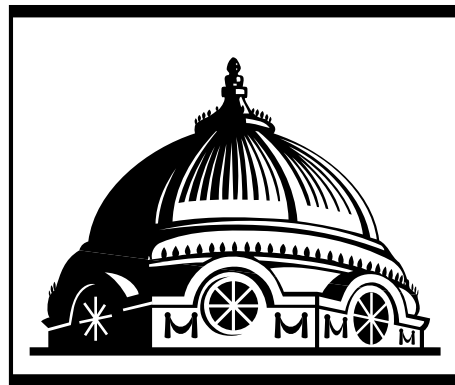


ALCOHOL, OTHER DRUGS AND YOUR COLLEGE STUDENT



Southeast
Missouri State University

TM

**DEPARTMENT OF
STUDENT DEVELOPMENT**

From the Office of Substance Abuse Prevention and Education

The freedom afforded by the college environment presents many challenges and potential problems for students and their families. Among them are the alcohol and other drug choices your student will face. This publication is designed to help students and parents prepare for a dialogue we encourage you to have about the dangers of alcohol and other drug abuse.

Recent research confirms our belief about the influential role parents continue to play in the lives of our students. Students whose parents have talked with them about the dangers of alcohol and other drug use/abuse are less likely to use. Those who perceive that their families care about whether or not they use/abuse are less likely to do so. The same holds true for students who perceive that their families will try to stop them from using/abusing alcohol and other drugs.

Our students are expected to abide by Federal, state and Local laws as well as the University Code of Student Conduct. The University views violations of these standards seriously and will take immediate action against any student violating the Code of Conduct. Two sections of the Code your student needs to be aware of are: “Unauthorized possession and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages on University premises or at University functions (alcohol is not authorized on campus unless specifically authorized by the President or designee)” and “disruptive behavior attributable to the use of alcohol or other controlled substances . . .”.

Although we have a strict policy against illicit behaviors, we also provide counseling and support services for students who feel they have a problem or may be struggling with these issues and choose to deal with them proactively. Students who are judicially sanctioned for Code of Conduct violations will be assessed a \$65 Judicial Fee and will also receive evaluation, education, support and counseling.

We strongly encourage you as parents to continue to be actively involved in the lives of your sons and daughters. Please have an ongoing conversation with them about your expectations related to alcohol and other drugs.

Sincerely,



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Introduction

College is a turning point in the relationship between parents and their children. It is a time to let go of traditional and comfortable roles and look forward to the future. This publication provides a brief overview of the impact alcohol and other drug use may have on the lives of students on a college campus. More importantly, it emphasizes the continued significance of your role as parent or guardian in the life of your college student.

The sensitive topic of drug and alcohol use can be even more difficult when discussed in the context of sexual behavior and violence. *But consider what you have to lose if you do not have this conversation; you could lose your child.*

Often parents and guardians find it difficult to talk about alcohol and other drug use because they may drink or use drugs themselves. Another concern is that discussing subjects as personal as substance use may bring up sensitive family issues. The truth is, virtually every family is affected, directly or indirectly, by substance abuse. There is often personal concerns that to discuss alcohol use with their children, parents must model and preach abstinence. This simply is not true. What we need to communicate is that the misuse of alcohol - by underage students and by students over 21 - remains a problem for some in spite of laws, campus policies, and college programs. So, when talking to your son or daughter about their choices with regard to alcohol, you may want to discuss the differences between low-risk and high-risk drinking and abstaining.

College: The Possibilities are Endless . . .

College is an opportunity for intellectual and social growth. College students' personal experiences, extra-curricular activities and social development are as significant as academic growth.

College students are young adults living in an independent setting in which they are responsible for their own structure and lifestyle. The first year may be particularly challenging for students as they experiment with "their newly acquired status of adulthood."

In high school, substance abuse prevention emphasized the important role parents and guardians play in helping their children deflect peer pressure. Now you have an even more important obligation - to help you child deal with the environmental expectation that substance abuse (alcohol and other drugs) is a presumed rite of passage on college campuses. Alcohol and other drug use/ abuse, expectations and problems are by no means unique to any particular school, whether public or private, large or small, or within a particular state or region.

Media coverage of recent alcohol-related deaths among college students focused the spotlight on collegiate substance abuse. However, research indicates that high risk drinking by college students has been a public health dilemma for decades, and only recently has been given the attention necessary to foster discussion and change.

