

PLANNING PARTIES

**A resource for those working with students
organising safe afterball parties**

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Foreword

In October 2000 the Alcohol Advisory Council called together a group of health promotion and youth workers who had expressed concern about afterball parties. At this meeting, more than 30 people told stories of how what was intended to be a highlight of a young person's time at school sometimes ended in personal tragedy. They also spoke about the work that was going on in various communities around New Zealand to make such events safer.

The participants made a strong recommendation to ALAC that a set of guidelines be developed for the people who work with the planners of the parties, such as health and youth workers, police, secondary schools and parent groups.

It is now my pleasure to introduce the resource to you. *Planning Parties* describes the relevant laws to consider and takes you through the steps in planning a safe party for young people.

It is my intention that these guidelines will be a valuable tool for those who are working to reduce alcohol related harm among young people.

Dr Mike MacAvoy
Chief Executive Officer

Purpose of this Resource

This resource is for those people or groups working with students organising a safe afterball party. It aims to assist in planning, running and evaluating safer events and includes legal issues, a comprehensive list of steps to follow and examples of things that have previously worked.

Using this resource should help achieve safer, more enjoyable parties. This resource is only a guide and will need to be modified to best meet the unique needs of your area.

Throughout this resource, the term 'afterball' is used. In some communities, other terms will be more common e.g. afterformal or rort.

The recommendations for planning a safe afterball party can be applied to other events such as other parties and youth events.

Content

The resource follows the planning sequence for a safe afterball party. It covers the legal issues, particularly the interpretation of sections of the Sale of Liquor Act (1989) and indicates what can and what cannot be done.

The resource outlines the steps to follow in planning a safe afterball function such as setting up a working party, establishing a budget, gaining sponsorship, choosing venues, security issues, transport and entertainment. It provides a planning timeline and a detailed checklist for ensuring that key areas have been considered and addressed. The resource provides a set of templates such as sample letters to Police, caregivers, Boards of Trustees, which can be adapted to the needs of the particular organising group. It also provides information on working effectively with the media and covers a range of frequently asked questions.

Background

The school ball is a highlight of the school year for senior school students and is generally an accepted and well organised activity on the school calendar. These events are organised by school staff and students and the majority are alcohol free. Over the last few years the 'Afterball Party' has emerged. Organised by students they have sometimes been associated with the excessive use of alcohol and have resulted in a range of alcohol related harms. Around the country there have been reports of violence, drink driving crashes, property damage, unsafe and unwanted sex and other alcohol related injuries.

As a result, a number of people around the country including health promoters, youth workers, police, road safety co-ordinators, liquor licensing staff and parents have worked alongside students to reduce these alcohol related harms. Although this approach is gaining popularity and is proving to be successful, the issue of afterball parties continues to be a controversial one.

Schools in particular have expressed different views about afterball parties. Some have threatened to cancel the school ball if the afterball goes ahead, some do not acknowledge these events take place, while others are very supportive. Schools can be put in a difficult position when they have not organised the event but are linked to any negative outcomes.

With the increasing popularity of afterball parties many communities are assisting students to make these events safer. Harm minimisation and host responsibility concepts have been key strategies in achieving this. These have included: provision of non-alcoholic drinks and food, security, safe transport and secure venues.

Around the country a number of groups have assisted students with the organisation of afterball parties. The Alcohol Advisory Council (ALAC) called a national meeting with people who had been involved in planning events at a local level. It was agreed that a national

resource should be developed to assist those people involved with afterball parties to effectively plan, implement and evaluate these events. It was recommended the resource pull together best practice recommendations and provide a framework that could be adapted to meet the needs of different communities.

Definitions

This resource uses a number of terms that may need explanation:

- **Harm minimisation**

Harm minimisation is an approach that aims to minimise the harmful health, social, and economic consequences of risk taking behaviour for those people who choose to participate in potentially dangerous activities. The primary goal of this approach is a reduction in related harms rather than totally stopping the activity, although harm minimisation strategies often lead to a reduced number of people participating in potentially harmful activities over time.

The concept of harm minimisation is well summed up by a Community Constable from Cambridge:

“In principle we should dissuade underage drinkers from drinking, but if we don’t provide a safe environment for them they’ll drink anyway - it can lead to social problems that create community problems, and soon the issue gets out of hand.”

- **Host responsibility**

Host responsibility is a well-known approach that puts the responsibility on the host to ensure that the good times associated with alcohol do not result in problems later on.

The following five main strategies make up host responsibility:

- ◇ Provision and promotion of substantial food
- ◇ Provision and promotion of non-alcoholic and low alcohol beverages
- ◇ Serving of alcohol with care and responsibility
- ◇ Identification of, and responsible approaches to dealing with, intoxicated and underage people
- ◇ Arrangement of safe transport options

- **Key Stakeholders**

Key stakeholders are the people who have a vested interest in, or who may be affected by the project. i.e. they have a stake in the processes and outcomes of the event. Key stakeholders in relation to safe afterballs may include: students, parents, police, security, fire safety, SADD students, road safety co-ordinators, public health nurses, health promoters, licensing agencies, teachers and principals.

Consultation

Consultation with key stakeholders will assist in putting together a working party, work through issues as they arise, create buy-in from people and gain support and skills greater than you could provide by yourself. The consultation process provides a great opportunity to gain community wide support for the afterball party.

Legal Issues

Legal issues impact significantly on afterball parties, and have been one of the factors that have caused the most concern and controversy. This section aims to clarify these issues, and demonstrate how you can work effectively within the law.

WARNING: The Sale of Liquor Act as it relates to youth drinking and parties appears to be interpreted differently around the country. It is always a good idea to check the position your local police are likely to take on these issues.

