



headspace[®]

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Media Alert

SCHOOLIES: A TIME TO HAVE FUN AND BE SAFE

Monday 20 November

As young people across Australia celebrate the end of their schooling, **headspace** has prepared some advice and tips for them, and their parents, to make sure loved ones stay safe and enjoy the Schoolies period.

For interested media, **headspace** Senior Clinical Advisor, Simon Dodd, is available for comment about promoting and protecting young people's mental health and wellbeing during Schoolies. Clinicians in many **headspace** centres across the country are also available for local comment, including in those regions (listed below) where many young people come together to party and spend time with their mates.

- **Queensland:** Maroochydore, Southport and Mackay
- **New South Wales:** Bondi Junction, Lismore and Wollongong
- **Western Australia:** Bunbury and Fremantle
- **South Australia:** Onkaparinga and Adelaide
- **Tasmania:** Hobart
- **Victoria:** Frankston, Warrnambool and Geelong

Safe partying tips for young people

- **We can still have fun without pushing our bodies too hard.** Sleep, eat, get some down time and take care of yourself.
- **Set your own standards.** You are likely to be faced with new opportunities and decisions at schoolies. Don't do something because everyone else is doing it, especially if you know you will regret it after.
- **Look after your friends.**
 - Don't leave your friends on their own.
 - Help your friends stay away from risky situations.
 - For each celebration (day or night) nominate someone who hasn't used alcohol or drugs to stay sober.
 - Arrange a meeting point so if you do get separated from your friends, you know where to go.
 - If you choose to use drugs, tell your friends what you have taken and how much. This makes it easier for the ambulance officers to help if you get into trouble.
- **Safe is sexy.** At Schoolies, we may be more likely to be in situations where we are faced with sexual propositions and opportunities. Be prepared and carry condoms/dental dams. Think about what consent really is: Only yes means yes.
- **It is impossible to know what drug you are taking.** To be completely safe, say no. If you choose to use any drug, try a little bit first to see if you have any side effects and so you can feel how strong the drug is and remember don't use anything whilst alone.
- **Mixing can get messy.** The effects of drugs can be unpredictable, but when mixed with alcohol can get out of control quickly.
- **It is hot out there - watch out for heatstroke.** The risk of dehydration and heat stroke is increased when we consume alcohol or drugs. Drink lots of water, wear sunscreen, rest and stay out of the sun.
- **Call 000 if anyone is passed out or in trouble.** Paramedics don't need to involve the police.
- **Coming down after the Schoolies high.** Schoolies is an intense week and you might feel flat or low coming back to reality after a week of partying. Take it easy and plan to look after your mental and physical health – plan some enjoyable and healthy activities when you get home.

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Tips for parents of young people at Schoolies

- **Talk to your child about ways to keep safe at Schoolies** (use safety tips above). Be open about what situations they may encounter and how they can be prepared and keep safe.
- **Offer food.** You can help by offering to cook and freeze meals, or give them a shopping list of things to buy. Whilst very important during Schoolies, eating properly is not likely to be a priority for them.
- **Let them know they can call.** Your child needs to know they can call you, day or night, when they are in trouble and that you won't be angry at them.

If you or someone you know is struggling, visit [headspace.org.au](https://www.headspace.org.au) to find your local centre. You can also find a number of resources on the website on various topics.

For further information, or to arrange an interview with Simon Dodd or one of the **headspace** centres, contact:

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