

# Information for the Parents of Secondary School Freshmen

Enska

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR 18-YEARS**

**LOOSEN THE LEASH**

**BUT DON'T LET GO OF IT**

**Congratulations on  
your child entering  
secondary school!**

The next few years will invariably involve various new and exciting challenges, for both you and your child. Your teenager will therefore continue to need your guidance and full attention throughout these experiences.

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR 18-YEARS**

## **Please note the following: Parental Responsibility until Eighteen: Loosen up, but don't let go!**

We as parents are legally responsible for our children until they turn eighteen-years-of-age. We therefore need to be there for our children, set clear boundaries and provide them with guidance and instruction. Indeed, research suggests that teenagers who receive positive parental support, attention and supervision generally get better grades, are better adjusted and less likely to use drugs or alcohol.

## **Study Support: Monitoring Online**

It's important for students that their parents show an interest in their school work and provide support to the best of their abilities. Parents can obtain a password from their child's school in order to gain access to the school's website, thereby being able to monitor attendance and grades (until the student turns eighteen). Should any problems arise, supervisors, school counsellors and prevention counsellors are on hand at the school to provide assistance. Parents are therefore encouraged to become involved; pick up the phone or write an e-mail, if you have questions or concerns regarding your child's social or academic progress.

## **Social Activities**

Leading an active social life and also doing well academically in secondary school can certainly go hand in hand. Indeed, positive social experiences during adolescence can foster maturity and personal development, and may very well lead to lifelong friendships. Nevertheless, we as parents need set clear boundaries, have the appropriate discussions and intervene if particular activities are harming our child's welfare and/or academic performance.

## **New Friends**

Entering a new school will most probably mean that your child will also make new friends and acquaintances. Try to become acquainted with these new friends and familiar with the places and venues they frequent. Indeed, studies reveal that children whose parents are familiar with their friends and friends' parents are much less likely to abuse drugs or alcohol.

## **School Dances and Parties**

School dances are an integral part of college. It is School dances and other similar events are an integral part of the social calendar for many secondary school students. It is therefore important that parents familiarise themselves with the school rules regarding such events. Similarly, parties in domestic residences are popular with secondary school students, particularly in conjunction with school events. If you should allow your child to host such an event, please ensure that a responsible adult is present at all times. Indeed, news of unsupervised parties can spread quickly (by word-of-mouth, mobile telephone and even online) resulting in unwelcome individuals showing up in hordes at your home. Please bear in mind that if you allow underage drinking in your home, you are thereby also condoning alcohol consumption by children whose parents have no say in the matter.

## Alcohol Consumption and 'Beer Nights'

According to Icelandic law, it is prohibited to sell or deliver alcohol to persons under the age of twenty or even provide them with alcoholic beverages. So-called 'Beer Nights' (bjórkvöld) or other similar events which actively encourage alcohol consumption are sometimes held under the guise of a particular school, but such events are never organized or sanctioned by the school in question. If we collectively intend to curb teenage alcohol consumption, then it's important that parents cooperate with one another and set clear boundaries. Also bear in mind that studies show that teenagers who have access to alcohol in their home drink more and are more likely to experience alcohol-related problems.

## Later is better

Research suggests that the later young people start to consume alcohol or tobacco, the less likely they are to experiment with other addictive substances, give up on their studies or experience other related difficulties. It is therefore of key importance that all teenagers receive positive support from their families, friends and schools in their commitment to abstain from tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.

## More Information

Most secondary schools have a homepage where information on social activities and school prevention policies can be found, as well as a list of the names of staff and their e-mail addresses.

Most secondary schools will invite parents to an orientation session at the start of the child's first year of school. Furthermore, all secondary schools should have a parent association within their framework. If you're interested in taking part, contact the school to find out how these activities are organized and how to participate.

This pamphlet was written in cooperation with prevention counsellors in various secondary schools.

This pamphlet was written in cooperation with prevention counsellors in various colleges.



[www.samanhopurinn.is](http://www.samanhopurinn.is)



MENNTAMÁLARÁÐUNEYTIÐ



HEILBRIGÐISRÁÐUNEYTIÐ

**HOFF** HEILSUEFLING  
OG FORVARNIR  
I FRAMHALDSSKOLUM