



Preventing Underage Drinking.. Priceless!

NOT hosting the party, staying out of jail —

BUDGET FOR PARTY	
Food	\$75.00
DJ	\$500.00
Alcohol for Underage Drinkers	\$190.00
Total	\$765.00
Damages from Civil Lawsuit \$8,694,162.00	

If you are concerned about someone who may have a problem with alcohol or other drugs, please call for information or treatment options.

Youth Central Intake & Care Coordination:
 Toll-free: 1-866-705-2807 | TTY: 1-617-661-9051
www.healthrecovery.org/projects/youth-cicc/
 Massachusetts Substance Abuse Information and Education Helpline (for all ages)
 Toll-free: 1-800-327-5050
 TTY: Use MassRelay at 711 or 1-800-439-2370
www.helpline-online.com

For more information on the prevention of alcohol and other drug use, go to:

Massachusetts Department of Public Health
www.mass.gov/dph/bsas
 For more copies of this brochure and detailed guides, visit
www.mass.gov/maclearinghouse or call toll-free: 1-800-952-6637
 TTY: Use MassRelay at 711 or 1-800-439-2370
 Office of National Drug Control Policy
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp>

Developed by:

Essex District Attorney Jonathan W. Blodgett
www.mass.gov/essexda

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
www.doe.mass.edu/ssce/safety.html

Massachusetts Department of Public Health Bureau of Substance Abuse Services
www.mass.gov/dph/bsas

Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
www.mass.gov/eopss

Richard L. Campbell, Esq.



SA3521
 March 2016

Safe, healthy, alcohol-free children... PRICELESS

- > Talk with your children about alcohol. Tell them what will happen if they break your rules about alcohol or other drugs.
- > Have an ongoing discussion about the risks involved.
- > Be involved. Know who, what, where, and when.
- > Don't assume that other parents have the same rules you have.
- > Create a plan with your children about what to do in a risky situation. Texting, calling, or going to a safe location are all good ideas.

Action Plan for Parents

It's the Law

The law in Massachusetts is clear:

Whoever **furnishes*** alcohol to a person under 21 years of age shall be punished by:



**Fine up to
\$2,000**

OR



**Imprisonment
for up to a year**

OR BOTH

* "FURNISH" shall mean to knowingly or intentionally Supply, Give, Provide to, or Allow to possess alcoholic beverages on premises or property owned or controlled by the person charged.
M.G.L. c. 138, s. 34

Questions & Answers About the Social Host Law

A SOCIAL HOST is anyone (adult or minor) who is in control of the premises and who furnishes alcohol or allows it to be consumed on those premises.

Am I breaking the law if I allow my child's underage guests to consume alcohol in my home?

Yes. The legal drinking age in Massachusetts is 21. It is against the law to serve or provide alcohol to underage guests or to allow them to drink alcohol in your home or on other property you control. If you do, you may be prosecuted criminally. The penalty is a fine of up to \$2,000, imprisonment for up to a year, or both.
M.G.L. c. 138, s. 34

Can I be sued if my child or an underage guest at my home drinks alcohol and injures someone?

Yes. You may be financially responsible if your child or underage guest injures another person (or himself) after having consumed alcohol, if you controlled the supply of the alcohol, made it available, or served it. Civil judgments can be for millions of dollars.

What if my child allows underage guests to drink or possess alcohol at my home or other property I control, without my knowledge?

You or your child may be charged criminally. For you to be found guilty under the Social Host Law, the Commonwealth must prove that you or your child knowingly or intentionally supplied, gave, provided, or allowed minors to possess alcohol at your home or other property you controlled. You or your child may also be sued civilly.

Does the Social Host Law apply if I rent a hotel room for my child's party?

Yes, since you control the hotel room, the Social Host Law applies. M.G.L. c. 138, s. 34

Will my homeowner's policy cover the costs of litigation and any judgment against me or my child?

You may or may not be covered, especially if the underage drinker causes injury or death by use of an automobile. Many insurance policies do not cover situations where criminal conduct is involved.

Alcohol and Your Child's Future

A criminal or juvenile record can prevent a person from getting a job or joining the military. Making bad decisions about alcohol can jeopardize involvement in school activities, sports or clubs, college admissions, and financial aid.

Alcohol and the Brain

The brain does not fully develop until a person is over the age of 20.

Drinking alcohol during adolescence damages parts of the brain responsible for:

- > Decision-making
- > Self-control
- > Memory and learning

Parents are the most important influence in their children's lives.

- > As a parent, the things you say and do have tremendous influence on the decisions your child makes — especially when it comes to using alcohol and other drugs.
- > Teens whose parents set rules about alcohol are less likely to drink.
- > By talking with your children about not using alcohol and other drugs, you can help them make better choices and live safer, healthier lives.