

PARENT GUIDE TO SCHOOLIES

We understand you might be hesitant to send your teen to Schoolies, especially with the new stories that love to show the worst case scenarios! But don't worry, we are here to help, and the good news is you can reduce your anxiety levels by being prepared and helping them to celebrate safely.



WHO ARE THE RED FROGS?

It all started in 1997 when Red Frogs Australia founder Andy Gourley hit Schoolies Week on the Gold Coast with his skateboarding mates and realised the need for a designated sober person at the massive drinking parties. [Watch the full story here.](#)

Since then, Red Frogs has become one of the largest volunteer support networks for young people in Australia and our footprint has expanded to include high schools, universities, festivals, skate parks and sporting events - positively influencing 1.4 million people every year.



**AT SCHOOLIES, RED FROGS ASSIST YOUNG PEOPLE IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS;
OFFERING PANCAKE COOK-UPS, ROOM VISITS & GAMES, ROOM CLEANS, EMOTIONAL
SUPPORT, WALK HOMES AND RED FROGS.**

IN THIS GUIDE:

**HOW TO START
THE CONVERSATION**

**5 TOP TIPS FOR
PREPARING YOUR TEEN**

**PARENT CHECKLIST
FOR SCHOOLIES**



START THE CONVERSATION - "THE BIG 5"

It's important your teen knows that Schoolies is an artificial environment with a lot of hype. Below are the "Big 5" issues you can chat about before Schoolies, to help them make positive choices. (Remember, you don't want to lower their excitement for their celebration but rather help them form realistic expectations). So, let's get started!

1. ALCOHOL

- Encourage them to set a limit to the number of drinks they will have, and to keep count of their intake.
- Suggest that they go one-for-one with a cup of water for every cup of alcohol they consume.
- Make sure they know how important it is that they eat sufficiently before drinking.

2. DRUGS

- Emphasise there is never a good time or 'safe environment' to experiment with drugs, let alone at Schoolies (fines for drug possession can also impact many future goals your teen may have)
- Encourage them to make a decision here and now, about the person they will be at Schoolies or parties in the future.
- Ensure they know to call 000 in a drug-related emergency - the ambos will come to provide medical support, not get them into trouble.

3. VIOLENCE

- Encourage them that the best response to a fight/taunt is to walk away from the situation - don't be a "hero".
- If your teen does see violence erupt close to them, encourage them to move away from violence so there is no crowding/accidental injury.
- Remind them that one punch can kill, and it's not worth it.

4. SEXUAL ASSAULT

- Remind your teen that sexual assault is never the victim's fault, and they shouldn't feel embarrassed or ashamed to seek support or medical attention if this was to happen to them or a friend.
- Emphasise the importance of sticking together and looking after each other; not walking through dark areas alone and calling the Red Frogs for a walk home are both great ways to stay safe.
- Discuss consent with your teen. This is a great video that communicates what consent means.

5. MENTAL HEALTH

- Keep letting your teen know that you are available and willing to talk to them about any issues that concern them, including mental health- and also that you love them no matter what issues they may be dealing with.
- Most teens don't want advice, they just want someone to listen. So try and just lend an ear, and let them know that it's ok (and healthy) to have emotions, and it's great that they are taking the time to acknowledge and express them.
- If you notice that your teen is really struggling, encourage them to seek professional health, either by talking to their doctor or booking them in with a counsellor. Remind them there is nothing to be ashamed of in doing this.

5 TOP TIPS

For preparing your teen for Schoolies Week

1. READ THE ACCOM AGREEMENT

Schoolies is a time when hotels will often have additional policies, so it's a good idea to read through the agreement so you both understand what the hotel expects - and what could potentially lead to being evicted mid-celebrations. Some hotels require an adult to be present at check-in, so knowing this beforehand will save you an unexpected car trip. If you have questions about the agreement, give your hotel a call and ask for clarification to ensure your young person's check-in and stay is as easy as possible for everyone.

