

Regardless of where or how your teen is choosing to celebrate Schoolies, they may face situations of great responsibility and risk and it's important to help them safely navigate what can often be a tricky time.

Now is the time to start a conversation with them about their plans, expectations and important health and safety considerations. To help your teen keep these moments in time memorable for all the right reasons, refer to the checklist below.

CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF YEAR 12 SCHOOL LEAVERS

WHERE TO START

- ❑ **Check in on how they may be feeling:** make time to sit down and reflect on the year to date with your teen and discuss how they feel about what they faced, the achievements they made, their thoughts on finishing school, and their hopes for the future. Let them know it's OK to feel highs and lows at this time and that you are always there for them to talk to. This is a huge transition for both of you.
- ❑ **Follow: @SaferSchooliesforParents** on Facebook or take a look at the 'information for parents' section at saferschoolies.qld.gov.au for everyday tips and advice on preparing for this time.

IF THEY ARE MAKING PLANS TO CELEBRATE SCHOOLIES – THINGS TO DISCUSS:

- ❑ **Discuss your teen's plans:** in an open way. Encourage them to make their own decisions, and not be peer pressured by friends. Consider whether celebrating amidst a pandemic is right for them and your family. Everyone's circumstance is unique.
- ❑ **Consider official health directives that may impact on celebrations:** remember that things can change in a flash in the context of COVID. Do their plans comply with current health directives? Check online at covid19.qld.gov.au for the latest info on gathering limits for your area and other relevant health instructions.
- ❑ **Talk about expectations:** they may have been looking forward to this period in their life for some time, however Schoolies often turns out different to what they had imagined.

- ❑ **Have an honest conversation:** about drinking, drugs, sex and the importance of consent, what to do in the event of an emergency, peer pressure, taking care of their mental and physical health and wellbeing, risk taking behaviour and good decision making (see our website for useful **conversation starters** if you're struggling).
- ❑ **Available support:** do some research to see if there are any support services available in the place they are going and talk to them about help seeking. Download the '**24hr Emergency Contacts**' from our website for a handy list of 24hr contacts they can take with them.
- ❑ **If they have a medical condition or take medication:** make sure they are able to manage it, and they have met with their GP to understand how alcohol and other drugs can affect their medication.

IN THE LEAD UP TO SCHOOLIES

- ❑ **School leaver checklist:** look through the '**Checklist for Year 12 School Leavers**' to ensure they have reviewed the content and have a checklist ready for when they are away.
- ❑ **If they are staying in accommodation:** make sure they have read the House Rules and clearly understand what they have agreed to before they check in.
- ❑ **Make a plan for staying in touch:** agree how and when you will check in with each other.

@SAFERSCHOOLIESFORPARENTS 

CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF YEAR 12 SCHOOL LEAVERS

IN THE LEAD UP TO SCHOOLIES (CONT.)

- Encourage your teen to download the free Emergency+ App:** it helps provide critical location details to emergency services in emergency situations.
- Ask if they have set up their emergency SOS/ emergency contacts/Medical ID in their phone:** this will be located in 'Settings' under 'Health', or 'Security' or similar (each phone type is slightly different). Make sure all the information is correct and up to date.
- Check in on their social relationships:** see how their peer relationships are at present and how the group dynamics are working.

A WEEK BEFORE THEY GO

- Have a chat:** about the importance of eating well (you could even pre-cook some meals), getting enough rest and drinking plenty of water. Also discuss stress, wellbeing and taking care of their friends.
- Encourage them to download the Policelink App:** to report any non-urgent crimes or incidents eg: wilful property damage, lost property or high risk behaviour.
- Let your young person know that it's OK for them to call you:** any time of the day or night, that you trust them and you are always there for them, no matter what the situation.
- Connect with other parents/guardians:** your peer support during this time is important too!
- Have one last talk before they go:** about the effects of drinking and drug use and what this can lead to (aggression, assault, unplanned sexual activity,

accidental injury and poor judgement) and about looking out for their friends.

WHILST THEY ARE AWAY

- Remind them:** that you are available for them any time of day or night, in any situation.
- Make sure they know:** to always call Triple Zero (000) in an emergency.
- If you are contacted about an incident:** try to stay calm, listen to the facts and support your teen appropriately.
- Take some time:** to acknowledge your own transition from school parent, to school leaver parent and beyond – you made it too!
- Before they come home:** encourage them to check their room for cleanliness and damage prior to check out.

AFTERWARDS

- Talk to your teen:** when you're both ready, about how they feel after they get home (for further support, visit our website for useful contacts).
- If you have other children yet to go through Year 12 celebrations:** consider what you may have had in place and make a note of anything you may want to do differently next time.
- Encourage:** parents/guardians of future Year 12's to follow us on socials to get the jump on preparing well.

@SAFERSCHOOLIESFORPARENTS

