

3rd Edition



Party Rules:

A guide for parents of young people

Alcohol and under 18s –
understanding the law in Tasmania



Originally written by DEN for a joint project with the
Tasmanian Early Intervention Pilot Project (TEIPP) –
Tasmania Police

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Looking for citations?

Find them online at www.den.org.au/resources/party-rules

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Visit CODE.**

Community Online Drug Education

Community Online Drug Education (CODE) is a place for Tasmanians to find free, trustworthy resources and information about alcohol, nicotine, and other drugs.



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Party Rules

Parties can be an important part of the social calendar for young people. They should be safe, inclusive and lots of fun!

As parents and guardians, we are able to set the rules and expectations for parties happening at our property. We also have a legal duty to ensure everyone gets home safely.

Open and clear communication with your young person when planning the party is essential to making it fun and safe for everyone.

The current National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Australian Guidelines to Reduce Health Risks from Drinking Alcohol advocate that there is no safe level of consumption of alcohol for anyone under 18 years.

What does the Tasmanian law say?

It's important that you understand the Tasmanian law regarding the supply of alcohol to under 18s.

It can be a very good idea to plan the party within the law from the beginning, to avoid having to make potentially unexpected or last minute changes.

The Sale or Supply of Alcohol to Youths (Police Offences Act 1935) legislation regulates the supply of alcohol to people under the age of 18 years, on private property. This legislation supports a responsible approach by parents, guardians, and other adults with parental rights, who choose to supply young people with alcohol.

You are breaking the law in Tasmania if you supply a person under 18 years of age with alcohol on private property without the consent of his or her parent/guardian.

What does the legislation mean?

If you are hosting a party for under 18s and alcohol will be served, you must:

- Have permission from every guest's parent /guardian
- You must supervise appropriately
- You cannot be intoxicated
- Young people cannot be intoxicated
- You must provide non-alcoholic drinks and food

Planning a party

Will you allow alcohol? Here are a few things to consider... Our brains are developing until around the age of 24 and the evidence shows us there is no safe level of alcohol for under 18's.

“But everyone else is drinking!” is often heard by parents who may feel pressure to allow underage drinking.

In fact, alcohol use amongst young people has been declining since the year 2000. Well over half of 14-17 year old's have never had an alcoholic drink and even those who are drinking, are drinking less than their counterparts 10 years ago.

This is really useful information to have when planning a party with your young person. It is truly possible to have a great party without alcohol.

So ...the decision is yours! If you do decide to allow alcohol, it is very important to get the permission of the parent or guardian of every guest under 18 and to serve responsibly.

Invitations

When considering how to invite guests to the party, written invitations have many advantages.

You have less control over the guest list if you invite via text, email or through social media. If you do use any social media, make sure the event page is private and invitation only.

Written invitations:

- Are a point of contact with other parents, and if you ask them to RSVP on their child's behalf, you can have a chat and exchange contact details
- Make it clear that the party is by invitation only and you can request that invitations be shown at the door
- Give you the chance to let guests know what's expected, things like dress code, if alcohol will be allowed/ provided, and the finishing time

Party Fun

Making sure the party is set up to be fun can take the focus off drinking as entertainment.

Having a theme for the party with decorations, food, drinks and activities that tie in with the theme, help to make it a memorable event and give your young person scope for creativity.

Keeping guests busy and having fun means there's more to do than drink. Spend some time with your young person planning activities like:

- games
- karaoke
- dancing
- eight ball
- movies
- competitions

Serving Alcohol

If you do provide alcohol at the party, it's a good idea to:

- set up an agreement between yourself and your young person about alcohol and adult supervision
- make sure no one under 18 years is served or given alcohol unless you have their parent's written or verbal permission
- only make alcohol available in one area, and have a responsible adult who isn't drinking as the bartender
- only serve low-alcohol drinks, and also have interesting non-alcoholic options.
- avoid drinks like punch that could be easily spiked.
- ensure there's lots of food set up on a visible table or being offered around
- plan for guests to sleep over if no one can take them home
- ensure you are following the Australian Alcohol Guidelines

NHMRC

BUILDING
A HEALTHY
AUSTRALIA



Australian Government
National Health and
Medical Research Council

Alcohol Guidelines

Australian guidelines to reduce
health risks from drinking alcohol

1: HEALTHY ADULTS

Drink no more than
10 standard drinks a **week**



AND
no more than 4 standard drinks
on **any one day**



to reduce the risk of harm from alcohol.

The less you drink, the lower
your risk of harm.

2: CHILDREN AND PEOPLE UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE

Should not drink alcohol



to reduce the risk of harm from alcohol.

3: WOMEN WHO ARE PREGNANT OR BREASTFEEDING

Should not drink alcohol



to prevent harm from alcohol
to their unborn child or baby.

www.nhmrc.gov.au/alcohol

Drunk or drug affected guests

Whilst remembering that it is your responsibility to avoid anyone being intoxicated, it still may happen. You may not know what drinks or drugs someone has had before arriving.

Drunk people can be annoying and could ruin the party for others.

When planning your party, ensure you have agreed on what to do if someone is drunk or drug affected. You have the right to ask them to be collected by parents/guardians.

Register with Police

You could consider registering your party with the police.

This is a good idea to ensure you comply with noise regulations and they can help if anything goes wrong.

www.police.tas.gov.au/services-online/party-safe/

Other parents support

Other parents can be a terrific support in planning the party and in helping on the night. It's great to have some moral support and they can share the load.

Safe transport

Being a responsible host involves making sure your guests get home safely. You don't want a situation where decisions about safe travel are being made on the spot after consuming alcohol.

It's a good idea for you to:

- ask your guests how they're getting home, and who's driving
- ask parents of younger children to pick them up at the end of the party
- encourage guests to come by taxi or with a designated driver. Support the designated driver to remain alcohol free
- make sure no one has to walk home by themselves
- remember that the law states P plate drivers cannot drive if they have drunk any amount of alcohol



What to do if things go wrong?

Gate crashers can be a problem at young people's parties, but you can take a few steps to minimize the risk:

- have a guest list and keep it by invitation only
- if you're having a big party, consider hiring security
- only have one entrance to the party, secure the side or back gates if necessary
- ask other adults to help you supervise the party and organise for one or more to be on the door and see peoples invitations
- offer lots of food and nonalcoholic drinks throughout the party so you can talk with everyone and monitor their intoxication
- make sure that vehicle access isn't blocked for emergencies
- phone police if unmanageable gate crashers arrive

Make a Party Plan

Download the Party Planner to further minimise the risk of something going wrong.

cdn.adf.org.au/media/documents/SafePartyPlanner.pdf



Notes - Plan your party here







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