2. COOK AND FREEZE MEALS

Lack of cooking skills means many school leavers end up eating noodles for the week - not ideal! In our Schoolies Program delivered in high schools, we encourage students to do a grocery shop for easy-to-prepare-but-nutritious meals (such as avo on toast, tacos, and fruit salad!) and also suggest asking parents or family members to prepare and freeze meals they can take with them to Schoolies. This can even turn into a fun family activity by preparing meals ahead of time together.

3. HAVE MEANINGFUL CONVERSATION

There are a number of issues young people may be challenged with in environments like parties or Schoolies. At Red Frogs, some of the more serious call outs we receive often involve alcohol, sexual assault or mental health. Using the pointers on page 1, make sure you sit down and have meaningful conversations with your teen so they have set realistic expectations and boundaries prior to Schoolies Week.

4. ORGANISE A CHECK IN DAY

Even if they don't admit it, your teen will definitely miss you while they are away! Before they head off, organise a day (or days) you can check in with each other. It will help you feel less anxious and your young person will appreciate the love!

5. ADD AN 'IN CASE OF EMERGENCY' (ICE) NUMBER AND THE RED FROGS HOTLINE NUMBER INTO YOUR TEEN'S PHONE

An ICE number is a number that first responders can access to contact the next of kin of someone they are attending. Decide with your child who their emergency contact should be, and then add this into their phone as a lock screen. You can learn how to do this for iPhones, Androids and Samsungs through [this link](#).

Our Red Frog Hotline (1300 557 123) is open 24/7 over Schoolies Week, allowing young people to contact us if they want to hang out, need someone to walk them home, are craving midnight pancakes, would like to talk to someone, or may be facing a more serious issue. In case of an emergency schoolies are urged to always call 000 first, and then call Red Frogs for further support. Having our number in their phone before heading to Schoolies means we're basically on speed dial for any of the above situations!

REDFROGS
AUSTRALIA

RED FROGS 24/7 HOTLINE:
1300 557 123



IN THE LEAD UP TO SCHOOLIES

- ☐ Follow 'Red Frogs Schoolies Advice for Parents' on Facebook, for ongoing advice regarding Schoolies.
- ☐ Encourage your teen to follow @redfrogsau on Facebook and Instagram for information and support services available during Schoolies.
- ☐ Speak to your school about booking a Red Frogs Schoolies Safety Program for the year 12 cohort.
- ☐ Have an honest conversation with your teen about drinking, drugs, violence, sex and the importance of consent, and peer pressure.
- ☐ If your teen has a medical condition, or takes medication, make sure they understand how alcohol and other drugs may affect their medication.
- ☐ Make sure you and your teen have read through the accommodation House Rules and clearly understand all requirements.

ONE WEEK BEFORE SCHOOLIES

- ☐ Talk to your teen about their expectations of Schoolies and consequences that could occur from risk taking behaviour.
- ☐ Make sure your teen is aware of what support is available; save the Red Frogs hotline in their phone (1300 557 123) and download the Red Frogs App.
- ☐ If you can, check to see how social relationships are going within the group.
- ☐ Agree on how/when you are going to stay in touch during Schoolies.
- ☐ Have a talk about the important of sleep, hydration, nutrition and mental health.
- ☐ Touch base with other parents.
- ☐ Encourage your teen to download the Emergency+ App to identify their location and to seek assistance in emergency situations.
- ☐ Let them know you trust them and will be available to them at any time.

DURING SCHOOLIES

- ☐ Breathe.
- ☐ Reiterate you are contactable at any time, day or night.
- ☐ Make sure your teen knows to call Triple Zero (000) in an emergency and stress the importance of this especially if drugs are involved - the ambos won't do them into the police.
- ☐ Take some time to acknowledge your own transition from parenting a teen to young adult and beyond!



REMEMBER, THE RED FROGS HOTLINE IS THERE FOR PARENTS TOO. IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR TEEN, PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO CALL US!

 **FOR MORE INFO, JOIN:**
'RED FROGS SCHOOLIES ADVICE FOR PARENTS'
OR CALL: 1300 557 123