SALE OF LIQUOR ACT (1989)

This is the main Act affecting afterball parties. The sections of this Act that need to be understood are:

Section 151 Sales by unlicensed person

Every person commits an offence and is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months or a fine not exceeding \$40,000 who, not being the holder of a licence, sells, or exposes or keeps for sale, any liquor.

To comply with this section no alcohol can be sold. Being sold or supplied also applies to alcohol being included in the ticket price.

Section 155 Sale or supply of liquor to minors

(1) Every person commits an offence who, being the licensee or a manager of any licensed premises, sells or supplies any liquor, or allows any liquor to be sold or supplied, on or from the licensed premises to any person who is under the age of 18 years.

(2) Every person commits an offence who, not being the licensee or a manager of any licensed premises, sells or supplies any liquor on or from the licensed premises to any person who is under the age of 18 years.

This section means that people working in licensed premises can't sell or supply alcohol to under-age people. This includes selling the alcohol to an older person, other than a parent or guardian, if they know that it's going to be passed on to someone under the age of 18.

Section 162: Purchasing of liquor by minors

Every person commits an offence and is liable to a fine not exceeding \$2,000 who, being under the age of 18 years purchases any liquor on or from any licensed premises.

This means that nobody under 18 can buy alcohol.

Section 172: Making false representation to Licensees etc.

(1) Every person commits an offence and is liable to a fine not exceeding \$2,000 who falsely represents in writing to the licensee or a manager of any licensed premises, or to any employee of the licensee, that he or she is a person to whom liquor may be sold or supplied under the licence.

(2) Every person commits an offence and is liable to a fine not exceeding \$1,000 who falsely represents otherwise than in writing to the licensee or a manager of any licensed premises, or to any employee of the licensee, that he or she is a person to whom liquor may be sold or supplied under the licence.

This section outlines the fines for pretending a person is over 18. For presenting false documents such as someone else's ID, the fine is up to \$2000.

Section 160: Purchasing liquor for minors

- (1) Every person commits an offence and is liable to a fine not exceeding \$2,000 who purchases or acquires any liquor on or from any licensed premises with the intention of supplying the liquor, or any of it, to any person who is under the age of 18 years.*
- (2) Subsection (1) of this section applies irrespective of any liability that may attach to the licensee or any manager or any other person in respect of the sale or supply of the liquor.*
- (3) Subsection (1) does not apply to a person who purchases or acquires any liquor with the intention of supplying it to;*
 - (a) Any child of whom that person is a parent or guardian; or*
 - (b) Any other person who is attending a private social gathering.*

This is the most important section for the afterballs - it means that, generally, for those under 18, only a parent or legal guardian can buy or supply alcohol.

The only exception in the legislation is for a 'private social gathering'. Exactly what this means is not defined in the legislation so is open to different interpretations. As a general rule the people coming need a personal invitation i.e. if any student can come then it isn't a private social gathering. Remember alcohol cannot be sold at the event or included in the ticket price.

It is important to note that anyone who sells alcohol can be prosecuted if it can be shown that they knew it was going to be illegally supplied to someone under 18.

Section 153. Use of unlicensed premises as place of resort for consumption of liquor

- (1) Every person commits an offence and is liable to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 who, being the occupier or having or taking part in the care, management, or control of any unlicensed premises, allows those premises to be kept or used as a place of resort for the consumption of liquor.*
- (2) Subsection (1) of this section does not apply to the consumption of liquor---*
 - (a) By any person on any premises on which that person resides, whether that person is the occupier of the premises or not; or*
 - (b) Supplied to any person by way of gift by any person who resides on the premises on which the liquor is consumed.*
- (3) For the purposes of subsection (1) of this section, any person who acts as, or as if he or she were, an occupier or a person having any part in the care, management, or control of any premises shall be deemed to be an occupier of the premises, but without affecting the liability of any other person.*
- (4) For the purposes of subsection (1) of this section, premises may be deemed to be kept or used as a place of resort for the consumption of liquor even though they are open only for the use of particular persons or particular classes of persons, and not to all persons who wish to use them.*

This section is open to interpretation. If it can be proved that the primary purpose of an event is the consumption of alcohol, then the organisers of the event could be held liable.

Recently there was a prosecution under this section for a man who organised a party on his property for his 16 year old. He pleaded guilty and was ultimately given diversion. There is very little case law in this area and we will never know whether or not he would have been convicted had it gone to court.

SUMMARY:

WHAT'S NOT OK	WHAT'S OK
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No one can sell alcohol without a licence whether or not it is included in a ticket price. 2. No one can sell alcohol to someone under 18. 3. No one can buy alcohol if they are under 18. 4. A person under 18 cannot drink alcohol in a public place. 5. A person under 18 cannot go into a supervised area (most bars) unless they are with their parent or legal guardian. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A parent or legal guardian can supply alcohol to their child(ren). 2. Alcohol can be supplied to someone under 18 at a private party, but it has to be just that - private (pre-sold tickets, admittance to school ball attendees only and not publicly advertised). 3. A person under 18 can drink alcohol at a private social gathering. 4. A person under 18 can drink alcohol at a sports club (or any other licensed premises) if: the licence is not being used at the time; no alcohol is being sold; the premises does not have an age designation; the venue is being hired out for a private function or if alcohol is purchased by a person's parent or legal guardian.

POLICE

Police will be guided by the Sale of Liquor Act, but as already noted local police may interpret the Act differently. In some areas afterball party organisers have received great support from local police. It is strongly recommended that you make contact with your local station and include the police as much as possible.

"It's the one time of the year that we bend the rules for them. If they don't abuse it they'll keep happening".
 Youth Aid Officer, Hamilton

"Every local area will be different, but police involvement is a key aspect of organising any afterball party".
 Constable, Invercargill

SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

There is a range of attitudes about afterball parties among school principals. Schools often feel apprehensive about involving themselves with afterball parties because of the issues related to under age drinking (see legal implications above), and potential problems caused by the party. However increasing numbers of principals are beginning to actively involve themselves in the process of afterball parties, assisting their students to plan and enjoy a safer party. In some areas the Principal has hosted a parent information evening to provide an opportunity to discuss concerns and look at solutions.

