

Controlled Party Dispersal to Reduce Social Access

ACCORDING TO THE 2016 Texas School Survey of Substance Use Among Students, alcohol continues to be the most commonly used substance among secondary school students, with 53% reporting use of alcohol in their lifetime and 28.6% reporting alcohol use within the last 30 days.

Teen parties remain one of the highest-risk settings for youth alcohol abuse where a lack of adult supervision often leads to serious problems, including impaired driving, vandalism, sexual assault and alcohol poisoning. Applying controlled party dispersal techniques can be a proactive approach to minimize the potential damage, while safely and securely making sure party attendees get home under parental or guardian supervision.*

The initial goals of controlled party dispersal are to:

- Control the number of partygoers fleeing the scene while safely rounding up the remaining attendees
- Issue citations and make contact with the parents of those who have been drinking
- Identify and hold responsible those who supplied the alcohol for the party

Aside from these immediate goals, such enforcement activities are a part of a comprehensive and community-wide approach to shift the social norms surrounding underage drinking. By involving community coalitions and organizations and utilizing the media to help publicize the consequences of such controlled party dispersals, you can:

- Raise community awareness and build support for the use of controlled party dispersals
- Inform parents and other adults about underage drinking laws and their enforcement
- Discourage such future parties by publicizing the consequences of breaking the law

The controlled party dispersal technique is an enforcement tool that when combined with community participation is an effective way to employ environmental strategies that work on the root causes of underage alcohol use and help affect positive change through proactive measures.

A comprehensive campaign of controlled party dispersals will help focus the attention on the underlying problem of underage drinking and help promote a unified, community-wide approach to growing positive outcomes and creating a healthier, safer community.



* Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
Preventing and Dispersing Underage Drinking Parties, 2011.