"We've all seen and heard horror stories about deaths and injuries caused by excessive drinking on campus(es)," President of College Parents Association, Richard M. Flaherty, says. "As parents, you are frightened by these stories. You have every right to be. Student alcohol abuse can be addressed, just as we have reduced drunken driving on our nation's roads. This fight will require college parents, students, universities, and their communities to work together." It is imperative that parents talk to their students about the personal and community impact of binge drinking/alcohol abuse.

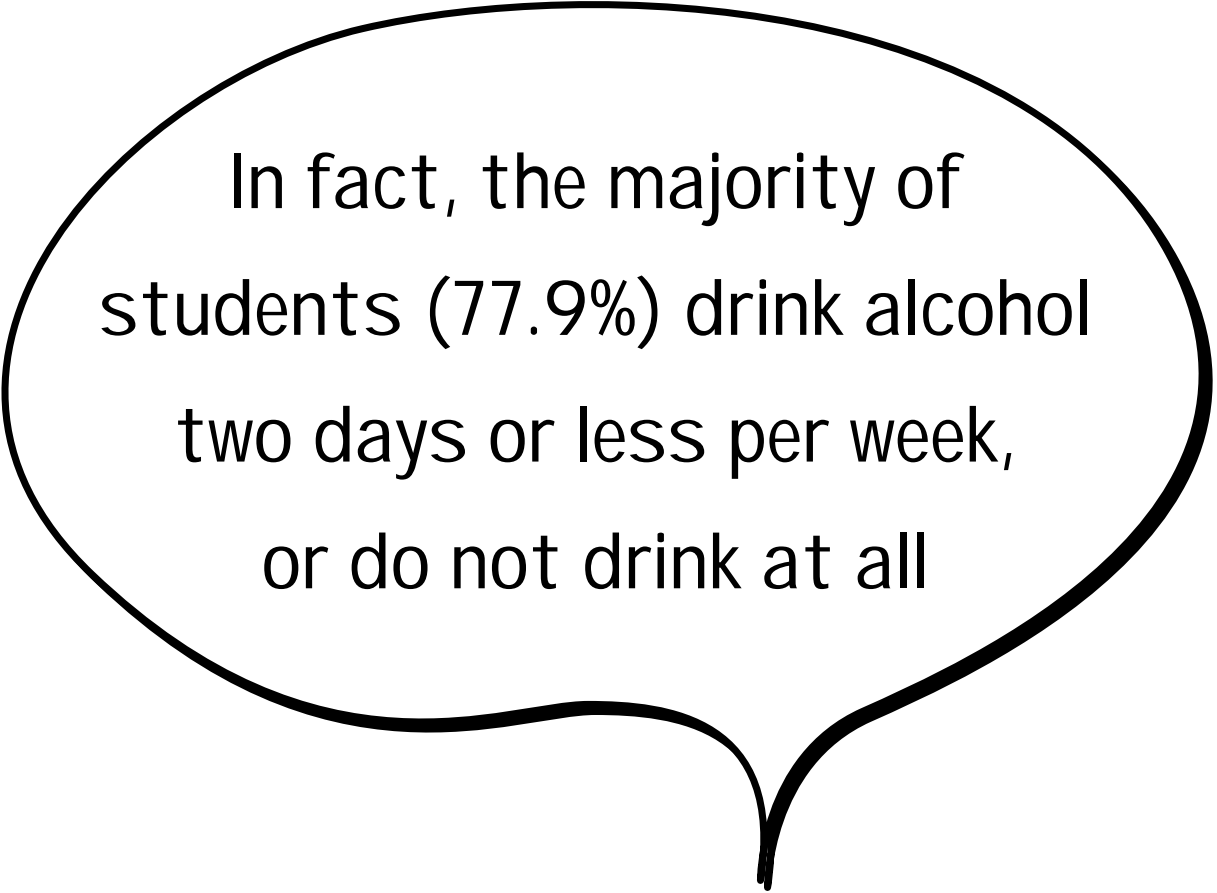
“Every child in America is at risk of using drugs”, says Joseph A. Califano Jr., President of The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) and former Secretary of Health Education, and Welfare. “The issue isn’t whether our children are going to be tossed into this sea of drugs; the issue is how well we can teach them to swim. The more parents take responsibility, the less at risk of using drugs their children are”.

