



**Schoolies 2020
Information for Parents and School-Leavers**

Key messages

- School Leavers Week or “Schoolies” across Victoria is from 28 November until 10 December.
- We know that the vast majority of schoolies will celebrate responsibly and avoid mishaps by making sensible & safe decisions along the way.
- Celebrations must adhere to the Chief Health Officer’s directions. Please familiarise yourself with the rules as police will respond to reports of breaches of the CHO directions and will be issuing fines for any obvious, deliberate and blatant breaches.
- You can have up to 15 people visit a home so please celebrate safely within these limits.
- Police will also be proactively patrolling popular locations like beaches and parklands day and night to ensure that everyone is safe and adhering to the CHO directions.
- While the Surf Coast and Bass Coast are still planning on hosting official Schoolies celebrations, it’s important to note that the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council has asked school leavers not to attend the area for Schoolies.
- Police will not tolerate those who break the law or engage in anti-social and riotous behaviour that puts the safety of others at risk, including our own officers.

Chief Health Officer restrictions (expected to be in place from 11.59pm on 22 Nov)

- **Public gatherings:** Up to 50 people can gather together outdoors
- **Private gatherings:** Up to 15 visitors can visit a household across the course of the day
- **Accommodation (including at short stay rental accommodation like Airbnb’s):** Restricted to private gathering cap of up to 15 people from any number of households
- **Face masks:** People will no longer be required to wear face masks when physical distancing outdoors, however they must carry a face mask with them at all times unless an exemption applies. Masks are still required indoors when away from the home, when on public transport and when physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Message to schoolies – Safety and respect for others

- Take responsibility for your own actions and look out for mates.
- If consuming alcohol, do so responsibly & safely. Binge drinking is dangerous and be mindful of ‘pre-loading’ before heading out for the night. Put plans in place re: transport, accommodation & caring for friends.

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- Respect communities, venues and private property you are visiting and keep each other accountable for responsible behaviour.
- Don't ruin the celebrations for yourself/others. Keep an eye on each other and speak up if your friends are taking things too far.
- If one of your friends is drinking to excess or engaging in risk-taking behaviour don't hesitate to call them out on it – it could save them from hurting themselves or someone else, or getting arrested.
- If you have been a victim of crime contact police as soon as possible so the incident can be thoroughly investigated.
- Be mindful of noise levels and report any suspicious behaviour to Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000. In an emergency call Triple Zero (000).

Message to parents:

- Have open, frank conversations. Encourage open dialogue with your child(ren) so they feel comfortable in sharing plans and concerns.
- Talk to them about the risks involved with excessive consumption of alcohol & taking drugs in addition to peer pressure and risk-taking behaviour.
- Make sure you know where they are staying, and who they will be staying with, and they have all the right contact details in case they need help. Encourage them to carry and answer their mobile at all times in case of an emergency and so they can contact their friends if they lose them.

Road Safety

- This may be the first time newly licensed drivers have driven a long distance due to CHO restrictions.
- Drivers and passengers; wear seatbelts, don't drive while alcohol/drug affected, avoid distractions such as mobile phones and call-out passenger distractions.
- Be mindful of pedestrians; families &/or peers who may be substance affected, around busy areas such as parks and beaches and drive accordingly.
- Police will have a highly visible presence on the roads in an effort to keep everyone safe. We do not want to see any tragedies on our roads during this time of celebration.
- Police will target speeding, drink and drug driving, people not wearing seatbelts, driver distraction which includes mobile phone use and fatigue.

Drugs

- All illicit drugs have the potential to cause harm. It's important that people realise they are putting themselves in danger of not just hospitalisation, but permanent disability or even death when consuming drugs.
- It is a completely avoidable risk. Don't feel pressured to take something that you're not comfortable with. It's your body and your choice. Consider the risks; including health, social, criminal and personal safety.
- These drugs are manufactured by criminals with absolutely no regard for the safety of the people who take them.

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- We also want to be clear that police have zero tolerance towards drug traffickers, especially those who prey on the vulnerable.
- Anyone found to be selling drugs can expect to be arrested and charged by police.
- Drug or any criminal conviction can have a significant impact on your life and may affect future travel, employment opportunities in addition to family, friendships, mental health & more.

Toolies

- There are often people not officially part of the 'schoolies' group who attend celebrations without an invitation.
- Some people may intend to interfere with the 'schoolies' celebrations and target young people who they perceive as vulnerable.
- Police urge genuine 'Schoolies' not to engage with individuals/groups that they feel are there with a hidden agenda or sinister intentions. Report suspicious behaviour/persons to police or to Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000. In an emergency, call Triple Zero (000) for immediate assistance.

Social media

- Think before you post. What you publish on the internet can be shared and viewed by many people very quickly, including those you never intended for it to be seen by, like a family member or your employer (current or future).
- Drugs and alcohol affect your judgement and stop you thinking clearly.
- Sending and having sexual images (someone naked or in their underwear) of someone under 18 years of age can be considered child pornography.
- Even if you are over 18, sending sexually explicit images may still be breaking the law.

Flares

- Flares are extremely dangerous and can cause serious injury. They can burn upwards of 1000 degrees Celsius and pose a serious risk when discharged in crowded or confined spaces.
- Police will be targeting this behaviour again this year. Those involved in throwing, igniting, or possessing flares unlawfully can face serious criminal charges.