

IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO PRINCIPALS AND PARENTS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Each year many parents will help their children celebrate finishing their school career. Year 12 students will have been through possibly one of the most stressful periods in their schooling, and are looking to burn off some energy by wanting to celebrate. Celebrating this important stage in life can be done responsibly with careful planning so that everyone enjoys this milestone.

The NSW Government's 2003 Alcohol Summit identified a number of underage drinking issues, including the need for more education about the offence of supplying alcohol to under 18s.

Underage drinking and alcohol misuse are important community issues - particularly so as the school year draws to an end. It is essential that young people, parents and the wider community are aware of the laws relating to young people and alcohol. Parents, family friends and other adults are important role models and can help to protect young people against the potential harms of alcohol.

Adults, young people and the wider community need to be aware that it is against the law to buy and/or supply alcohol to under 18s, regardless of where this occurs – even at private parties. This is known as **secondary supply** or a **second party sale** of alcohol. The maximum penalty for supplying alcohol to a minor (a person under 18) is \$5,500, or \$11,000 and/or 12 months prison (in serious cases).

If parents agree to host a party they need to consider a number of issues, such as whether guests will be admitted by invitation only, and imposing a ban on under 18s bringing alcohol to the party. This is especially important if a party includes under and over 18s.

Gaming and Racing has developed a number of resources to explain the underage drinking laws, and the responsible drinking laws applying to adults. The enclosed material will help you understand these laws, and provides a useful reference for principals, teachers, senior students and their parents.

- Young People and the NSW Liquor Laws - information about the NSW liquor laws relevant to young people and adults, the key underage drinking offences, secondary supply of alcohol to under 18s, responsible drinking laws, and strategies to reduce underage drinking
- End of Year Functions and Alcohol Checklist - highlights the requirements for holding functions in licensed and unlicensed venues and related issues
- “Be smart, know the rules...” wallet card* - a quick reference to the underage drinking laws, and offences for using/making false proof of age documents

* Year 12 students also receive this wallet card in their “**have fun, play it safe**” student show bag.

These resources can be used to generate discussion and increase awareness of the underage drinking laws. You might also consider including information in your school newsletters or website, or using the information sheets as a teaching resource.

For more information about the NSW liquor laws, go to the Gaming and Racing website – www.dgr.nsw.gov.au or telephone the Department's Client Access Centre on 02 9995 0333.

Useful information about alcohol-related issues is also available from the NSW Government's www.alcoholinfo.nsw.gov.au website