

## GUIDELINES FOR DANCES

**Preface:**

A dance can be a great social event for young people. Because the expenses are low and the attendance is usually high, it can also be a good source of revenue. Every effort, however, must be made to ensure that the dance is a place where young people receive a positive message via vi the music, the games, the chaperones, the required dress, and the like. When hosting a dance for young people, please be aware of the following guidelines.

This form must be used in conjunction with the **GUIDELINES FOR SITE SELECTION**.

- The number of adults needed is largely dependent upon: number of attendees, ratio of boys/girls attendees, age of attendees, number of exits and how well lit they are, number of bathrooms and how accessible they are to the actual dance, the size of the parking lot and its location in terms of distance from the actual dance, and the like.

Obviously a dance that follows the normal adult-youth ratio would become unmanageable very quickly. Every effort should be made to take into consideration the factors listed above. Under normal circumstances with two or three well lit exits for the building and one bathroom each for boys and girls, the follow ratios are suggested:

Every effort should be made to have a chaperone ratio that matches the ratio of males/females in attendance. Cleared adults must also wear CYM ID badges.

Up to 100 attendees (min. 7 cleared adults)  
 Up to 150 attendees (min. 9 cleared adults)  
 Up to 200 attendees (min. 11 cleared adults)  
 Up to 250 attendees (min. 13 cleared adults and one off-duty officer)  
 Up to 300 attendees (min. 15 cleared adults and one off-duty officer)  
 Up to 350 attendees (min. 17 cleared adults and one off-duty officer)  
 Up to 400 attendees (min. 19 cleared adults and one off-duty officer)  
 Up to 450 attendees (min. 21 cleared adults and one off-duty officer)  
 Up to 500 attendees (min. 23 cleared adults and one off-duty officer)  
 More than 500 attendees – please call CYM (302-658-3800)

At all times, event leaders should be aware of the maximum number of people allowed by the fire code. In addition, there should be no fire code violations such as blocked or locked exits.

Cleared adults (with nametags) should be assigned posts that include but are not limited to:

- Roaming around the dance floor (perhaps a couple that dances)
- Stationed at the exits to ensure that no one leaves or arrives unnoticed
- Patrolling the parking lot periodically to ensure that no one is “hanging around” unsupervised
- Assisting at the refreshment stand to ensure spills are cleaned up quickly and general order is maintained
- Assisting at the registration desk to ensure the monies collected are properly handled, guests have turned in appropriate paperwork and all attendees have a permission slip on file

For High School Dances:

- One or two men periodically checking the boys’ bathroom (every 20 minutes or so)
- One or two women periodically checking the girls’ bathroom (every 20 minutes or so)

Bathrooms should be checked for:

- Vandalism
- Participants smoking
- Inappropriate contact or other behavior

For Junior High Dances:

- One cleared adults should be stationed outside each restroom in shifts (male outside boys’ room, female outside girls’ room) for the duration of the event to monitor loitering, potential vandalism or other Code of Conduct violations.
- Careful consideration should be given to the selection of your DJ. This person will be responsible for setting the tone for the dance. He/she should be encouraged to play music with positive messages, to host all – inclusive games, and most importantly, he/she should feel comfortable saying “no” to a participant who request a song that is inappropriate. There should be a written agreement between the host parish/school and the DJ outlining the expectations of the event.
- There must be a signed consent form on site for each participant. Publicizing this ahead of time will lessen the headache the day of the event. Make the permission form available online for parents to download or hand them out at the beginning of the year. If you use the Annual Permission Form, have copies available on site and a master list of those whose forms you have. Guests of participants are welcome but must also provide written permission that includes an emergency contact number.
  - Suggestion: some parishes use ID cards that are sold at the beginning of the year when forms are filled out. Knowing that those who have an ID card also have a written consent on file is one way to cut down on the last minute rush. Still, the first dance of every year will probably be accompanied by a rush of those

wanting/needing to fill out the proper forms. Once everyone catches on, participants and their parents will become much more cooperative.

- All dances should begin and end with prayer. The use of modern music in prayer is encouraged.
- When the dance ends, parents should be encouraged to come into the dance a few minutes early (especially in the case of junior high students). This allows the parents to be a part of the experience and affords the young people an escort to the car.
- All music that is played should have a positive message. Use Cornerstone Media ([www.cornerstone.net](http://www.cornerstone.net)) as a resource.
- There should be no “bumping and grinding,” no “crowd surfing” and no “mosh” pits.
- Consequences of inappropriate action should be made clear. If someone smokes, for instance, he/she is sent home, etc. See also **Guidelines for Sending a Young Person Home**