

Party Safe for hosts: Planning tips and checklist



Hosting a party at home or at a local venue can be great fun. You'll want to have a night your guests will remember for all the right reasons. As a party host, it is your responsibility to ensure your guests party safe! This information sheet provides you with some key points to consider when preparing and having your party or gathering.

Before the party

- Register your party at your local police station. The address and contact details for your local police station can be located in your local White Pages or on the Queensland Police Service website, www.police.qld.gov.au. Try and **register your party at least two weeks beforehand** so that police can ensure that they are able to supply you with all your Party Safe wristbands and other helpful information well in time for your party.
- Make entrance to the party by invitation only, and let people know that it is an exclusive party. This way there will only be people you know and want at your party and will discourage gatecrashers.**
- Try to avoid using the Internet, SMS, e-mail distribution lists, online notice boards, social networking sites or word of mouth to advertise your party. If word of the party has spread you may need to take extra preventative measures i.e., change venue, more adult supervision or hire security guards.**
- Make the start and finish time clear on your invitation. Encourage parents to collect their children or for guests to make arrangements for transport home at the end of the party. Consider pre-booking taxis to help get guests home safely at the end of your party.
- Clearly state on your invitation if the party is alcohol free, BYO or if alcohol will be supplied. If you don't allow people to BYO it will be easier to control the amount of alcohol that is served.
- Use the Party Safe non-reusable identification wristbands from your local police station to make identification of invited guests easier.
- Let your neighbours know about your party in advance as this may reduce concerns about parking or noise later. Give them your contact details so that they can contact you directly with any concerns on the night, rather than the police.**
- Ensure all your valuables are locked away so they can't be damaged, broken or stolen. Mobile phones, laptops, cameras and handbags are amongst the property most targeted by thieves at parties.**
- Ensure that you have ready access to a phone during the event. Have emergency service numbers ready, just in case, and taxi company numbers handy to assist with guests getting home safely afterwards. Consider pre-booking taxis to help get guests home safely at the end of your party.
- Think about organising some party activities, like dancing. These are a good way of keeping guests entertained and doing things other than drinking. Remember that parties can also be fun without alcohol.
- Ensure your first aid kit is well stocked and easy to access. Plan what to do if a guest becomes sick or intoxicated. If a person is drunk and has or looks like they may pass out or collapse call an ambulance immediately. While waiting for the ambulance, lay the person on their side in the 'recovery' position to maintain their airway and stay with them.
- Be mindful of your obligations as a host. Drinking alcohol or taking drugs affects your ability to make safe decisions; stay in control and sober so that you are able to deal with problems quickly and effectively.
- Check your liability insurance so you know what your policy covers.

The venue

- Ensure that the venue for your party is suitably equipped for the number of people invited. Consider the size of the venue, whether there are enough seats and tables available and whether there are sufficient toilets so people don't have to go outside.
- When planning your party be mindful of the layout. Consider placing tables of food in central locations within easy reach. Keep the area where alcohol is served to a single central location, so it can be monitored, and away from the party entrance.
- Make sure there is appropriate lighting for the venue; particularly any dark hidden-away areas you may have.
- Consider where people will put their valuables when they arrive and during the party.
- Is there a smoking area? Some people smoke and a designated smoking area will keep guests from going outside or congregating out the front of your house.
- Make sure that any out-of-bounds areas are adequately secured.
- Consider if there are any potential hazards that require extra preventative measures or supervision e.g. swimming pools, gas heaters, BBQs.

Crowd control

- Remember that it is your party and you have the right to set the standard of acceptable behaviour and see that it is maintained. **As the host, you may be legally liable if a drunken guest causes damage to property or another person.**
- Consider what type of supervision or security you need for your party? Will you use friends, other parents, private security? How many do you need? What do you want them to do on the night? i.e., checking attendees off a list as they arrive, stopping alcohol being brought into the venue, dealing with uninvited or unruly people.
- Think about having only one entrance and exit to your party (to make it easier to control who attends your party) and consider how this will be monitored and controlled.
- Try and ensure that your supervision/security is visible. Visible security will discourage gatecrashers and help maintain the standard of behaviour of your guests.
- If gatecrashers turn up, act quickly by refusing them entry and asking them to leave immediately. If they won't leave, tell them you will be contacting the police, and do so.
- Try not to allow people to wander round or congregate out the front of your house. Try to confine the party to a backyard, building or enclosed area as it is easier to control your guests. Avoid using front yards or street frontages as this can attract uninvited guests and is more likely to elicit complaints from neighbours.
- It's your party and you have the right to refuse entry to your property and to ask people to leave at any time. It is an offence for people to trespass if you have refused them entry.
- Contact your local police IMMEDIATELY should trouble occur. REMEMBER in an EMERGENCY call **Triple Zero (000)**.

Food and alcohol

- Ensure food and water are readily available for all guests throughout the party. Snacks high in protein and carbohydrates such as cheese, dips, crackers, chips, raw vegetables and seafood delay the absorption of alcohol.
- Avoid serving too many salty foods, as these tend to make people thirsty and encourage them to drink more.
- If you are providing alcohol, limit full strength alcoholic drinks such as full strength beer, spirits, wine or champagne. Provide a good selection of lower strength drinks.
- Have a wide variety and sufficient supply of non-alcoholic drinks such as non-alcoholic punch, mocktails, fruit juice and soft drinks.
- Only serve alcohol from one area within your party, which is away from the party entrance, and have a responsible sober adult serving the drinks.
- Discourage people from going around and topping up glasses as this makes it hard to keep track of how much alcohol they are drinking.
- Stop serving alcohol an hour before the party is to end. Consider serving hot drinks or non-alcoholic drinks along with some food prior to your guests heading home.
- Do not allow people to leave with drinks, remember it is illegal to consume alcohol in public places.**
- Should you decide to allow guests to bring their own alcohol, avoid providing open containers that can be 'spiked' or used to disguise the volume of alcohol being consumed.

Drugs and alcohol

- It is an offence to supply alcohol to a person under 18 in a public place.
- It is an offence to supply alcohol to a person under 18 within your property or someone else's private property unless you are a responsible adult for that minor (i.e., a parent, step-parent or guardian of the minor, or an adult who has parental rights and responsibilities for the minor) and the supply of alcohol is not irresponsible. If police are called to a party and see irresponsible supply of alcohol and people under 18 years of age not being responsibly supervised then the police may seize all alcohol and if you supplied the alcohol you could be facing a fine of up to \$8,000.**
- Remember young people, like adults, can be arrested for behaviours associated with drinking (such as violence or property damage).
- It is a criminal offence to have illicit drugs including cannabis, and could involve paying a fine or serving a prison sentence if you are charged and convicted. Not to mention that you could end up with a criminal record for the rest of your life that could impact on your future job and travel opportunities.