"Afterball parties are a fact of life and in some respects are one of those 'rites of passage' which most of us experienced in our teenage years. I hold the view that I would rather work with the organisers of such events to offer advice and guidance to ensure those who attend are safe, than to pretend the events do not happen".

Principal, Hamilton

A Taupo school uses a number of strategies to assist the students. These are:

- A letter is sent home to parents before the ball
- Guidelines for running a safe afterball party are made available to parents
- A booklet 'Hot Tips for Parents' produced by the school is sent home with students.

"I contacted, where possible, the families or co-ordinators that were having the after-ball functions. I advised them to seek Council permission if appropriate and to inform the police of their actions. We discussed venue sites, venue security, and the fact that there should be food available for students to eat, plenty of water and toilet facilities. To date, with 14 years experience as a principal, (fingers crossed), the same safe and happy event will occur this year".

Principal, Tauranga

BOARDS OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees is responsible for setting the school's policy on alcohol. In some schools members from the Boards of Trustees may be interested in being part of the discussion and planning either in their Board role or as a parent. In June 2000 the New Zealand School Trustees Association produced a resource for Boards of Trustees on developing alcohol policies. One section of this resource is devoted to the ball and afterball party. A list of options (including advantages and disadvantages) for school involvement in afterball functions is included.

A statement from the document reads:

"how schools deal with the contentious issue of the 'after-ball' provides a good example of the inconsistency between policy and practice. It is important to note that this is not suggesting that schools are directly involved in the organisation of afterball parties but rather that they provide an environment that encourages students to organise safe events and facilitates the assistance of other community organisations".

School Trustees Association

FIRE SERVICE

The interest that the Fire Service has in afterball parties relates to safe evacuation schemes and ensuring that venues are not overcrowded. Most venues should have an approved evacuation scheme. These include sufficient entrances and exits, emergency lighting, a safe assembly point and adequate fire alarms. Not all venues will have an existing approved scheme. If this is the case Fire Safety Officers are available to assist you in organising a safe alternative.

Planning a Safe Afterball Party – Steps to Follow

1: SETTING UP A WORKING PARTY

Afterball parties are student events and therefore it is essential that students take the lead role. However the involvement of other key stakeholders through a working party will assist students in making sure the event is safe as well as being fun. As previously discussed key stakeholders for afterball parties include students, health promoters, parents, SADD students, police, security, fire safety, road safety co-ordinators, public health nurses, district licensing agencies, teachers and principals. It is not necessary to have representation from all of these people on the working party; there may be a core group who meet regularly and call on other stakeholders for specific meetings or tasks.

A working group should be large enough to share the workload around. However very large groups can make decision making, meetings etc. difficult. For this reason 'sub-groups' work well.

It is important that members on your group share common goals and understand the principles and benefits of youth participation, host responsibility and harm minimisation strategies.

Once the working party is established it is important to identify people's abilities, strengths and availability. With this information roles can be assigned to individuals or sub groups eg: sponsorship, cooking food on the night, media liaison.

2: BUDGET

A budget will need to be drawn up, and funds to meet these requirements planned for. How the money will be managed, and decisions about spending are important considerations for the working party. Options for managing the finances include using one of the stakeholder agencies as a budget holder, or setting up a specific bank account for the event.

Common expenses include (the following figures are estimates only):

- Venue Hireage (Cleaning, power, bond, insurance) \$150.00 - \$1000.00
- Non-alcoholic drinks \$1.50 - \$5.00 per head
- Food \$2.00 - \$10.00 per head
- Transport \$250.00 per bus (1am - 6am)
- Porta-loos \$90.00 each \$30.00 cleaning
- Tables/Chairs \$5.00 - \$10.00 tables, \$3.00 chairs
- Decorations Variable
- Entertainment \$250 jukebox, \$300 DJ, \$500 Bands \$500 PA system
- Security \$18.00 - \$25.00 per hour + GST
- Organising expenses (Phone calls, tickets, printing, paper etc.) Variable, but remember to allow some cost

Sponsorship can meet some of these costs (*See sponsorship section over page*). Additionally costs can be factored into the price of tickets. Selling food and non-alcoholic drinks at the venue and fund-raising can also assist with your budget.

3: SPONSORSHIP

Sponsorship can assist in funding an afterball party. Sponsorship may be secured for food, transport, non-alcoholic drinks, chairs/tables, buses, taxis (discount deals), porta-loos, etc. Sponsorship may be sought from both product based businesses as well as those businesses that rely on community support e.g. lawyers, real estate agencies and insurance companies.

Successful sponsorship requires good planning, and takes time. For this reason seeking sponsorship needs to be prioritised, and should be one of the first activities undertaken. Approaches for sponsorship should come from the students as the event organisers. Businesses are likely to be more supportive of such approaches where working party involvement is identified. There are templates (example letter pg. 24) found in this resource to assist in obtaining sponsorship. The following steps are recommended:

Identify all the things for which sponsorship is suitable.



Make a list of all the businesses that sell or cater for these needs - some businesses may have provided sponsorship in previous years, and may be happy to continue sponsoring the event. Additionally follow up any contacts that working group members have i.e. a parent may own a business that is able to contribute.



Establish what can be offered to a sponsor in exchange for their support.



Decide on the approach - written or verbal.



The person seeking sponsorship needs to be able to talk about the event confidently and clearly outline what they are asking for. A written proposal may be helpful. This proposal might be left following a meeting with a potential sponsor or included with a letter of request. The proposal could outline all the requirements and ask for contributions towards this or may be specific to the nature of the business.