Source: Survey of teenagers conducted for The national Center on Addition and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University by the Luntz Research Companies, 1996.

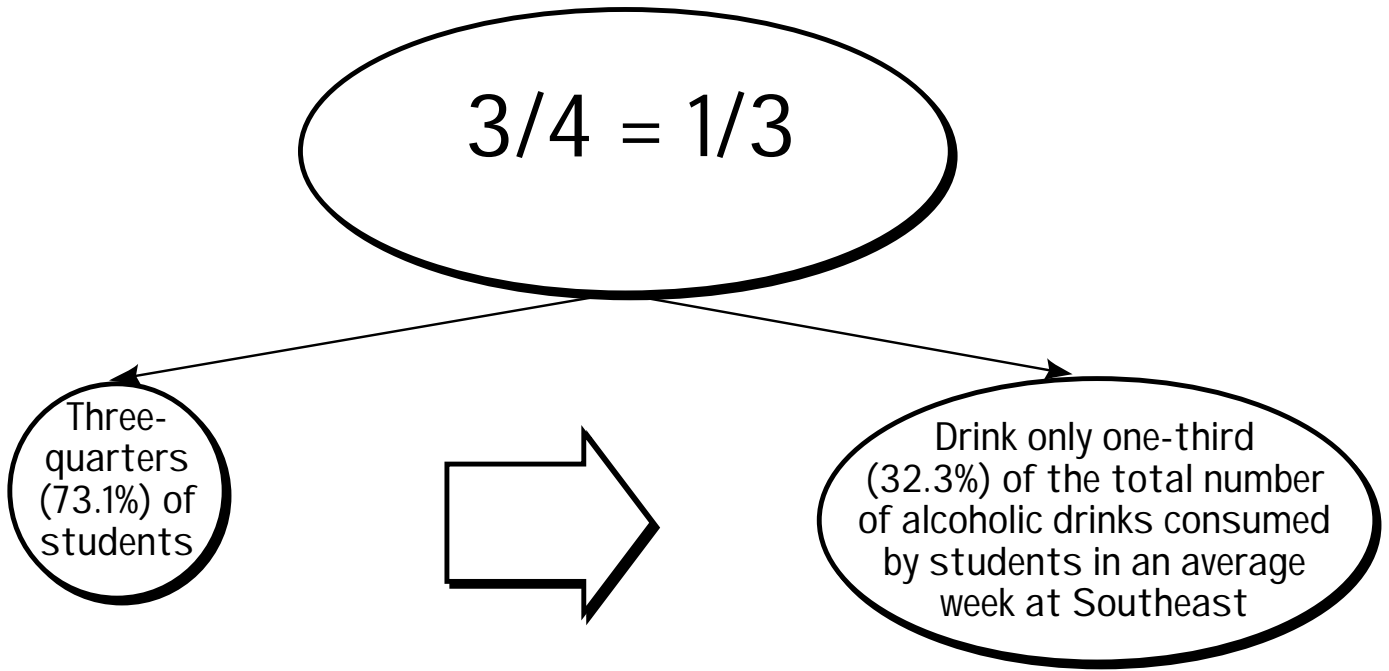
Misperceptions About Student Drinking Norms

There are significant differences between the perceptions about the frequency and quantity of drinking while at school and the actual drinking behaviors of students. Students always believe that the amount of drinking by other students is significantly greater than it actually is. Similar misperceptions of peers exist in junior high and high school. Therefore, students come to college with a misperception of the campus norm that grows worse after arrival.

Given these misperceptions, however, we also know that the majority of students abuse alcohol at least occasionally (20% abstain). The very first time a young persons drinks, or on any particular occasion when they have “too much”, any of the risks discussed herein. Therefore, for the safety of your student, begin these serious conversations.



In fact, the majority of students (77.9%) drink alcohol two days or less per week, or do not drink at all



Look Who's Coming to College

By the time American teenagers reach 17:

- 58% have a friend who has used LSD, cocaine or heroin; 62% have friends who are marijuana users.
- 43% have one friend with a serious drug problem; 28% have more than one.
- 34% know someone with a serious drinking problem.
- 43% say marijuana is easier to buy than either cigarettes or beer.
- 58% have been solicited to buy marijuana.

