

Starting Point

Party

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Addictive Substances

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Parents have Influence



A topic that concerns parents and other persons acting in loco parentis is how children and youths spend their free time and their consumption of drugs and alcohol. The spare time seems to be one of particular concern. How can you, as a person responsible for raising children, exercise an influence on your children's responses to addictive substances outside of your home?

Various studies indicate that youths whose parents show an interest in their children's spare time activities and social habits and apply a certain control by encouraging exercises, consume fewer legal and illegal drugs than youths with less parental supervision. As a person responsible for raising your children, you have the right and duty to supervise your children's social activities. When arrangements are made keep your child's stage of development in mind and also consider the trust in your child. Since children learn best by imitating, the parents' role play is of utmost importance. How are our children supposed to behave properly, if we do not provide them with models of positive behaviour? The examples provided by parents are a basis for the life ahead.

Publisher's Information

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Rules for Going Out

Young people are searching for their own lifestyles. As parents, you can support this search by granting your children space, but also providing them with security and setting limits. Young people need someone to talk to and to have time for them.

Actively engage your child, make arrangements with them and be ready to discuss these arrangements again from time to time. Give your child security but set limits as well.

You need a lot of patience and equanimity. It is recommended that parents act consistently towards their children.

Important Questions for Parents

- **Where are you going?**
- **How are you getting there and back?**
- **Who are you going to be with?**
- **When are you coming home?**
- When your child returns, ask what he/she did. **Show interest** and be engaged when your child wants to tell you something. But **respect it** if your child does not want to talk about it, since this does happen among young people.

Recommendations

- Insist on **definitive answers**. If your child does not want to answer or cannot answer your questions, don't let him/her go out.
- Make **arrangements** concerning the consumption of alcohol and other drugs.



Party

Parties, visits to discos and events are important opportunities for young people to meet people of their age and interact with them, build contacts outside of the family and to experiment. Show interest in your child's lifestyle and everyday activities; this is how you make it easy for your child to become more independent.

Children and youths need adults to give them guidelines for organising parties and going out, even if they make a fuss about them beforehand. Clear rules simplify your responsibility and are at the same time arguments towards colleagues. Demand concrete information from your son or daughter when he/she wants to go out with friends or go to a party.



Important Questions for Parents

- › **Who** is organising the party?
- › **Where** is this event taking place?
- › **How long** will the event last?
- › **Who are the adults** responsible for the event?
- › **Whom** is the event intended for?
- › **How and when** are you coming home?

We do not recommend that you grant approval:

- › if the organisation is uncertain/unknown
- › if it is not clear who is responsible
- › if the time frame is uncertain
- › if the child is beneath the required age of admission
- › if the event is being held outdoors (e.g. in a forest, at a lake or similar)
- › if the return trip is not planned (time, transportation)
- › It's a red flag if a party is going to be held at a place where the parents/adults are "out of town"

Recommendations

- › Make clear arrangements regarding the time the children are supposed to be back home and also regarding alcohol consumption.

- › State and enforce clear consequences for misbehaviour.
- › Be consistent if arrangements are violated.
- › Show interest in your child's friends.
- › Be available to your child at all times.

Parties and Events at Home

Support your son/daughter with clear rules when your child organises a party at your home.

- › Take responsibility and provide the necessary supervision.
- › Forbid serving alcohol (not even alcopops)
- › Make it clear that smoking is undesirable and that drugs are prohibited.
- › Do not allow any parties in your home when you are absent.
- › Make the guests aware that nightly noise restrictions become effective as from 22.00h onwards (that is, they need to keep their voices down to indoor conversational levels and show consideration for the neighbours when they leave your residence).



When should they come home?



Adequate sleep is a basic precondition for the physical and intellectual development of children and youths. Adequate sleep is very important for health, growth and the ability to learn. The need for sleep is not the same for all young people, though. The average amount of sleep required by young people is:

- ▶ between 12 and 13 years of age around 9 to 10 hours
- ▶ starting at age 14 around 8 to 9 years
- ▶ other important factors that play a role are the times of getting up, the way to school, beginning of school lessons, the return from school and personal activities such as sports, etc.