Make sure the sponsors are thanked following the event.

4: VENUES

Choosing an appropriate venue for an afterball party has been a challenge in some communities. For this reason it is important that the working party allows plenty of time. Possibilities include sports clubs, halls, warehouses, barns, clubs etc. The tables below provide summaries of the advantages and disadvantage of these venues. Real estate agents may also be able to provide a list of vacant properties that are available for hire. Start by checking what has been used before.

When looking at venues you will need to consider the following and it is recommended they become part of a contract with the owner of the venue.

4a: Size

The venue must be large enough to comfortably cater for the number of people attending; this includes sufficient room to allow for eating, dancing, seating, non-smoking and smoking areas. Some venues specify a maximum number of people. As there are no set guidelines identifying the number of people/square metre, it is recommended that security firms and fire safety officers are consulted to establish that the venue is of adequate size to cater for the number of people coming with regard to fire and safety.

4b: Liquor Licence - 'Sale of Liquor Act'

There are different types of licence, including *on licences* (i.e. taverns, hotels, nightclubs) and *club licences* (including sports clubs). If the venue is licensed you will need to get advice from the Liquor Licensing Inspector (at the local council) or from the Police.

If the premise is a tavern, hotel or nightclub their normal licence will probably prohibit anyone who is under 18 from being there unless they are with their parent or legal guardian. If you want to use such a venue you may need to get a special licence removing the age designation. This will allow under 18s to be there (without a parent or legal guardian) and only consume alcohol they have brought along with them. No alcohol will be able to be bought or sold at the venue. Some local authorities may not agree to this arrangement.

If you use a sports club a special licence probably will not be required as long as you are not selling alcohol and the club is just providing the venue, not the alcohol. The club may however require you to get a special licence.

Although checking on licences requires time and planning, the advantage of using a licensed or partially licensed premise is that they are usually well equipped. (*For more details see section - Legal Issues pg. 4*)

4c: Kitchens

You will need to consider the kitchen facilities of the venue. Are they adequate to cater for the food that is planned? For example are the stoves for cooking, or re-heating, storage of food, washing up facilities etc.

4d: Toilets

Are there sufficient toilets to cater for the numbers attending? If the venue does not have adequate numbers of toilets (i.e. barns/warehouses) porta-loos will need to be organised (if these are not obtained through sponsorship, this will need to be allowed for in the budget).

4e: Phones

It is important to have access to phones for emergencies, transport and other arrangements. If the venue does not have phones, mobile phones will need to be organised. Security guards, or those providing security should have phones, and it is important for members of the working party who are attending the event to have phones as well. Cell phone coverage may need to be checked, particularly for some rural venues.

4f: Price of Hireage

Venues are hired at a range of prices, therefore it is important to obtain a variety of quotes. It is important to establish what the price includes i.e. power, insurance, cleaning, bond, toilet paper etc. Consider the hours for which the venue will be needed - including pre-event decorating, setting up of equipment, the event, and cleaning up afterwards.

4g: Electricity

Power will be needed for lighting, emergency lighting, cooking, music etc. If the venue does not have electricity or has limited power points, generators, gas or other alternatives will be needed. (This may need to be budgeted for if not included in the prices of hireage). The use of alternate methods of power such as gas, LPG etc. can increase the risk of fire. It would be wise to discuss this with the local fire safety officer.

4h: Approved Evacuation Scheme

The venue should have an evacuation scheme in case of fire or other emergencies. If the owner of the venue is unclear, or the venue does not have a formal scheme (eg a barn) the local fire safety officer should be able to help. *(For further details see Safety section pg.14)*

4i: Hours of Use

There may be curfews to the hours of use. These will need to be considered when hiring a venue.

4j: Noise Restrictions

Venues within residential areas may have noise restrictions, or residents may complain about noise through noise control authorities. In many areas these authorities will act after 1-2 complaints, usually with an initial warning. Following these, authorities may close the event if noise levels are not sufficiently reduced.

4k: Gate Crashers

Well known venues, or venues in busy public areas are more likely to be troubled with gatecrashers. For this reason it is important to keep the venue unknown to as many people as possible. Security is an important factor in effectively managing gatecrashers *(for further details see Security section pg 14)*.

4l: Parking

Although private cars are strongly discouraged parking will need to be available for security, organised transport, police etc. Inner city venues may have limited parking, which will need to be considered when organising transport options.

4m: Location of Venue

The location of the venue is an important consideration. Venues situated in residential areas offer easier access (transport) but may pose problems with parking, noise control and gatecrashers. There is less chance of noise problems with rural venues but it may be more costly to organise transport to and from these. Centrally located venues also offer the advantage of easier access to suppliers and emergency services. It is important to keep the venue unknown to as many people as possible to decrease the risk of gatecrashers.

4n: Cleaning of Venue

Cleaning must be organised before the event. This may be built into the price of hiring the venue, or may need to be budgeted for as an additional cost. Another option is to organise a 'clean-up-crew' for both during and after the event. Make sure that there are plenty of rubbish bins available on the night, and for cleaning up afterwards.

