

[Keep in Mind...]

- 1. Parental notification does not require that an institution notify any parent let alone all parents in all situations.**
- 2. Parental notification should not be exclusively a reactive policy, i.e., notification “only after” an infraction has occurred.**
- 3. Parental notification can be performed by the student him-/herself, the option for “how” this occurs thus being placed in the student’s hands and empowering the student with a greater degree of personal responsibility as regards her/his own behavior and its consequences.**
- 4. It cannot be assumed that all students or even most students will reject a policy of parental notification, especially if crafted in a proactive way with obvious options for student involvement in its execution.**
- 5. Likewise, it cannot be assumed that parents receiving letters or notification by other means will inundate the institution with calls and/or requests for information, explanation, or the delivery of threats**

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The Network Presents...

Framing the Issue of Parental Notification

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[What is Parental Notification?]

Parental Notification (PN) is a concept that administrators in higher education have been considering as a potential tool to address the pandemic of high-risk and dangerous drinking in higher education.

It is imperative that when considering the topic of parental notification, the individual/body doing so keep several points in proper perspective, lest seemingly logical conclusions be drawn from incomplete information.

1. Parental notification does not require that an institution notify any parent let alone all parents in all situations.

The institution has the right to establish the criteria for its particular approach to parental notification.

2. Parental notification should not be exclusively a reactive policy, i.e., notification “only after” an infraction has occurred.

By notifying parents of the institution’s belief of parental responsibility to be involved “before” a violation occurs, the institution can effectively involve parents in the prevention of high-risk student behavior, i.e., parental notification “before” as well as “after” a student infraction.

- Informing parents during campus programs or events activities of the university’s views on “parental involvement” and the “expected role parents will play” in preparing students for the realities of collegiate life as regards alcohol, other drugs, and their relation to the independence of collegiate living.

- Informing parents during orientation of the university’s policy on parental notification and its purpose, including its demonstration of the collaborative relationship existing between university, student, and parent for the successful negotiation of the rigors of a collegiate academic/social life.

- Informing parents specifically and assertively about what the university will and will not be doing as regards informing them of their son or daughter’s behavior will increase the likelihood of a collaborative relationship between university and parents should unfortunate consequences follow a student’s decision to violate campus, local, State, or Federal rules/laws.

3. Parental notification can be performed by the student him-/herself, the option for “how” this occurs thus being placed in the student’s hands and empowering the student with a greater degree of personality responsibility as regards her/his own behavior and its consequences.

4. It cannot be assumed that all students or even most students will reject a policy of parental notification, especially if crafted in a proactive way with obvious options for student involvement in its execution.

5. Likewise, it cannot be assumed that parents receiving letters or notification by other means will inundate the institution with calls and/or requests for information, explanation, or the delivery of threats

[Arguments For Parental Notification]

- Provides the university with a defense should litigation every be waged based on “duty to inform/warn” or respond to the allegations that the university had “previous knowledge of a problem” should there be a civil action.

- Casts the university in the role of aiding not yet fully independent students in the transition to adulthood, i.e., places the university in the role of facilitator of recognizing personal responsibility rather than “cop” policing student behavior.

- Serves to place parents and students on notice that the university recognizes both parties as equal participants, along with the university, in assuring adherence with all campus, local, State, and Federal laws regarding alcohol and other drugs.

- Conveys the message that the university is not afraid to acknowledge, address, and act on the problem presented by individuals who choose to engage in high-risk and/or underage drinking.

- Conveys the message that the university does not view itself as solely responsible for addressing the problems associated with the high-risk or underage consumption of alcohol.

- Conveys the message that the university views parents as key players in affecting the process of change in the campus culture as regards alcohol and drinking.

- Presents the university with a viable and powerful marketing tool in publicly addressing the well established general community awareness of problems associated with high-risk and underage collegiate drinking.

- Presents the university with another viable options in affecting a comprehensive program of environmental management in an effort to address the issue of high-risk and underage collegiate drinking.

[Arguments Against Parental Notification]

- May be a labor-intensive policy to enact.

- Is not a solution to the problem of high-risk and underage drinking.

- Contrary to traditional student development theory.

- Possibility of incomplete/inconsistent enforcement.

- Difficult to justify to students.

- Consideration of immediate implementation likely to generate more “heat than light.”

Parental Notification presents the university with another viable options in affecting a comprehensive program of environmental management in an effort to address the issue of high-risk and underage collegiate drinking.