

Party Planning Tips

Make Alcohol Safety The Life Of Your Party

(NAPSA)—Each holiday season, Americans look forward to parties and festive celebrations. All too often, excessive consumption of alcohol is associated with these events and that corresponds to an increase in impaired driving tragedies at this time of the year.

Fortunately, there are a number of ways to enjoy your party without having alcoholic beverages as the center of attention. Here are a few tips on holding alcohol-safe and drug-free events from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration—or SAMHSA.

Get the Party Started

- Prepare plenty of foods so guests will not drink on an empty stomach, and avoid too many salty foods, which tend to make people thirsty.

- Encourage lively conversation and group activities, such as games that keep the focus on fun—not alcohol.

- Never serve alcohol to someone under the legal drinking age, and never ask children to serve alcohol.

- Make it clear that no drug use will be tolerated.

If You Choose to Serve Alcohol

- Offer a variety of non-alcoholic beverages for those who prefer not to drink alcohol. You could even host a contest to create non-alcoholic drink recipes. If you prepare an alcoholic punch, use a non-carbonated base, like fruit juice. Alcohol is absorbed into the bloodstream faster with a carbonated base.



At parties across the country, many drink a toast to alcohol-safe celebrations.

- Don't let guests mix their own drinks. Choose a reliable bartender who abstains from alcohol at the party and who can keep track of the size and number of drinks that guests consume.

Before Your Guests Depart

- Stop serving alcohol one hour before the party ends because only time sobers an individual who has been drinking.

- If some guests have too much to drink, drive them home or arrange for alternative transportation.

For more information on organizing alcohol-safe and drug-free parties, contact SAMHSA's National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information at 1-800-729-6686.