



Tip Sheet

Tips for Changing the Setting and Mindset Around Drug Use and Parties (Page 2)

- ❖ Arm yourself with important information about legal consequences: Have knowledge that arrests and or citations can be made for the following offenses and understand (and have your child understand the consequences of each of this legal interventions):
 - Providing Alcohol to a Minor
 - Sale of Alcohol Without a License (if money is charged for the party)
 - Possession of Alcohol By A Minor
 - Drunken Disorderly Conduct
 - Driving Under the Influence
 - Vandalization of property
 - Irresponsible upkeep and improper garbage disposal to the point where it becomes a health hazard or eyesore (large parties with kegs/clean up)

- ❖ Understand that parties are opportunities to help your child develop their intuition and conscience and learn to act on their own behalf, i.e., make the right decisions that are truly their own decisions).

- ❖ Understand that Freedom and Responsibility go together in complicated ways. Teens need freedom to learn the right choices and to demonstrate their ability to respond well. And they need the chance to mess up in order to learn to respond well. Therefore, learning how to be responsible demands the chance to misuse or misunderstand the freedom that you grant to your teens. So, a logical but disconcerting consequence of this is that teenagers' screw-ups are not necessarily reasons to curtail freedom, because this is the necessary condition for learning. "Screw-ups" can be occasions for teaching planning, stress management techniques, "threat" assessment, failure analysis, and a host of other important skills that can only be developed through hindsight and new chances to demonstrate newly incorporated information about what works and what doesn't. And you might have to give up some more of your short-term freedom to teach them long-term responsibility. Mike Riera tells us that teens' maturity cycles include movement back and forth between "not enough responsibility" and "too much freedom" in getting to the goal of consistent responsibility in difficult situations. Try to match "screw-ups" with the appropriate amounts of freedom curtailment and new opportunities to learn and demonstrate responsibility. Give them things to do that they can be successful at, so that they can ramp up again to try out their hard-won knowledge...which leads to a final tip, below.

- ❖ Remember that Teenagers Do Well on Things When They Are Feeling Good. And Feeling Good About Oneself Comes from Doing Well on Things. One consequence of this information is that when your child messes up, work with them on making the situation right and learning from it, but try to help them (subtly or not) find something they can succeed at. Not to point too fine a point on it: If they fail by messing up, help them succeed at fixing their mess...but don't do it for them!

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