Parent's Opinions:

- Nearly half of baby-boomer parents believe their teens will try illegal drugs.
- 46% know someone who uses illegal drugs.
- 32% have friends who use marijuana.

Source: Survey of teenagers conducted for the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University by the Luntz Research Companies, 1996.

Use vs. Abuse: Take a Closer Look

Substance use turns to abuse when the use of alcohol or other drugs is terminal to the health of the individual and/or the health of others. Since the University is a community, the behavior of each student affects the health, safety and behavior of other students.

Spectrum of Substance use and Addition:

Abstinence: Not using alcohol and other drugs

Experimentation: Alcohol and other drug use is influenced by curiosity and is experimental. It is limited to only a few exposures with no pattern of use and the student experiences limited negative consequences (*although there is always risk of physical danger while under the influence - even if it is only once*).

Social/Recreational: Students seek out alcohol and/or other drugs to experience a certain effect, but there is no established pattern of use.

Habituation: Regardless of how frequently students use alcohol or other drugs, a definite pattern of use indicates that the craving for the effect of the substance controls the user.

Drug Abuse: Students use alcohol and/or other drugs despite negative consequences in relationships, school, finances, health, work, emotional well-being or with the law.

Addiction: Students have lost control of their use of alcohol and/or other drugs. As reflected in their behaviors, the substances have become the most important things in their lives.

More young people are becoming addicted to alcohol - not necessarily during their teen years, but at some point in their life. For those individuals who wait until age 21 to begin drinking, only 10% will become alcoholic. If they begin drinking at age 17, almost 1 in 4, (24.5%), will become addicted. If they begin to drink before 15, over 40% will become alcoholic; almost a flip of the coin. The majority of teenagers begin drinking at age 15 or younger. Similarly, the prevalence of alcohol abuse significantly drops as the drinking age rises.

Relationship between Age of Drinking Onset & Future Alcoholism

| Age of Drinking Onset | NIAAA Predicted Future Alcoholism* |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| 21+ | 10% |
| 17 | 24.5% |
| <15 | +40% |

*January 14, 1998 National Institutes of Health Press Release; National Institute on Alcohol Abuse & Alcoholism report.

Source: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 1998.

While physiological and developmental issues are involved with addiction, particularly when considering teenagers, the age of first use is one of many other risk factors. When asking why some teens move from alcohol and other drug use to substance abuse, the answer doesn't lie just in the substance itself. The answer lies in the way a teenager relates to their self, other people and their surroundings.

Other risk factors for teenagers' susceptible to substance abuse include depression or anxiety, antisocial peer groups, low self-esteem and a desire to escape feelings like self-doubt, powerlessness and hopelessness. A teenager with risk factors is not destined to substance abuse; he or she is simply at higher risk.

All teenagers, but particularly those with risk factors, can build on their strengths (known as "resilience" or "protective factors") to prevent the negative factors from dominating their lives. Resilience factors include having a strong relationship with an adult, confidence-building experiences at school, work or other extracurricular activities and the ability to control the sources of their problems rather than focusing only on the expression of those problems - the substance abuse. Such factors build self-esteem, a sense of personal control, a desire to be healthy and a link to mainstream activities and values. What does this mean for a parent? Help your child build resilience and build open and honest communication.

Source: Peele, S. Don't panic! A parent's guide to understanding and preventing alcohol and drug abuse, 1996.

Minimizing the Risks Associated with Alcohol and Other Drugs

Substance use presents such obvious immediate health risks as alcohol poisoning and death from overdose. Substance use also presents immediate health risks that are not so obvious:

- A decrease in the ability to make safe and healthy decisions (e.g. using a condom as protection from the risk of infection of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV). 60% of college women who are infected with STDs, including genital herpes and AIDS, report that they were under the influence of alcohol at the time they had intercourse with the infected persons.
- As many as 70% of college students admit to having engaged in sexual activity primarily as a result of being under the influence of alcohol, or to having sex they wouldn't have had if they had been sober.
- The increase in violence associated with all drugs, including alcohol. 90% of all campus rapes occur when alcohol has been used by either the assailant or the victim.
- 55% of female students and 75% of male students involved in a acquaintance rape admit to having been drinking or using drugs when the incident occurred.
- Students who drink 5 or more drinks in one setting were 3.5 times more likely than their lower risk drinking counterparts to have been a victim of actual physical violence, 2.3 times more likely to have experienced forced sexual touching and 2.7 times more likely to endure unwanted sexual intercourse. (Core Institute, 1996)

Source: American Council for Drug Education, 'Facts on tap: A Risky Relationship', 1998.