An important and recurring question is when children/youths should get home after a night out or party. Age-appropriate limits make sense; however, it should be possible to arrange exceptions. But exceptions should remain exceptions!

We recommend the following guidelines:

During the week during the school year

- ▶ 12 to 14 year-olds 20:30 at the latest
- ▶ 15 to 16 year-olds 21:30 at the latest
- ▶ 17 to 18 year-olds 22:30 at the latest

Weekends, during holidays

- ▶ 12 to 14 year-olds 21:30 at the latest
- ▶ 15 to 16 year-olds 23:00 at the latest
- ▶ 17 to 18 year-olds 24:00 at the latest

Rules on Alcohol Consumption

In recent years it has become commonplace for youths increasingly younger in age to drink themselves to intoxication at weekends or even on weekdays. Since alcohol intoxication is very harmful for developing children and young people, you as parents and legal guardians are called to exercise your influence on the alcohol consumption of children and young people and to prohibit consumption of every kind of addictive substances until the age of 18. Talk with your children about the effects and later consequences of the consumption of addictive substances. Regulate consumption for all members of your family. Welcome your child, when he/she comes home from an evening out with friends or ask him/her to wake you up when he/she comes home. A glance is all it takes to tell if your child is well. At the same time, this recommendation has a preventative effect since your child will make sure not to overconsume alcohol if he/she has to face you later.



Recommendations:

- ▶ Children under 16 years of age: Absolutely no alcohol consumption!
- ▶ Starting at 16 years of age: With 16-year-olds, alcohol can be tried out on selected occasions (e.g. family parties) in a controlled setting. When going out, however, parents should prohibit excessive consumption of alcohol and arrange clear rules: Whether and how much he/she may drink.

Laws:

- The law prohibits (even vending machine sales):
- ▶ Sale of alcohol, tobacco products and smokables **to those under the age of 16**
- ▶ Sale of spirits, aperitifs, alcopops, liqueurs to **those under the age of 18**
- ▶ the sale of alcoholic beverages **to intoxicated persons**

New Media



Television, PC games, internet, mobile phones and other mobile devices can be dangerous playgrounds that are unsuitable for young people. Find out what your children are using their computers and mobile phones for and what information is stored on them. Don't check these devices in secret. Talk to your child directly. If they suspect that your children have and are sharing violent imagery and pornography, teachers and administrative personnel in school have the right to confiscate a mobile phone and inform the parents.

Establish common rules for the use of various media and make your child aware of the dangers of chat-rooms.

Mobile Telephones

So that young people keep their costs under control, we recommend the following:

- when purchasing, make sure your son/daughter purchase a Natel with a prepaid card.
- the parents can grant the child or youth a certain amount for the mobile. In contrast to an allowance, we recommend some form of service in return in the form of a "chore".
- To keep control, the pre-paid card should always be re-loaded at the same time (e.g. beginning or end of the month).
- Together with your child, perform random checks of the files saved on the mobile (movies, pictures) at regular intervals. Have the functions explained to you. "The younger the child, the fewer functions. Children in primary school do not need either internet access or MMS functions on the mobiles. Security settings from the mobile phone provider: The younger the child, the more important it is to select the most restrictive security settings (such as blocking 09000 numbers) available."



Television and/or Computers

Arrange age-appropriate limits for television and computer times for your child:

- ▶ **7 to 9 years-of-age:** max. 30 minutes per day
 - ▶ **10 to 12 years-of-age:** max. 1 hour per day
 - ▶ **13 and older:** max. 2 hours per day
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- ▶ For school-age children, we recommend placing media in a living room or family room. Children's rooms are unsuitable locations for these devices.
 - ▶ Screens should always be visible to the parents and should be shut down after use, not kept on in standby mode.
 - ▶ Together with your child, determine which movies, games and activities the child is permitted to view or play on them. Always pay attention to the age restrictions stated by the manufacturers. Check by random sample what your child is viewing on TV or what he/she is doing on the computer.
 - ▶ Television and computer games are leisure activities: Arrange under what conditions (homework done, chores done) they can enjoy their media. Media use in the morning and afternoon is not recommended.
 - ▶ Discuss PC use with your child and develop family-wide habits.
 - ▶ Learn about child-proofing your home internet access (www.fit4chat.ch, www.security4kids.ch)

Allowances

Children and young people only learn to handle money if they are able to manage a small income themselves. It is sensible to pay them a small allowance and not link it with any conditions.

