music. Have videos on hand that reflect the beach theme.

Scavenger Hunt

Make a list of hard-to-find items (pinecone, family photo at Niagara Falls, baseball card from the 1960s, etc.). Divide friends into two teams. The first team to find all the items wins. Make sure no one has to break the law or do anything dangerous to find an item.

Final Exam Cram

Invite your classmates to a pre-exam party. Ask them to write test questions, then divide up and have a Team Trivia Game. Serve snacks and spend some time relaxing before the big test.

Character Party

Pick a favorite book or movie, and ask everyone to dress as a character in it. Serve food that characters in the book or movie would eat. Watch the movie or a movie version of the book, if there is one.

Name: _____

1. Talk with your parents about the party ahead of time. Listen to their suggestions. They've learned a lot from experience.
2. Decide together where the party will take place. If it's in your home, decide which rooms will be off limits to guests.
3. Try to limit your guest list to 20. More people can be hard to control.
4. Mail invitations. Sending them by email or verbally can cause the guest list to get out of control.
5. Decide on a time for the party to begin and end. Stick to the plan.
6. Talk to neighbors about the party a few days ahead of time. It will ease their minds if they know what's going on and they'll probably be less likely to complain later.
7. Put away breakable and valuable things before the guests arrive. You never know; better safe than sorry.
8. Ask a friend to be in charge of music, so you can take care of your guests. Make sure the volume doesn't get out of control.
9. Ask your parents and their friends to help out as chaperones. For every ten guests, plan on having at least one adult. They can keep their distance and still have an eye on things without being intrusive.
10. Offer a wide selection of non-alcoholic drinks and have plenty of water on hand. Ask your parents or other adults to help guests follow a no-alcohol, no-drugs guideline.
11. Don't allow people to return to the party if they have left.
12. Talk to your parents about what will happen if something goes wrong. For instance, if someone shows up drunk, what will you do? Decide on a plan together.
13. Help with clean up after the party.
14. Don't forget to have fun!

Name: _____

Mothers Against Destructive Decisions. www.madd.org

Safegrad.com: Dedicated to Helping Students Plan SAFE Parties. www.safegrad.com

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