4o: Extra Stuff

Some venues may have chairs and tables included in the prices. If not these may need to be organised (if not via sponsorship, this will need to be allowed for in the budget)

SUMMARY OF VENUES

VENUE	Liquor Licence	Kitchens	Toilets	Phone	Price of Hireage	Electricity	Fire Evacuation Scheme	Hours of Use	Noise Restrictions	Gate-crashers	Parking	Transport	Secrecy of Venue
BARN			Maybe		Cheaper	Maybe		Not Restricted	Less likely	Less likely	✓	More expensive	Easier to maintain
HALL (City)		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	May be Restricted	Maybe	More likely	✓	Cheaper	More difficult to maintain
HALL (Country)		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	May be restricted	Less likely	Less likely	✓	More expensive	Easier to maintain
SPORTS CLUBS	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	May need extended licence	Maybe	More likely	✓		More difficult to maintain
TAVERN HOTEL NIGHT CLUB	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	May need extended licence	Maybe	More likely	✓		More difficult to maintain
WARE-HOUSES			Limited		Cheaper	✓	Maybe		Less likely	Less likely	✓		Easier to maintain

The above table provides a summary - however these are generalisations, and may not be true in all cases

5: SECURITY

When organising security it is important to use youth friendly personnel. Ideally they will be from a registered or well-recognised firm. The ratio of security guards to attendees must be sufficient to deal with any problems that might arise. Most firms will have a recommendation for this. The Cambridge Police recommend 1 guard per 50 students. It is worth completing a contract with the security firm.

If you are not using a security firm there are a variety of other options including: off duty police and Māori wardens. Some groups have used parents, sports teams and teachers although they not trained in the area of security. Where parents have been used a suggested ratio is 1 parent per 20 guests.

Additional security measures that may assist in managing gatecrashers include:

- ⇒ Pre-selling tickets - no door sales
- ⇒ Limiting ticket sales, and retaining a list of numbers sold and attendees
- ⇒ Designing tickets in such a way that does not allow for duplication eg. printing on red paper makes them difficult to photocopy
- ⇒ Vetting of attendees to eliminate potential trouble makers (when selling tickets) - in smaller areas local police may be happy to assist with this, otherwise it remains the responsibility of the working group. Police support may be sought to assist the vetting process
- ⇒ Having two forms of entry - ticket and rubber stamp on hand at arrival. The stamp is an extra security check – it allows for easy identification of a gatecrasher
- ⇒ Make arrangements to prevent intoxicated people entering the venue. This might mean taking students home, or arranging for parents to collect them
- ⇒ Allowing no-one to enter one hour after the event has started
- ⇒ Providing security on all doors, exterior, car park etc. Ensuring all entry/exit points are well lit
- ⇒ Having a back up plan organised in the event of gatecrashers getting in
- ⇒ Arranging police presence during the event
- ⇒ Requiring people to stay inside unless they are leaving for the night

6: SAFETY

There are a number of things that can be done to create a safer environment, these are:

Fire Evacuation Scheme: An approved evacuation scheme includes sufficient entrances/exits, fire alarms etc. It is also important to have a designated smoking area, with security.

Phones: It is important to have phones available for emergencies, organising transport, food and other issues that may crop up during the evening. Even if the venue has landlines, cellphones are recommended as back-up. The working group may like to develop a card which could be photocopied with all cell phone numbers, emergency contacts, local police numbers on it for the night. These could be distributed to those likely to need them during the evening

Access: There needs to be clear entry/exit points that are well lit and good access for emergency services should these be required.

Drink Containers: It is important that there are no glass drink containers at the venue. Cans, unopened plastic bottles, and plastic covered RTD's are recommended.

Alcohol: The safe use of alcohol at afterball parties is one of the most controversial and challenging issues to be addressed. Legally young people can only drink alcohol that has been purchased by their parents. When alcohol is allowed the organisers need to come to some agreement about the quantity that might be brought, types of beverages permitted, how and when the alcohol will be taken to the event and how to manage any intoxicated party goers. A pre-arranged limit may be agreed – eg 6 cans of beer or 4 RTD's per person. Open plastic bottles or drinks that have been mixed at home should not be permitted. Some event organisers have opted for an alcohol-free event.

Non-Drinkers & First Aid: It is important that some people at the event don't drink any alcohol, including security, police, members of the working group and/or parents. It is also important to ensure that at least a couple of people are trained in first aid.

Bag and Coats Area: There needs to be a monitored area for storing attendees bags and coats - a docket system will help track peoples gear.

Police Involvement: As previously discussed, police involvement with all aspects of afterball party is desirable.

7: TRANSPORT

Transport needs to be well organised for getting all attendees safely to and from the event. Transport needs to be available all night for ticket holders only. There are a number of options available, including:

TRANSPORT OPTIONS	PROS AND CONS
TAXI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It may be possible to negotiate discount prices. ● It is more difficult to get everyone to the event using taxis because of their carrying capacity. Taxis are good during the evening and at closing as they can do trips more frequently and take people to their homes. ● Taxis may be a more expensive option.
MINI BUSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sponsorship for minibuses may be possible. ● Mini buses are a good option as they are more flexible than buses for regular trips, and are better than taxis for getting large numbers of people to and from the event. ● If minibuses are used safe pick up and drop off points will be needed. These should be well lit, supervised and spread out to cater for students living in different areas. To allow students to get home safely from these points parents/caregivers will need to be notified or taxis arranged.

