

From: "Party Without Pain. The use of Real Life Rehearsals® to help teenagers control their drinking." ISBN: 978-0-9757328-8-5

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Preface

As teenagers get older, they go to more and more parties by themselves and increasingly make their own decisions about whether or not to drink alcohol. Most teenagers go to a party with some idea of how much they want to drink, and how they will pace themselves in their drinking. No matter what their intentions, they can be pressured – to drink more, and faster, than they intend. Many teenagers succumb to this social pressure, as do many adults.

To resist this pressure, teenagers need the intention to limit their drinking, but they need more. They also need a set of workable strategies, and the social communication skills to deliver them. These strategies and skills typically involve a combination of diplomacy, assertiveness and planning. Strategies must be realistic as well as culturally and personally acceptable to the teenagers. If they aren't, teenagers will be reluctant to use them in the real world.

With experience, teenagers learn successful strategies and develop appropriate skills. However, this can be a long process of trial and error. Many mistakes can be made along the way – some with disastrous consequences. They need to be given an opportunity to learn realistic and acceptable strategies and skills at the beginning of their venture into the world of alcohol, rather than leaving it to chance. Teachers are well placed to give teenagers this opportunity, but teachers are also well aware of the shortcomings of traditional role-plays. They need a more viable teaching method.

Party Without Pain. How to help teenagers learn the art of resisting the pressure to drink. A guide for teachers. satisfies this need because it uses Real-Life Rehearsals®. Real-Life Rehearsals® has four important features:

1. Real-Life Scenarios™ are used;
2. The students develop a set of refined strategies that they have 'mentally road-tested' and found to be realistic and culturally acceptable;
3. The students personalise the refined strategies; and
4. Agent Provocateur Role-Plays™ are used to help the students develop the social communication skills they need to deliver the strategies in the real world.