



SCHOOL DANCES: THE BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER

School dances are an exciting tradition at New Trier with three events a year: Homecoming in the fall, Winter Dance-Trevapalooza, and Junior-Senior Prom in the spring. Some students go and some do not: usually about 50% of the students attend the dances.

In general, students view the dances as **BIG** events that can include before dance “picture parties,” rental transportation, dinner at a restaurant and an “after party”. Typically students invite a date although sometimes a group of friends will go together and everyone pays individually. Usually the person asking plans the evening, and will join up with his/her friends to go together as a group. Groups can number anywhere from 6 to as many as 35 people and as a result, the evening can get costly and logistics can be complicated. Parental advice and assistance is needed to help students make good decisions.

Usually the evening starts with a “picture party.” The group makes plans to meet at a home before dinner, and parents are invited to take pictures. It is fun and a good way to meet other parents and to see your student’s friends. When the student group leaves the picture party, usually the parents do as well. Although it is the host’s decision, New Trier suggests that alcohol not be served to parents while students are present at this brief get-together.

For transportation, carpools can be arranged with parents taking turns driving the various segments during the evening. Larger groups tend to charter limousines or small buses. Usually they are hired to drive students from the “picture party” to dinner, to the school for the dance, and then to the “after party.”

Many students go out to dinner before the dance either at local restaurants or downtown. For bigger groups some restaurants will arrange in advance a fixed price menu. This allows students to identify the cost ahead of time and arrange for one person to collect the money needed.

Sometimes a family will offer their home for an “after party.” This party begins after the dance and usually ends between 1 and 2 a.m. Prior to the party parents should check in with the host parent to see if anything is needed (rides or snacks) and to talk over what supervision will be provided.

In recent years, there has been a trend for students to leave the dance very early in order to get to the after party. If you are hosting an after party please discourage this practice as a lot of effort has been put into the planning of these dances. Without a dance, there would not be an after party. Generally the dances end at 10:30.

While school dances are planned to be fun, students are held to the same behavior rules as at any school activity: student must have NT student ID with him/her; no alcohol, drugs, smoking, etc. Students will face disciplinary action if they are found to be under the influence or in possession of alcohol or other drugs.

“The Ask” - Sometimes a student will design a clever or elaborate way to ask his/her date. This is just a formality as date has already said yes.

NTPA P2P guide is based on the experiences and insights of veteran New Trier parents, conversations with New Trier administration, local community groups and law enforcement. 10/10/16



Talk with your teen about...

- **acceptable budget for the evening**
- **most appropriate mode of transportation**
- **curfew for evening**
- **appropriate dress**
- **reasonable and safe options for pre and post dance activities**
- **appropriate behavior; common courtesy towards dates**

Homecoming: There are two separate Homecoming events:

Freshman Mixer

The Freshman Mixer takes place at the Northfield Campus and is a casual no date event organized by the Senior Helpers. It is a good opportunity for freshmen to get together and socialize.

Homecoming Dance

Organized by Tri-Ship and Girls' Club. The Homecoming Dance is held at the Winnetka Campus on a Saturday evening (7:30-10:30) in the fall and is attended by sophomores, juniors and seniors.

Tickets must be purchased in advance, and a New Trier ID is needed for admittance. Attire reflects a unique New Trier culture. Sophomores wear semi-formal clothing. Corsages and boutonnieres are individually purchased. Juniors and seniors wear theme costumes. While there is usually an overall theme for the dance decorations, individual groups choose their own theme. Although these are generally very creative and lots of fun, it's wise for parents to review ahead of time with your student what theme has been chosen to make sure it's appropriate

Winter Dance-Trevapalooza

The Winter Dance-Trevapalooza (previously known as Turnabout) is organized by the Global Exchange club and takes place on a Saturday evening (7:30-10:30) in February at the Winnetka Campus. Tickets must be purchased in advance, and a New Trier ID is needed for admittance.

Like Homecoming, attire reflects a unique New Trier culture. Freshmen and sophomores wear semi-formal clothing. Corsages and boutonnieres are individually purchased. Juniors and seniors generally wear theme costumes. (See Homecoming above)

Junior-Senior Prom

This dance takes place on a Saturday night (7:00-11:00 PM) in the spring. Unlike other dances, Prom is held at a large hotel in downtown Chicago and is sponsored by the junior class. This dance is for juniors and seniors although an underclassman may go as an upperclassman's date. Tickets must be purchased in advance, and a New Trier ID is needed for admittance. Dinner is included in the per-person ticket price. Students must arrive at the dance by 8:30 PM and may not



leave prior to 9:30 PM. Attire is formal with corsages and boutonnieres purchased individually. Girls wear both long and short dresses while boys generally wear tuxedos.