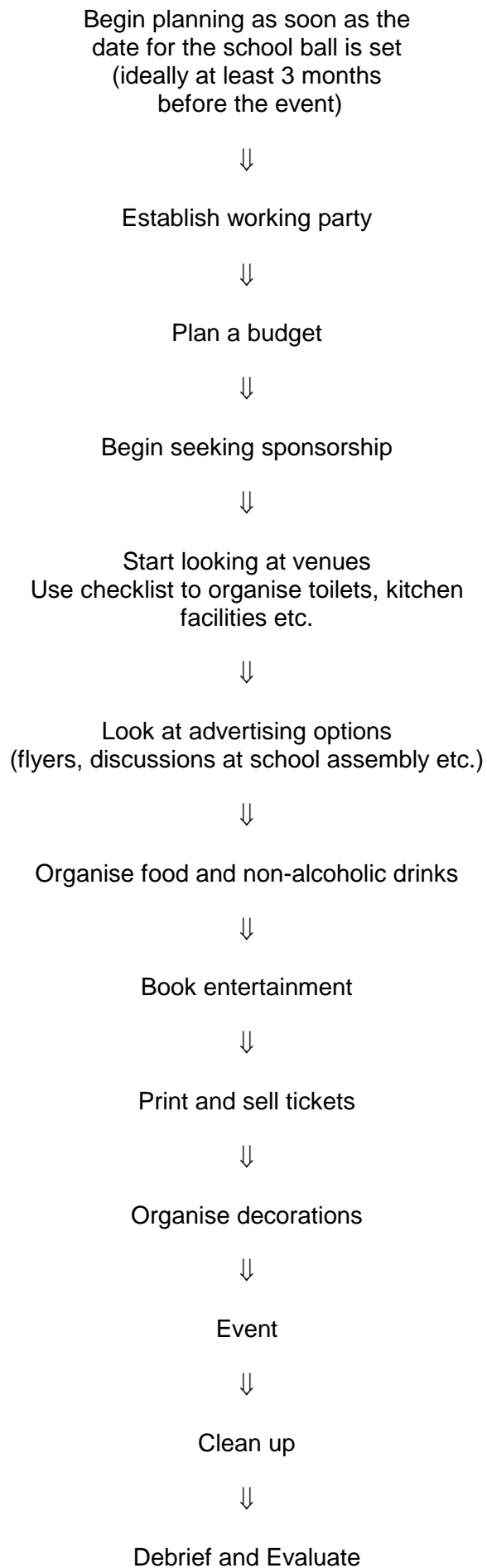
BUSES

- Sponsorship for buses may be possible.
- Buses are a great option for getting everyone to the venue.
- It may be more difficult to get people home during the event when buses are used as often they will wait until partly full before doing another trip.
- If buses are used safe pick up and drop off points will be needed. These should be well lit, supervised and spread out to cater for students living in different areas. To allow students to get home safely from these points parents/caregivers will need to be notified or taxis arranged.

8: ENTERTAINMENT

Organised entertainment is an essential part of a safe afterball party. Entertainment takes the focus away from drinking - good entertainment along with good food ensures alternatives to alcohol are readily available. Afterball parties provide an opportunity for local and school bands to gain exposure. Additionally entrants in the Xtra Smokefree Rock Quest may be interested in performing at the function. If bands are not an option, Disc Jockeys and Jukeboxes provide alternatives for music. Consider a variety of entertainment e.g. comedy act or dance group for earlier in the evening and bands, DJ's or Jukeboxes for later. Whatever the choice, providing entertainment is an important factor in running a safe and enjoyable afterball.

9: TIMELINE





Send thank you letter to working group and sponsors

Safer Afterball Checklist

DEVELOPING WORKING GROUPS

Student involvement. SADD groups are an excellent starting point

Identify stakeholders and invite people to join working group

Liaison with community police/Youth Aid Officers throughout the process - hopefully representation on working group

Parent involvement

BUDGET

Develop a budget

Look at funding options (sponsorship, fund-raising, ticket sales)

VENUE

Find and book a suitable venue

Check evacuation scheme or develop one with Fire Safety Officer

Check and action liquor licence requirements. No liquor to be sold or included in the price of the tickets

Ensure adequate lighting at all entry/exit points

Complete contract with venue owner

Keep venue secret

Plan and erect decorations

Set aside an area for bags and clothes

Identify non-smoking and smoking areas

Organise cleaning during and after the event

Ensure sufficient numbers of toilets or Porta-loos, and toilet paper

Arrange telephones and cellphones

Check power supplies - electricity, generator or gas

Ensure sufficient rubbish bins for the event

Set agreed finish time and notify local police (4 am usual time)

SECURITY

Limit numbers to event

Limit ticket sales to ball attendees and partners only

Don't allow bulk purchasing of tickets

Arrange security to include entry/exit points to building, exterior and car-park area

Brief door security on the entry requirements

Entry by ticket only sold prior to ball - keep a list of attendees

Organise rubber stamp, and person to administer this on hand after taking ticket at entry

Arrange police presence during the event

TRANSPORT

Arrange transport for all ticket holders (taxis, buses or mini vans)

Ensure transport will be available during total time of event

Provide adequate parking for taxis/buses/mini-vans and emergency vehicles

Publicise to students that no private vehicles are allowed at the event

ENTERTAINMENT

Organise live band/DJ with contract agreeing on price and times

Organise hiring of a PA systems

FOOD

Ensure sufficient food

Organise kitchen facilities

Ensure water available

Plan availability of non alcoholic drinks

Arrange for any left over food from Ball to be taken to afterball

SAFETY

Set and publicise limit amount of alcohol (6 cans beer or 4 RTD's per person)

No glass (cans or plastics) - (RTD's only glass bottles permitted)

No open plastic bottles or premixed (home-made) drinks permitted

Non alcoholic drink options/available

Helpers trained in first aid

First aid kits

Dealing with Problems on the Night

In spite of the best planning things can still go wrong. It is suggested that you discuss potential problems with the working group and other key stakeholders - setting clear guidelines that you agree on and will use. It is recommended that the following scenarios are considered.

What do you do if gatecrashers arrive?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who will deal with them - security firm or working party or police?• If the police are not present, who makes the decision to phone them – security or the working party?• Check with the local police as to telephone number – set up either a local contact or use a central number
What do you do if people start fighting?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decide on whether it is appropriate to use a warning system. This might be as simple as giving a first warning to change behaviour, and on a second warning person is asked to leave – and transport home arranged• Decide on appropriate strategy for anyone involved in the fight• Decide on strategy for taking home any people involved in a fight. This might be by taxi, use of a minibus or calling parents to collect their child• Decide who and how might intervene in a fight – aim should be to separate ring leaders and defuse situation• If there is a need to contact the police, agree on who will make the decision to phone them – security staff or member of the working party• If the police are required provide the number for either a local contact or a central station
What do you do if someone hurts themselves?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decide on a system so that members of the working group, and first aid people can be easily recognised – such as colourful name badge• Ensure that first aid equipment is taken to the venue on the night• Decide on an area within the venue that will be used as a first aid station if necessary. This area will need good lighting, access to phone or cellphone and easy access to the door should emergency vehicles be required• Create a list of emergency facilities near the venue – include telephone numbers, how to get there, and how long it takes to get there• Allocate the responsibility to make the decisions on the night regarding calling an ambulance if the need arises

What if someone gets really drunk?