Some parents give their child a fixed amount per week or month with which they must pay for certain things themselves (e.g. going out, mobile phone fees, clothes, etc.). Other parents give their child money for certain specific occasions (e.g. movies, concerts, sporting events, buying new clothes, etc.). In any case, take your child's age and ability to handle money responsibly into account. And make sure that the amount fits into your family budget. Children and young people should not have unrestricted amounts of money all the time. It is important that they learn to accept responsibility. Make it clear to your child what their money may NOT be spent on (e.g. alcohol, cigarettes, etc.).

An Allowance is a Matter of Negotiation

You must arrange with your child what their allowance can and must be used for.

Recommendations

As a pure allowance that can be used for sweets, going out, magazines, etc., we recommend the following variants:

- ▶ 1st school year Fr. 1. to 1.50 per week
- ▶ 2nd school year Fr. 1.50 to 2. per week
- ▶ 3rd school year Fr. 2. to 2.50 per week
- ▶ 4th school year Fr. 2.50 to 3. per week
- ▶ 5th & 6th school years Fr. 15. to 25. per month
- ▶ 7th & 8th school years Fr. 25. to 35. per month
- ▶ 9th & 10th school years Fr. 35. to 50. per month

You can find more information at:
www.adb-budget.ch or www.my-money.ch

active

Leisure Time



MACH ÖPIS

www.machoepis.ch - the Platform for Active Recreation

The machoepis recreation portal is a free internet platform available to everyone that helps interested parties find individual recreational options. A broad range of services, advice and information offices are presented in six categories.

- **Club portal:** All sports and recreation clubs in the Canton Schwyz
- **Coordination Centre for Parent Information Ausserschwyz:** Events calendar, continuing education and educational opportunities, informational assistance.
- **Recreation:** Exciting ideas for recreation, checklists and guides for planning events and parties, recipes for alcohol-free drinks, information on the topic of child and youth safety.
- **Special Offices:** Emergency offices and contact points for questions of all kinds.
- **Teams & Outfits:** Be active and look professional thanks to a standard outfit, free t-shirts and sports outfits.
- **Fun & Games:** Borrow trendy new games free of charge.

www.machoepis.ch - the recreational platform for young and old

Addresses and Contact Points

- ▶ **Budget Consulting in Canton Schwyz**
Tel. 041 811 29 15
www.budgetberatung.ch
- ▶ **The Helping Hand (24 hours)**
Tel. 143
- ▶ **Office for Alcohol and Drug Concerns**
Tel. 055 451 27 17 (Lachen)
Spd.lachen@spd.ch
Tel. 041 859 17 17 (Goldau)
spd.goldau@spd.ch
www.spd.ch
- ▶ **Office for Marriage and Family Counselling**
Tel. 055 410 46 44 (Pfäffikon)
Tel. 041 859 17 37 (Goldau)
www.spd.ch
- ▶ **Debt Counselling**
Tel. 055 420 28 88
info@schuldfragen.ch
www.schuldfragen.ch
- ▶ **gesundheit schwyz**
Information Office for General Questions on Health Maintenance, Prevention and AIDS
Tel. 041 859 17 27
gesundheit-schwyz@spd.ch
www.gesundheit-schwyz.ch
- ▶ **Cantonal Police Schwyz (Information and Prevention)**
Main office Tel. 041 819 29 29
Police Emergency No. 117
kapo@sz.ch
www.sz.ch/polizei
- ▶ **Child and Youth Psychiatric Services, Counselling and Therapy**
Tel. 055 451 60 50 (Lachen)
Tel. 041 859 17 77 (Goldau)
www.kjpd-sz.ch
- ▶ **komin Competence Centre for Integration**
Tel. 041 859 07 70
integration-sz@kom-in.ch
www.kom-in.ch
- ▶ **Counselling Office for Victims of Violence, Canton Schwyz (Threats, Injuries, Sexual Exploitation)**
Tel. 0848 82 12 82
opferhilfesz@arth-online.ch
www.arth-online.ch/opferhilfe