



Parents' Association

Alcohol and your child

As responsible parents, decisions for your children are yours. There are times, however, when decisions for your children impact other children. This can be particularly troublesome when alcohol is concerned.

The Christ Church Grammar School Parents' Association endorse the School's common guidelines prohibiting the provision of alcohol to minors, and recommends the adoption of these by the general parent body.

Background

- In Western Australia it is a legal offence to supply alcohol to a minor (a person under 18 years of age) in a public place. It is also an offence to sell or supply alcohol to a minor on licensed premises.
- From November 2015, new laws came into effect in WA regarding the secondary supply of alcohol. Under this law it is an offence for anyone to supply under 18's with alcohol in a private setting without parental or guardian permission. This offence carries a maximum penalty of \$10,000.
- Early adolescent alcohol consumption impacts on the way the brain forms and functions, resulting in reduced brain response in areas such as vocabulary, general knowledge and memory retrieval. This will impact many activities, from success at school to general social aptitude.
- Research in Australia (and other similar countries) reveals that children who are introduced to alcohol prior to 16 years of age are more likely to progress to early regular alcohol use and an increased risk of alcohol problems later.
- The National Health and Medical Research Council (NH&MRC) states that there is no safe level of alcohol consumption for teenagers under 18 and advise parents to delay their children's introduction to alcohol as long as possible.

Recommendation

Given the concern from the NH&MRC and other authorities, as well as the Commonwealth Government, adolescent alcohol consumption is not advised.

Those in control of a social function take on the legal responsibility (duty of care) for the unaccompanied students on behalf of their parents. This responsibility also extends beyond the private residence, even following the function, until care is handed over to the parent or another adult. As there is a range of parent views on the consumption of alcohol by students, it is best to respect the School's guidelines prohibiting the provision of alcohol at social functions for students.

The Parents' Association recommends that adolescents not be supplied or allowed alcohol in situations where other students may be present without their own parents. While the Association has no wish to intrude in decisions made within the family unit, we believe that parties or social events involving students from other families should not provide or allow alcohol.

We hope that those parents holding a social function for students, respect and support the decision of those parents not allowing their own children to consume alcohol.

Individual parents will make responsible decisions to enhance the lives of their children, and their peers in the parent community should support this.

Recommended resources:

- <http://www.alcoholthinkagain.com.au>
- www.alcohol.gov.au
- <http://www.rgl.wa.gov.au/liquor/liquor-legislation-amendment-act/faq-s>
- <http://www.rgl.wa.gov.au/liquor/liquor-legislation-amendment-act>