

TEENAGE PARTIES

As your child gets older, they will become more and more curious about alcohol and other drugs. The Planet Youth school survey in 2021 showed us that up to 52% of Limestone Coast Year 10's have tried alcohol by the time they turn thirteen.

More than half of our Limestone Coast Year 10's drink alcohol at home and also drink alcohol at the home of others.

Two thirds of our Limestone Coast Year 10's have been drunk in their lifetime.

There is no evidence to support the view that parental supply of alcohol protects our children from adverse drinking outcomes.

The evidence is clear that the best thing we can do as responsible parents and adults is to delay and defer any alcohol use for as long as possible. Alcohol use during adolescence impairs brain development, increases the chances of developing alcohol and drug issues, and interferes with relationships, sports, academia, health and wellbeing.

Fact: up to 52% of Limestone Coast Year 10's have tried alcohol by age 13

Substance Use - Key Findings

Alcohol Onset

43%

Tried alcohol at the age of 13 or younger

Been drunk in the last 30 days

38%

Have been drunk in the last 30 days

Drink at home

56%

Drink alcohol at their own home

Drink at home of others

55%

Drink alcohol at the home of others



E-Cigarette

 **30%**

Have smoked an e-cigarette in their lifetime

Cigarette smoking

4% 

Smoke cigarettes daily






Cannabis Use

 **22%**

Have used cannabis in their lifetime

Teenage Party Strategy - As a parent, what can you do?

Parties and socialising with peers are fun ways for young people to learn the personal and social skills they need as they become independent adults. Parties help them to:

-  Strengthen friendships
-  Be accepted by peer groups
-  Make new friends
-  Introduce friends to family
-  Learn planning & entertaining skills

Steps on planning a party

If you're hosting a party for your child, it works best to plan it together.

Agree on the ground rules before the party is announced so there are no misunderstandings later, including no alcohol will be served or allowed to be brought in. Work out who will make things known to guests and how this will be done. What is the party budget and who is paying for what. How many are invited. How will the invitations be sent? Discourage social media invitations as they can be passed on, instead use phone, or email.

Whether the party is in your home or at a venue, you have a duty of care to ensure the safety of all your guests. You may be legally and financially responsible if someone is hurt, acts illegally or property is damaged.

Get to know your child's friends' parents. Have their phone numbers and tell them it will be alcohol free.

Decide how you will respond if alcohol or drugs are brought to the party or if anyone arrives under the influence.

Be prepared to act if you find someone under the influence or drinking. It can be difficult and embarrassing but it is important to remind them this wasn't agreed to.

Remove the alcohol and tell them you will take care of it while they are in your home. Return it to their parent or carer, not to the young person.

Make sure you understand the law about serving alcohol to young people under 18 years. You must get permission from the parent or carer before you supply alcohol to a young person.

When things go wrong

Sometimes things go wrong. The party might not be supervised adequately, your child might use alcohol or other drugs, or gatecrashers might cause problems. It's a good idea to have a back-up plan just in case.

Back up plan ideas

Let your child know they can call you at any time, in any condition, if they or their friends need help - no questions asked.

Make sure your child's phone has all your phone numbers and other emergency contacts.

Give your contact details to at least one of your child's friends.

Make sure your child has enough money for an emergency taxi ride home.

Have a coded message that your child can use if they're embarrassed about calling to ask to come home. For example, your child could send a text message checking on a sick grandparent.

Come up with some strategies to help your child say "no" to alcohol or other drugs without losing face. For example, "I have to work in the morning" or "I'm on medication for" or "I've tried it before and I don't like it".

There is no evidence to support the view that parental supply of alcohol protects our children from adverse drinking outcomes.

Take action by:

- › Getting to know the parents of your child's friends.
- › Make a commitment to not allowing teenage children to drink alcohol. Anywhere.
- › Build a strong and trusting relationship with your child, by spending time with them, talking, playing and having fun, this helps prevent substance use as they get older.
- › Tell them you love them and be involved in their lives.
- › Get to know their friends and make them welcome in your home.
- › Notice their strengths and the good things they do and tell them.

What is Planet Youth? Planet Youth is a ground-breaking evidence based model, developed in Iceland, designed to reduce the risk factors and increase the protective factors associated with alcohol and drug use in our young people.

The Planet Youth team surveyed local Year 10 students about their lifestyles, and the data highlights that alcohol, cannabis use and vaping are an issue for our young people in the Limestone Coast.

For more information about Planet Youth in the Limestone Coast www.smlc.org.au

