

SAFE HOMES Tips for Parents

The SAFE HOMES committee encourages you to:

- Get to know your child's friends, as well as their parents.
- Know where your children are and let them know where you are.
- Make sure your kids know how to get help when you are not home.
- Assure your children you can be contacted to give them a ride home whenever needed.
- Leave a message for your child if no one will be home when they get there after school.
- Be awake or ask to be awakened when your children and their friends return home at night.
- Verify your child's activities. Find out if they are parent-supervised and make sure there will be no alcohol or drugs served.
- Secure any alcohol you may have in your home in a safe place and keep track of what you consume.
- Abide by set curfews for weekdays and weekends.

How does your family decide on teenage privileges and responsibilities? Have you ever wished for a standard to help you make those decisions? The following guidelines are designed for just that purpose. They may be too restrictive for some families and too permissive for others; but by using them as a guide you can establish a sense of agreement in your community.

WHEN YOUR CHILD IS INVITED TO A PARTY

1. Tell him/her that you intend to call the host parent to confirm there will be parental supervision and that no alcoholic beverages will be served. Be sure to follow through on these plans.
2. Be sure to know when the party ends and when your child will be home.
3. Make it easy for your child to leave a party where there is drinking or other drug use. Discuss this in advance. If, for any reason, your child wishes to leave the party early or has a change in plans, he/she should be able to call you or another designated driver for assistance.
4. Make it easy for your child to talk to you when arriving home. Being up and available when your child comes home from a party encourages communication and could alert you to a potential problem.

WHEN YOUR CHILD IS HAVING A PARTY

1. Have the child develop a guest list and party plans. Suggest changes if necessary, but try to be tactful. Encourage small parties and gatherings and stick to a guest list.
2. Set specific beginning and ending times for the party. Consider theme parties to include ideas such as skating, swimming, watching a video, bowling, or miniature golf.
3. Set ground rules that are clearly understood by both you and your child in advance. These include:
 - ▷ No alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs—remember it is illegal to serve alcohol to minors even in a private home.
 - ▷ No smoking.
 - ▷ Limit the party to a certain area of your house.
 - ▷ No uninvited guests.
 - ▷ No leaving the party and returning later.
 - ▷ Lights MUST be on.
4. Try to reconcile your child's plans for the party with your own standards. Don't compromise your standards, but be understanding of your child's feelings.