Reminders:

- New Trier's Extracurricular Code of Conduct applies at all dances; disciplinary action will be taken if a student breaks the rules
- Police are present at all dances and NT supervisors randomly board buses and breathalyze students if there is a concern. If one student isn't "well" they must question the overall "wellness" of the entire group on board.
- Guests from other schools must be approved prior to attendance-See Activities Office for more information

TEEN PARTIES – A SURVIVAL GUIDE

Teens should be able to have fun socializing with friends, and one way to do this is at parties in someone's home. This can be a slippery slope as teens may be tempted to engage in unwanted behaviors. With parental involvement and good planning teen parties can be a fun and positive experience for everyone.

WHEN YOUR TEEN IS HOSTING A PARTY...

Parents should always be home and aware of activities if there is a party at their house.

- Plan the party *with* your teen and agree on ground-rules in advance.
- Do not serve alcohol or drugs or allow students to bring in alcohol or drugs. It is advisable to check overnight bags, basement and perimeter of house prior to party.
- Limit the number of people attending and the length of party. Know how people will get home. It is best to have students picked up by parents rather than uber or cabs.
- Allow only invited guests and determine in advance how party crashers will be handled. Some parents will collect cell phones thereby reducing the potential of uninvited guests showing up.
- Communicate expectations and ground-rules with other parents either by phone or by email. Emails are especially helpful when guests will be bringing dates – in the email, ask that expectations be communicated to the parents of dates. Request parents let you know how their teen is getting home.
- Be present: serving food midway through a party or refilling snacks allows you to keep an eye on things.
- When guests leave, don't allow them to return to the party. This prevents partygoers from leaving, drinking/using drugs elsewhere, and then returning to your home.
- Notify parents of any teen who arrives at the party under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. Ensure the teen's safe transportation home. Never let anyone leave your home if you suspect he or she may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.



Despite careful precautions, if things get out of hand do not hesitate to call for reinforcements by calling parents of guests or even, as a last resort, the police.

Keep in mind that in Illinois, the Social Host Law, which went into effect January 1, 2013, holds adults accountable for underage drinking that occurs in their home, regardless if you are the one who provides the alcohol.

WHEN YOUR TEEN IS ATTENDING A PARTY:

- Call the host parents ahead of time to confirm adult supervision and review plans for the evening including times, location and transportation. Some parents appreciate offers of help in supervision, food or rides.
- Discuss with your teen details of party and your expectations.
- Arrange an appropriate ride or pick your teen up at the end of the night.

WHEN YOUR TEEN GOES OUT:

Unless there is a party planned, typically teens make plans at the last minute. The best way to ensure your teen's safety and help them use common sense is to ask questions and ask them to update you on their location.

- **Know where your teen is going.** Parents vary in their level of supervision and rules when it comes to alcohol and other drugs. If your student's plans seem inappropriate, express your concerns and discuss alternatives.
- **Encourage your teen to leave an un-chaperoned party.** Often this is when trouble arises. If alcohol and other drugs are present, your teen may be subject to arrest and may face disciplinary action under New Trier's Extracurricular Code of Conduct.
- **Be aware of your teen's transportation** and discuss options. While most teens understand the risks of drinking and driving, many do not understand the risk of driving while high.
- **Let your teens know that you will come when called no questions asked.** Be sure they can reach you, regardless of time. Give assurances that "broken rules" will be dealt with when cooler heads prevail. Their safety and helping them to leave a dangerous situation comes first.
- **Help your teen prepare in advance for unexpected situations.** Talk through how they will deal with potential crises – the best way to leave a party that is un-chaperoned or is getting out of hand: what to do if their driver seems under the influence – be it an adult or fellow teen; how to react if police arrive at an unruly party; how to leave if drugs and/or alcohol are introduced at a party; how to respond to unwanted sexual advances – for both girls and boys.
- **Be awake to greet your teens upon their return.** Teens are far less likely to engage in unwanted behavior if they know you will be awake when they come home. A small conversation may give you clues as to that night's happenings or open the door to things that may be on your teen's mind.

Most of all – support, promote and occasionally reward your teen's good choices.



UH-OH NOW WHAT?

When it comes to teens partying the local police focus is primarily on safety and well being of the teen and there is an understanding that kids make mistakes. For that reason, depending on the circumstances, first-time offending teens are usually written a citation for violating a local ordinance rather than being arrested. When a teen is written a citation, parents are notified and sometimes New Trier will be notified. Penalties, determined by a hearing officer, can range from community service to a fine. If the school is made aware, there will be penalties related to the Extracurricular Code of Conduct, even if the violation occurred at a non-school event.

If a teen is arrested and it is a first time offense often the judge will refer the case to Peer Jury. Upon completion of the penalty (usually community service) the teen will be able to have record expunged.

