

# STOP THE SUPPLY OF ALCOHOL TO MINORS

## Parent FAQ

Keep teens safe. Stop the supply.

The law changed on 18 December 2017, with stronger penalties for people who illegally supply alcohol to anyone under 18.

Parents continue to have the power to choose when they allow their teenager to drink alcohol at a range of locations, so long as they provide responsible supervision.

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## What is responsible supervision?

As a parent, you can still allow your underage teen to drink in certain locations, so long as you provide responsible supervision. You can also give permission to another adult to supply alcohol to your teenager, so long as that adult provides responsible supervision.

Responsible supervision involves many things, including:

- the adult should directly supervise the teenager while they are drinking
- the adult should not be intoxicated
- the teenager should not be intoxicated.

## At what age can I let my teenager drink alcohol?

You should take a common sense approach when choosing the age at which you give your teen a drink. It is important to understand the risks associated with teenage drinking, including the setting where drinking will occur, transport options, and the quantity and type of alcohol being consumed.

For teenagers aged 15 to 17 years, the safest option is to delay drinking for as long as possible.

## Can I give my teenager a drink at home?

You can allow your teenager to drink alcohol at home, so long as there is responsible supervision. You can also provide permission to another adult for your teenager to drink at that adult's home, so long as there is responsible supervision.

## Can I give my teenager's underage friend or relatives a drink at home?

You must have the permission of the parent or caregiver of any underage person to supply them with alcohol. You must also provide responsible supervision for all underage teenagers who you have given alcohol.

## Does the parent's permission need to be in writing?

No. An adult who plans to supply alcohol to someone under 18 must be confident that they have permission from the teenager's parent or caregiver. This permission can be provided in a number of ways including text message, in writing or even verbally.

If any questions are raised, the adult supplying the alcohol will need to prove that they had permission.

The adult supplying the alcohol must also provide responsible supervision.

## Can I throw an 18<sup>th</sup> birthday party at home and provide alcohol?

You must have parent or caregiver permission for every underage person at the party to provide them with alcohol. In addition, you need to provide responsible adult supervision for every underage teenager at the party.

You may need to consider the size of the guest list, and whether you can directly supervise all underage attendees. This direct supervision should be provided by you as the authorised adult who is supplying the alcohol, with permission of the parents/caregivers of the minors, not by other adults at the party.

In addition, hosts of private parties have a duty-of-care to take measures to prevent harm, and should be aware of potential negligence implications if someone is injured or property is damaged. You can read more about these obligations in the [Legal Services Commission's Law Handbook](#).

Parents hosting a teenage party can take steps to make it a safe event and to minimise trouble. Visit the [SAPOL website](#) to notify the police that you are having a party, and to download their 'Party Safe' information.

### **Can I give my teenager alcohol to take to a friend's house or party?**

You must not give alcohol to your teenager if you cannot guarantee responsible supervision of their drinking. You also cannot provide permission for other minors to drink, and should be aware that your teenager may illegally share the alcohol you provide with underage friends.

You can talk to the friend's parent or caregiver to discuss a responsible arrangement to allow your teenagers to drink alcohol.

### **What happens if I'm away and my teenager throws a party with alcohol without my consent?**

In this circumstance you would not be in breach of the new laws, as you have not supplied the alcohol. However, your teenager and the person who supplied the alcohol would be in breach of the law.

An underage teenager who is caught with alcohol illegally is liable:

- \$2,500 maximum penalty
- \$210 on-the-spot fine.

Any adult who gave or sold your teenager alcohol for the party is liable:

- \$10,000 maximum penalty
- \$500 on-the-spot fine.

You should take a common-sense approach when deciding whether to leave your teenager unsupervised for an extended period of time. You need to take reasonable steps to ensure that your teenager does not have access to alcohol within the home when you are away, such as a liquor cabinet.

### **What if teenagers bring their own alcohol to my party?**

Underage teenagers who consume or possess alcohol at your party without their parent's consent and without responsible supervision will be committing an offence. Whoever supplies the alcohol will also be committing an offence.

So long as you do not supply or serve any alcohol at your party, including serving alcohol that belongs to the teenager, you are not in breach of the new secondary supply laws.

### **Can I provide alcohol to teenagers at a hall, warehouse or other venue?**

No. You must not give alcohol to teenagers at any private property that is not residential. This includes industrial sheds, out buildings and warehouses.

Alcohol cannot be supplied to anyone under 18 at licensed venues, including restaurants, pubs, shops, bars and clubs.

### **Can my adult child give alcohol to their underage siblings?**

All adults, even an adult sibling, require the permission of the teenager's parent or caregiver to supply alcohol, and must provide responsible supervision.

The exception is when the adult sibling is acting in the parental role. In these cases they have the same decision-making power regarding supplying alcohol, and the same responsibilities, as a parent or caregiver.

### **What is the difference between a party at home and an organised party?**

Organised parties will be targeted under the new laws, which is any event in a public place with an entry fee. Alcohol must not be supplied to teenagers at organised events. This could include warehouse parties and after-formal parties where there is a ticket or cover charge.

House parties without an entry fee fall under the same rules as at home. Permission from the parent or caregiver of every minor attending the party is required, and responsible supervision must be provided.