A Conversation You Can't Afford Not to Have With Your Student

Alcohol Use and Academic Performance:

This table describes the relationship between the average number of drinks consumer per week by college students and grade point average.

Grades and Drinking

- | | |
|----------|----------------------|
| A | 3.6 drinks per week |
| B | 5.5 drinks per week |
| C | 7.6 drinks per week |
| D | 10.6 drinks per week |

Source: National CORE Survey, 1996.

Alcohol is implicated in more than 40% of all academic problems and 40% of all dropouts. 26% of students had a memory loss in the past year.

Source: The Commission on Substance Abuse on America's Campuses, 'Rethinking Rites of Passage', 1994.

Marijuana Use and Academic Performance

Consider the following facts:

- Marijuana impairs short-term memory and the ability to concentrate - abilities recognized by all educators as important to academic success.
- Marijuana use can have lingering effects on the ability to learn. Studies show that college students who regularly used marijuana had impaired skills related to attention, memory and learning as many as 24 hours after they last used the drug.
- Marijuana slows reflexes and coordination. It impairs the user's ability to judge distance, speed and time.
- Regular use of marijuana commonly causes such respiratory problems as bronchitis, sore throats and coughs - all conditions that may significantly affect school attendance and concentration in class.

- While not addictive in the same way as alcohol, cocaine and other harder drugs, long-term use can lead to psychological dependence on the drug.

Source: The American Council for Drug Education, 1997

Risking Loss of Financial Aid

As of July 1, 2000, financial aid recipients convicted (felony or misdemeanor, Federal or State law) for the sale or possession of a controlled substance (e.g., marijuana) will lose their eligibility for financial aid (any grant, loan or work assistance).

Source: 1998 Amendments to Higher Education Act of 1965, Section 483®.

How and When to Talk to Your Son or Daughter

Before you begin . . .

- Avoid contradictions between your words and actions.
- Be prepared to establish an ongoing conversation rather than giving a one-time talk. The first discussion is likely to be the toughest to initiate.
- Assess and review your own feelings about alcohol and other drug use.
- Talk with other parents of college students who learned by experience. They may have information to share on successful conversations they have had with their college student. They may also have advice on conversations they wish they had or actions they might have taken.

How to begin the conversations . . .

- Be prepared to initiate the discussion.
- Exchange information face to face rather than over the phone.
- Look for and create “teachable moments” such as television news, dramas, books or newspapers that deal with substance use in college settings.
- If the teachable moment seems to arise because your child is intoxicated, do not try to talk while he/she is intoxicated: wait until the next day.

When you communicate . . .

- Communicate calmly and openly. You do not need to exaggerate. Facts speak for themselves.
- Listen actively and try to understand each other's point of view.
- Allow your child to express fears, concerns and disagreements without interruption or preaching.
- Role-play or use anecdotal scenarios. Work through potential situations your student may encounter in college using a role-play. Figure out a number of ways your student can handle each situation and talk about which works best and why.
- Be clear in what you expect from your student about such things as: attending class; drinking and driving; financial responsibly; choices regarding drinking and other drug use; study time vs. social time; staying in touch.

The College Parents of America offers the following eight talking points for parents to keep in mind when speaking with their students.