Local ordinances, although similar, vary from village to village as does how violations are handled. You should check your local village code or police department for the most current information available.

LAWS YOU SHOULD KNOW

Curfew

In Winnetka, Wilmette and Glencoe, village curfew hours apply to students under the age of 17. In Northfield curfew hours apply to students under 18.

Curfew begins at 12 a.m. on Friday and Saturday nights and 11 p.m. on other days of the week.

It is important to understand the difference between Curfew and **Nighttime Driving Restrictions**, which begin at 11:00 on Friday, and Saturday nights and 10:00 other days of the week (Sunday- Thursday). A teen's driver's license is not considered valid and your insurance company may not cover him/her during this time. Nighttime Driving Restrictions apply to students under 18.

N.B. There are circumstances where children may be unaccompanied during curfew hours such as when attending an official school activity.

Tobacco/ Alcohol/Drugs

Illegal in Illinois:

- Possession of smoking and chewing tobacco by a minor
- Possession or use of marijuana or drug paraphernalia.
- Possession or consumption of alcohol under the age of 21



Penalties for Minors if convicted:

Suspension of driving privileges as a result of alcohol in the age of 21
3 months for first conviction, 1 year for second conviction, license revocation for subsequent convictions.

Illegal transportation of alcohol in an automobile under the age of 21:

For the driver, the penalty is mandatory driver's license suspension for one year on the first offense, and mandatory one-year revocation for subsequent offenses. Anyone in the vehicle can be charged with a maximum \$1,000 fine.

Possession, cultivation, trafficking, or sale of marijuana

Depending on the quantity involved this is classified as a misdemeanor to a felony.

Possession of Hard drugs

Possession of hard drugs is a felony; this includes illegal drugs such as heroin and ecstasy as well as prescription drugs not prescribed for the individual (OxyContin, Percocet, Codeine, Vicodin, Ritalin, Adderall).

New State Law as of 2016: if a person is intoxicated and underage but calls 911 for medical help, neither the caller nor the person they are helping will be issued any citations.

Social Host Law – Penalties for Parents

In Illinois, the Social Host Law holds adults accountable for underage drinking that occurs in the home. There are several parts to this law.

If you allow or host a party at your house and provide alcohol to people under age 21 (or if you know or should have known that they are drinking alcohol), you are guilty of a Class A misdemeanor. This will result in a fine (up to \$2500). *N.B. you are held responsible regardless of whether you are the one who provides the alcohol AND regardless of whether you are home or not.*

If a minor who was drinking at your house injures or kills someone, you are guilty of a Class 4 felony. This could result in both a fine and/or jail time.

You will not be guilty of violating the law if you request help from the police to help remove the underage drinkers and stop the gathering. This only holds if you are the first one to call—not if the police show up after a complaint from a neighbor and then you ask for help.

The law says it is 'reasonable' to assume that parents would know that drinking is taking place on their property, even if kids bring the alcohol themselves, arrive drunk, or if the host parents are not personally present.



THE EXTRACURRICULAR CODE OF CONDUCT

Know New Trier's Extracurricular Code of Conduct (found in the Student Guidebook). **Read it and discuss it with your teen.** The code is in effect 24/7 365 days per year on or off campus. The school can learn about off campus code violations either through the police, social media or from members of the community.

Code violations can range from being under the influence of a prohibited substance to unsportsmanlike conduct. Your teen needs to know what constitutes a violation. It's not simply partying on the weekend or showing up to school high on drugs. It is bullying, hazing, destruction of property, cheating, disobedience, violating school policies and more.

N.B. While strongly discouraged, mere presence at a party where there is underage drinking is not a violation, however, hosting a drinking party is.

Consequences

For a violation that occurs on campus or at a school-sponsored activity, there are disciplinary consequences such as suspension/detention AND a loss of activities/privileges (such as participation in a sport or walking in graduation)

For an off campus violation there is a possible loss of activities/privileges but usually not a suspension. (This depends on the severity of the violation)

Also, it is very important to understand if your teen is involved in school athletics, activities, or any leadership positions at New Trier the consequences can be stiff including a 50% loss of season or 25% loss of participation in activity. Leadership positions will be taken away.

N.B. For a first time offense if a student comes forward and admits the violation before the administration is aware of the violation, the penalty will be much less onerous.

IT IS OUR HOPE THAT THESE INSIGHTS ARE USEFUL TO PARENTS AS THEY PREPARE FOR DANCES AND/OR THE SOCIAL ACTIVITIES OF THEIR TEENS THIS YEAR. EVERYONE PARENTS DIFFERENTLY, TALKING WITH OTHER PARENTS AND KEEPING LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN WITH YOUR STUDENTS WILL HELP ENSURE A SUCCESSFUL, MUTUALLY ENJOYABLE EVENING FOR ALL.