



## About Otago

Mō Ōtākou

# Planning for a safer night

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Planning for a safer night is an important focus for 2021 students.

Safer Nights is a Police-led initiative which seeks to engage students in useful discussions on how to look after themselves and their friends. The aim is to accurately inform young people and ensure they have their questions answered on topics that can greatly impact their lives.

During 2021 Orientation Week New Zealand Police teamed up with Southern District Health Board, Red Frogs, Dunedin City Council, student-led group RedLight and the Otago University Students' Association to run the Safer Nights campaign.

Constable Steve Jones says that the initiative was trialed last year and had a successful response over O-Week.

“We all want the same thing, for everyone to be safe, happy and well. The students have been really engaged. We have received heaps of positive feedback and been asked lots of questions. Even more so, Safer Nights has helped us bond with the students, and we

do see them as our students. We are proud of them and want to look after them. They are what make Dunedin unique from anywhere else in the world.”



Constable Steve Jones says that the initiative was trialed last year and had a successful response over O-Week.

Southern District Prevention Manager Inspector James Ure says informing students at the beginning of their studies is an important part of keeping them safe.

“Police are committed to working in partnership with Otago to try and reduce harm. Our focus is on education and engagement to reduce harm from alcohol and drugs. We don’t want to be simply a response service or the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff so to speak.”

“Enforcement is our absolute last resort and we have found that the work done over recent years with the ‘Good One Party Register’ has been a huge success to reduce harm and ensure everyone goes home safely.”

Over the past year Police wastewater testing revealed a drastic nation-wide increase in illegal drug-use. Ensuring that people are correctly informed on staying safe and looking out for their peers is often a key component in harm prevention.

Along with this work University Proctor Dave Scott says his office has also been working with Police and Good One Party Register to encourage students to plan their evenings for a safer outcome.



Ensuring that people are correctly informed on staying safe and looking out for their peers is often a key component in harm prevention.

“Our goal is for students to have an outstanding experience but in a safe way. Dunedin isn’t just limited to students, and so we work with them to consider the safety of the wider community.”

Dave and his team have been out visiting students as they arrived in the city during the past few weeks.

“We’ve been dropping by student flats and giving them advice on registering their parties, disposing of glass bottles safely and having a plan should they find themselves in trouble. For a lot of students, this is their first hosting experience and we see it as an opportunity to help guide them with a safety focus.”

#### Helpful resources:

[www.otago.ac.nz/proctor/index.html](http://www.otago.ac.nz/proctor/index.html)

[www.otago.ac.nz/proctor/campuswatch/otago025137.html](http://www.otago.ac.nz/proctor/campuswatch/otago025137.html)

[www.highalert.org.nz/](http://www.highalert.org.nz/)

[www.police.govt.nz/advice-services/sexual-assault-and-consent](http://www.police.govt.nz/advice-services/sexual-assault-and-consent)

[www.police.govt.nz/advice-services/drugs-and-alcohol](http://www.police.govt.nz/advice-services/drugs-and-alcohol)

[www.ousa.org.nz/support](http://www.ousa.org.nz/support)

[www.goodone.org.nz](http://www.goodone.org.nz)



Campus Watch: 0800 479 5000

Need to talk? Free call or text 1737 to talk to a trained counsellor

Lifeline: 0800 543 354

Mental Health Foundation: 09 623 4812

Suicide Crisis Helpline: 0508 828 865 (0508 TAUTOKO)

The Low Down: [thelowdown.co.nz](http://thelowdown.co.nz) / Web chat, email chat or free text 5626

In a life-threatening situation, call 111

*Kōrero by Internal Communications Adviser, Chelsea McRae*