- Decide on appropriate strategy for dealing with intoxicated (drunk) people. The strategy might include having a person identified who makes the final decision about whether a guest can stay or should go home
- Decide on strategy for taking home any people who are intoxicated. This might be by taxi, use of a minibus or calling parents to collect their child
- If you decide to use taxis as emergency vehicles it is wise to set aside some money to cover the costs, in case people sent home can't pay

Benefits of Organising a Safer Afterball Party

Assists access to reasonable venues at realistic prices

Provides and promotes a safe environment

Police support for the event

Parents/students support

Reduces public criticism

Reduces the abuse of alcohol

Reduces damage/disorder on streets

Students can relax and enjoy themselves

Deters possible gate crashers

Shows that organiser has a responsible attitude

Builds acceptance by their school management

Sets platform for well organised/managed event

Encourages positive publicity

Safer environment - greater student participation

Evaluation

There are a range of evaluative techniques that can assist you in identifying what did and didn't work well, what you should continue to do and what needs changing. Because afterball parties are usually organised by senior students who will probably not be at school the following years the information will greatly assist students running the event in following years. When evaluating your party it is important to speak to a range of people who were involved, including those who attended. Make sure that the feedback is documented and is readily available for future afterball organising groups.

Key Contacts & What's Worked:

There are a number of people, organisations and community groups that have experience helping students plan safe events, including afterball parties. The Regional ALAC office will have access to other local contacts. The toll-free number for ALAC is 0508 258 258.

It is recommended that you make contact with local representatives with similar interests. These may include people from any of the following:

POLICE - Local Community Constable and/or Youth Aid Officer
FIRE - Fire Safety Officer
LOCAL COUNCIL - Community Development Unit
DISTRICT LICENSING AGENCY
PUBLIC HEALTH UNIT
ROAD SAFETY CO-ORDINATORS
YOUTH WORKERS
MĀORI WARDENS

Templates

This section provides example letters to assist you in: establishing working parties, obtaining sponsorship, accessing venues, notifying Boards of Trustees and parents.

Invitations to assist with establishing a working party

Afterball Working Party
C/- 14 Brown St
TOPTOWN
08 576 7787

15 March 2001

Constable Mike Paki
Youth Aid Officer
Roseville Community Police Station
Grey Street
TOPTOWN

Dear Mike

We are in the process of establishing a working party for planning an afterball party for June 15 this year. As you will be aware these events aim to provide a safe environment for secondary students to celebrate their senior school years. We are planning the event around host responsibility/harm minimisation strategies and are in the process of organising, food, non-alcoholic drinks, transport, a security-controlled venue, and supervision.

We believe that your knowledge would be valuable to the working group, and that you could greatly assist us in making this a safe and enjoyable event. We would like to invite you to participate as part of our working group, and will be in contact to discuss this with you next week. Should you want to talk to us before this time feel free to contact us at the above details.

Yours sincerely

Elisabeth Jones
Toptown Afterball Working Party

Sponsorship Letter

Toptown Afterball Working Party
C/- 14 Brown Street
Toptown
08 576 7787

15 March 2001

Roberto's Pizza
44 Main Street
Toptown

Re: SPONSORSHIP

To whom it may concern/The manager/or personal details if you have them

We are a group of students, community workers, youth development officers, police, and road safety co-ordinators (list who is on your working party) who are currently planning an afterball party for 15 June this year. These events provide an enjoyable and safe environment for students to get together and celebrate their senior years at school.

To make this event safe we are encouraging host responsibility practices, these include; providing food, non-alcoholic drinks, transport, a security controlled venue, and supervision.

To enable this event to take place we are seeking sponsorship for (identify your request). We have approached your business as your products/services are well recognised by our students. As you would be the only provider of (their product) we would like to offer you sole advertising rights on our tickets, posters and other advertising material. Additionally we would be happy to distribute promotional material with ticket sales or at the event. We feel that this event will provide you with excellent coverage as there will be 200 tickets sold.

We believe that this could provide you with an excellent opportunity to advertise and we would like to discuss with you any sponsorship that you feel able to make. We will be in contact next week, however if you would like to contact us sooner please feel free to use the above details.

Yours sincerely

Elisabeth Jones
Toptown Afterball Working Party

Venue Access

Elisabeth Jones
C/- 14 Brown St
TOPTOWN
08 576 7787

12 March 2001

The Manager
The Skyline Event Centre
Mountain Road
TOPTOWN

To whom it may concern

We are a community group who are in the process of planning a party for June 15 of this year. We are writing to request information regarding your venue. If your venue is available on the 15th June could you please forward information regarding costs (bond, insurance, cleaning), hours of use and the facilities available at your premises.

Yours sincerely

Elisabeth Jones

Board of Trustee Letter

Elisabeth Jones
Afterball Working Party
C/- 14 Brown St
TOPTOWN
08 576 7787

30 March 2001

The Principal and Board of Trustees
Toptown College
30 Edward Street
TOPTOWN

RE: SAFER AFTERBALLS

Dear Principal and Board of Trustees

As you will be aware the Toptown College Ball is rapidly approaching. With these events usually comes the student organised 'Afterball party'. During the last few years students and representatives from the community have worked together to try and make these events safe.

