



Parents Who Host, Lose The Most: Don't be a party to teenage drinking

Parents play a major role in their children's choices about alcohol, tobacco or other drugs. In a recent national survey of parents and teens by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, one-third of teen partygoers have been to parties where teens were drinking alcohol, smoking pot, or using cocaine, Ecstasy or prescription drugs while a parent was present. By age 17, nearly half (46 percent) of teens have been at such parties where parents were present.

Drug-Free Action Alliance has developed the ***Parents Who Host, Lose The Most: Don't be a party to teenage drinking*** public awareness campaign to provide parents with accurate information about the health risks of underage drinking and the legal consequences of providing alcohol to youth. The campaign encourages parents and the community to send a unified message at prom and graduation time that teen alcohol consumption is not acceptable. It is illegal, unsafe, and unhealthy for anyone under age 21 to drink alcohol.

Here are the facts:

- There are many health-related consequences of youth consuming alcohol including negative effects on brain development, deviant behavior including stealing and skipping school and a greater risk of becoming alcohol-dependant later in life.
- Parents who give alcohol to their teen's friends under any circumstances, even in their own homes, are breaking the law.
- Parents who knowingly allow a person under 21 to remain in their home or on their property while consuming or possessing alcoholic beverages can be prosecuted and everything associated with such a violation can be confiscated, including personal property.
- Parents can be sued if they give alcohol to anyone under 21 and they in turn hurt someone, hurt themselves or damage property.

Underage use of alcohol is a serious problem that too often leads to harmful consequences for youth and their families. Parents can protect themselves and their teens by following these guidelines when hosting parties for their children:

- Host safe, alcohol-free activities and events for youth during prom and graduation season.
- Refuse to supply alcohol to children or allow drinking in your home or on your property
- Be at home when your teenager has a party
- Make sure your teenager's friends do not bring alcohol into your home
- Talk to other parents about not providing alcohol at youth events
- Report underage drinking

Our youth deserve to live and grow to adulthood in an environment where alcohol is not misused. Let's be unified in our message, and host alcohol-free parties with plenty of fun activities to show our youth that we care about their future.

Parents Who Host, Lose the Most. Don't be a party to teenage drinking.