

The Party (Party 1)

Fred and Kelly are neighbors. Kelly is a single parent with two teens. Fred lives alone. Kelly often allows her daughters to host parties at her house. Two weeks ago, Kelly hosted a party, which the fire department responded to. Fred got fed up with the ruckus and ran over to the house to confront Kelly. Kelly called the police. The police said it was a civil matter and referred both parties to mediation.

Kelly:

You are a single parent of two teenagers, Tom (16) and Jennifer (17). Jennifer is graduating this year and will be going to school in the East next year. You really want this graduating year to be special for her. You know that this will likely be Jennifer's last carefree year and you want her to enjoy every minute of it.

You have always been a considerate neighbor and are on good terms with the neighbors, although not really friends with any of them. You like to keep some distance from people when you live so close to them.

This spring, Jennifer and her friends have had grad parties nearly every weekend at someone's house. Since you have the largest house, the majority of the parties have been at your place. They are a good bunch of kids and deserve a little celebrating.

On occasion, your neighbor, Fred, has mentioned that the parties are a bit loud and go on a bit late. You feel that he is being somewhat unreasonable, especially because you have had to put up with the barking of his beagle for the past 5 years. Even though the barking is annoying, you have never asked Fred to curtail it. Now that he is complaining about the parties, you are finding the barking almost intolerable. Not only that, the beagle frequently leaves piles on your lawn and rummages through your garbage bins in the lane.

You have just had a mega-party two weeks ago which did get a little out of hand. For some reason, a fire truck appeared at the house at 3 a.m., and several of the kids were carrying on in the front lawn. Some bottles were broken but no real damage was done. Fred showed up in a real temper. You have never seen him like this before. He is making threats and appears nearly out of control. He is even insulting you as a parent and calling your children "tramps." Feeling your own anger rise to the surface, you decide to call the police to intervene.

To be revealed in private meeting or during negotiations:

You divorced your husband because of his out of control temper. Having Fred show up as he did brought up a lot of fear for you. You also were raised by a spinster aunt and kept under strict controls. You always felt that you had missed out on a lot as a young person and you are determined to make things better for your kids.

The Party (Party 2)

Fred and Kelly are neighbors. Kelly is a single parent with two teens. Fred lives alone. Kelly often allows her daughters to host parties at her house. Two weeks ago, Kelly hosted a party, which the fire department responded to. Fred got fed up with the ruckus and ran over to the house to confront Kelly. Kelly called the police. The police said it was a civil matter and referred both parties to mediation.

Fred:

You are a 60 year old bachelor and live in a quiet residential neighborhood. You live a very regimented life: to bed at 10:00 p.m., rise at 6 a.m., walk your dog, a beagle named Juicy, from 6:30 to 7:30 a.m. and so on. You like to know what to expect from the day and generally things go along very smoothly.

That is, until this spring when your neighbor, Kelly, has begun throwing riotous parties for her two punk teenagers. Nearly every Saturday night, you are kept awake way past midnight by loud music and siren-like laughter and screams. You have asked Kelly on a number of occasions to keep the noise down after 10 p.m., and she even said that she would. But, sure enough, the next weekend things got even louder.

Well, you've had enough! Two weeks ago, the party was the worst one ever and you were fantasizing about taking real action. There were at least 20 kids on the front lawn at 3 a.m., and someone must have set the place on fire because a fire truck appeared at 3:12 a.m. You were awake all night and you refuse to tolerate any more of this nonsense. Kelly, like most single parents (in your opinion), has no control over her kids and they will all probably end up behind bars someday. Well, the sooner, the better, as far as you are concerned.

You went over to Kelly's house and demanded that she put a stop to these parties. As soon as you began telling her how you feel, you found yourself losing control and shouting insults and accusations at her. Before you knew it, Kelly was shouting just as forcefully back at you when she suddenly grabbed the phone and called the police.