

Looking after yourself and your friends

Celebrating with friends

Schoolies is all about you and your friends having a great time. You've been through so much together over the past few years and now your high school days are ending. Here are a few tips on making sure you – and your friends – get the most out of Schoolies.

Watching out for your friends

- Be a good friend – don't leave your mates on their own.
- Trust your instincts – if you don't feel safe you probably aren't.
- Think – drugs and alcohol affect your judgement and stop you thinking clearly.
- Mix it up – if you drink alcohol, eat food and drink water between alcoholic drinks.
- Think ahead – organise a safe place to meet in case you get separated from friends.
- Keys please – drinking and driving don't mix, not for you and not for your friends.
- Stay connected – if you own a mobile phone, keep it on you so you can contact or be contacted by friends, call a cab or call for help if need be.
- Mind your P's – if you are on your red P's it is illegal to travel with one or more person aged 16 to 22 unless they are a relative.
- Drink spiking – always watch your drink being opened or poured, don't leave drinks unattended, don't share drinks and don't accept drinks from strangers. If you are unsure about your drink, don't drink it.
- No means no and silence is not consent – pressuring or forcing someone else into sexual activity is against the law. Someone who is substance affected may not be able to give consent.
- Talk it out – speak to an adult you trust: parent, youth worker, GP, nurse, or other health worker, police, family friend or volunteer.
- Everybody has the right to have a good time – violence is unacceptable in any form and under any circumstances and in any community in Victoria.
- If you experience, see or hear any kind of assault or violence report it to the Police as soon as possible.

Peer pressure

Peer pressure is when you are influenced to do something that you may not usually do because you are worried about what your peers might think. There may be times you feel this pressure from others to drink alcohol or take drugs. You might even pressure someone else without realising.

Here are some suggestions to conquer peer pressure:

- Stick with friends who share your interests.
- Remember that it's okay to say 'no'.
- Respect everyone's choices no matter whether you agree with them or not.
- Stand up to peer pressure or help a friend who may be influenced by peer pressure to say 'no'.

House rules

We all disagree with one another from time to time, and the occasional argument is a normal part of life. Living so closely with your friends during Schoolies and sharing your space during an intense emotional time is bound to bring up a few conflicts.

Before you head to Schoolies, set up some house rules with your friends.

- Respect – always treat your friends' and housemates' property with respect. You also need to respect the place you are staying and your neighbours.
- Allowing strangers in your house – discuss this rule with your housemates before Schoolies and think carefully before inviting someone back to your house.
- Turn it down – make sure you turn down any loud music after 9pm.
- Space and privacy – everyone needs their own space to chill, so respect your friends' decisions.
- Money - sort out finances before you go. Work out how much everyone needs to pay for their accommodation and split things fairly.
- Start a household kitty – this is useful for things like toilet paper, detergent and basic food.
- Helping out– set up a daily roster for things like doing the dishes, taking out the rubbish, cooking and cleaning up. This also speeds up the cleaning up process at the end of your stay.

Looking after your health

- Remember to drink plenty of water, especially if you're drinking alcohol or spending a long time out in the sun.
- Be aware that alcoholic drinks differ in strength. Familiarise yourself with how many standard drinks are contained within the alcoholic beverages you are consuming.
- Be sun smart – slap on SPF 30+ sunscreen every 2 hours, wear a hat and sunnies and catch some shady breaks.
- Make sure you have the right ID – fake IDs are illegal. Bottle shops, pubs and night clubs will only accept legal ID.
- Be careful when you swim – never swim, surf or go boating alone, don't swim after you've been drinking or have taken drugs, only swim between the flags and never swim at night
- Be aware and prepare before heading into the water – check the weather and read the safety signage to learn about hazards and dangers before entering the water
- Boost your vitamins - add a salad to your lunch and dinner to make sure you're getting lots of fresh veggies. They're quick and easy to prepare and a great source of vitamins and minerals.
- Seek medical attention if you need it - if you or a friend is suffering prolonged pain, headache, bleeding, vomiting, nausea, diarrhoea or fever, don't wait for it to go away - find a pharmacist, nurse or doctor who can help immediately. In an emergency always call 000.

For more information on staying healthy and looking after your friends, visit the Schoolies website: schoolies.youthcentral.vic.gov.au