As a result of the growing incidence of these events the Alcohol Advisory Council has developed National Guidelines that outline recommendations for running a safer afterball party. The majority of recommendations are around host responsibility and include things like; food, non-alcoholic drinks, safe transport etc. Please find a copy enclosed for your interest.

One of the key factors affecting schools is the need for students planning the event to access parents. This encourages parental involvement and increased parents awareness of the afterball. Previously other schools have allowed this to happen through the school newsletter system. These articles have stressed that the afterballs **are not a school function**.

The purpose of this letter is to ask you for your support in enabling the working group to utilise the school information system to assist in planning a safer afterball party. We will be in contact with you next week to discuss this proposal.

Thank you in anticipation of your support.

The Afterball Working Party

Parent Letter - Sample from Toptown College

Letter on School Letterhead

Date

Dear Parent/Caregiver

JOINT STATEMENT ABOUT COLLEGE AFTERBALL FUNCTIONS FROM THE PRINCIPALS OF TOPTOWN COLLEGE AND MOUNTAIN VIEW HIGH SCHOOL

The ball season is upon us and once more the local college students are preparing for their special formal occasions.

The Toptown College Ball is held on (Date) and the Mountain View High School Ball is held on (Date). Both balls are at the Skyline Event Centre.

There are some important issues and information that needs to be publicised to parents and the public about what happens after the senior formal ball.

- Afterball functions are an inevitable part of afterball activities. These are **private** functions and are not organised or sanctioned by the Colleges whose students may attend or be involved with.
- The Colleges are concerned about the safety and well-being of our students at all times. Both colleges educate students on making informed choices regarding keeping themselves safe and host responsibility through their senior life skills classes.
- Parental organisation is the best way to ensure a successful safe event. The alternative is to leave everything to chance. It is better to have warm shelter, food, security and control rather than lots of students roaming the streets looking for functions.
- Parents should be prepared to shoulder the responsibility of what happens after the school ball. Parents have two choices as far as the afterball function is concerned: - permit their child to attend or pick them up after the school ball and take them home.
- Even though the colleges take no responsibility they are able to provide organisers of any afterball functions a set of guidelines that may assist any parental group wishing to be involved. The guidelines come from a parent who organised a successful afterball function a few years ago.

Bill Waru
Principal
Toptown College

Jane Fox
Principal
Mountain View High School

Working Effectively with the Media

Check out what angle your local media take, are they supportive of youth issues? Try to identify a publication that is supportive, and gain positive media coverage. Feel confident about what you want to get across - (e.g. host responsibility and harm minimisation), identify someone in your group who feels confident talking with media. Ask to view the interview script prior to publication to ensure that it has been interpreted correctly.

Commonly Asked Questions and Answers

How can we support a party that has underage drinking?

The thing is that the parties happen anyway - often resulting in harmful behaviour. You can work effectively within the law to assist students to plan and run a safer 'private' party. (See Liquor Licence section - pg. 10)

Are we encouraging young people to drink?

The reality is that many young people drink alcohol in a range of settings – at home, at parties, at social gatherings. Party organisers can support safe and responsible drinking; they can also provide non-alcoholic drinks for those young people who choose not to drink. Safe drinking practices include providing non-alcoholic alternatives, food, monitoring the amount of alcohol available per person and thinking about safe transport.

What is the benefit of organising afterball parties?

Plenty - building productive relationships with youth, encouraging safe drinking practices, and keeping youth safe - a full list is provided on pg. 21.

How much alcohol should I give my child?

There is no hard and fast answer to this question. Parents will weigh up a variety of factors – the age of their child, their family attitudes to alcohol, their own values system and come up with an individual response.

When the question is asked regarding a particular event such as an afterball party the organising committees may have set guidelines regarding how much alcohol each attendee is able to bring – this would not exceed a maximum of six drinks per person, sometimes lower levels are set.

What is a standard drink?

A standard drink varies depending on what type of alcohol is being consumed - for example 300ml beer, 100ml wine and/or 2 pub measures of spirits are all equivalent to one standard drink. A premixed drink or RTD is also equivalent to 1 ½ standard drinks. There are no specific guidelines for young people.

Why don't schools have alcohol served so that afterballs aren't needed?

A few schools do allow alcohol to be served at the school ball, these have predominantly been private schools. Some people are in favour of this becoming the norm, which may reduce the desire for afterballs. However even if there is alcohol available at school balls, there is no guarantee that this would stop afterball parties. Young people like the opportunity to do their own thing.

Why are schools not willing to be involved?

Predominantly because of the ethical implications of under-age drinking, and the alcohol related harms historically resulting from afterballs being reflected upon the school. Some schools are beginning to involve themselves with these functions, with really positive outcomes.

There is so much to organise; how can we do it all?

Working parties are the most effective way to get everything done. If your working group share a common goal they usually work really well. Working parties allow you to draw off a range of skills and spread the workload so it is divided into manageable levels.

Do we need to let the Police know what is happening?

It is strongly recommended that police are involved with as much of the process as their time allows. Working alongside the police will help you to make sure you are planning a safe and enjoyable event that operates within the law.

References:

Alcohol Advisory Council, *Host Responsibility at Work*, Wellington 1990

Alcohol & Public Health Research Unit *Programmes Evaluation: An introductory guide for health promotion*, University of Auckland, Auckland, 2000

Ministry of Education, *Drug Education - A Guide for Principals and Boards of Trustees*, Learning Media Ltd, Wellington, New Zealand, 2000

Ministry of Health, *Guidelines for Safe Dance Parties*, Wellington. 1999

Ministry of Health, *Guidelines for Safe Dance Parties_- THE BIG BOOK*, Wellington. 1999

Ministry of Health, *National Drug Policy*, 1998 – 2003 Wellington 1998

The Health Action Trust, Nelson Youth Council and the Nelson City Council, *Event Underwriting Application and Checklists Booklets*, Nelson, 1999