1. Set clear and realistic expectations regarding academic performance. Studies conducted nationally have demonstrated that partying may contribute as much to a student's decline in grades as the difficulty of his or her academic work. If students know their parents expect sound academic work, they are likely to be more devoted to their studies and have less time to get in trouble with alcohol.
2. Stress to students that alcohol is toxic and excessive consumption can fatally poison. This is not a scare tactic. The fact is students die every year from alcohol poisoning. Discourage dangerous drinking through participation in drinking games, hazing, or in any other way. Parents should ask their students to also have the courage to intervene when they see someone putting their life at risk through participation in dangerous drinking.
3. Tell students to intervene when classmates are in trouble with alcohol. Nothing is more tragic than an unconscious student being left to die while others either fail to recognize that the student is in jeopardy or fail to call for help due to fear of getting the student in trouble.
4. Tell students to stand up for their right to a safe academic environment. Students who do not drink can be affected by the behavior of those who do, ranging from interrupted study time to assault or unwanted sexual advances. Students can confront these problems directly by discussing them with the offender. If that fails, they should notify the housing director or other residence hall staff.
5. Know the alcohol scene on campus and talk to students about it. Students grossly exaggerate the use of alcohol and other drugs by their peers. A recent survey found that University of Oregon students believed 96 percent of their peers drink alcohol at least once a week, when the actual rate was 52 percent. Students are highly influenced by peers and tend to drink up to what they perceive to be the norm. Confronting misperceptions about alcohol use is vital.

6. Avoid tales of drinking exploits from your own college years. Entertaining students with stories of drinking back in “the good old days” normalizes what, even then, was abnormal behavior. It also appears to give parental approval to dangerous alcohol consumption.
7. Encourage your student to volunteer in community work. In addition to structuring free time, volunteerism provides students with opportunities to develop job-related skills and to gain valuable experience. Helping others also gives students a broader outlook and a healthier perspective on the opportunities they enjoy. Volunteer work on campus helps students further connect with their school, increasing the likelihood of staying in college.
8. Make it clear — Underage alcohol consumption and driving after drinking are against the law. Parents should make it clear that they do not condone breaking the law. Parents of college students should openly and clearly express disapproval of underage drinking and dangerous alcohol consumption. And, if parents themselves drink, they should present a positive role model in the responsible use of alcohol.

Source: College Parents of America, ‘Attacking Alcohol Abuse on Campus’, 1998.

It Takes a Partnership

Colleges and universities across the country look to parents as “partners” in this fight against the increasing use and abuse of alcohol and other drugs. Students are adults and need to assume a new level of responsibility for their behavior. In some cases, parental involvement may discourage students from coming forward to admit a problem or seek counseling. Some students avoid admission of a problem for fear of “disappointing a parent or loved one”. We believe our policy and structure serves to minimize this fear. Because most students are adults, our communications with them are held in confidence. However, our goal is to encourage students to involve their parents early on before any behaviors begin to inhibit their daily routine and, in effect, academic performance.

More frustrating than learning your child was just suspended from college is finding out about a drug or alcohol problem at the very same time. We hope the contents of this brochure will allow you to talk with your child before a crisis necessitates it.

Ultimately, dealing with a drug or alcohol problem is up to your child and you, with Southeast Missouri State University health professionals as mere facilitators in the discussion. Please act now if you have not already had this very important ongoing conversation with your student; there is no time like the present!

Comparison of Alcohol Use Trends Among the Incoming Class of 2004 vs. 1999 Southeast Missouri State University Core Survey Data and 1988 National Core Survey Data

| | First Step 2000 | Southeast Core '99 | National Core Data |
|--|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Average number of students who got drunk within the past year | | _____ | _____ |
| How often students perceive the average student uses alcohol | | 3 Times a Week or More | _____ |
| How often students perceive the average student gets drunk | | _____ | _____ |
| How often in the past month students actually used alcohol | | 7 days | _____ |
| How often in the past month students actually got drunk | | _____ | _____ |
| Number of drinks consumed in an average week | | 5.7 | 5.2 |
| Age the average student first used alcohol (other than a few sips) | | 14 | _____ |

Student Comments Regarding SAPE Alcohol Class, Programs and Services

E.M. "I liked the class, it really opened my eyes. I will monitor problem drinking situations because now I can identify (them)."

J.M. "I was surprised. I thought that it would be lecturing us against the use of alcohol but I liked the fact that it made me more aware of my drinking habits."

M.S. "I think I should re-consider my options when it comes to drinking."

M.J. "Keep everything the same. The instructor is very down to earth and we can relate to that."

B.R. "The class was informational. I liked to hear some of the statistics and facts that I didn't know. The personal experience gave more meaning than someone who has never drank, trying to tell me not to. I think the class was a very good thing, don't change anything!"

J.A. "I will think about the consequences before I start drinking."

J.B. "It was very informative. The statistics of college drinkers was amazing. I'll see if it's hard for me to stop after 3 or 4 drinks."

J.B. "This class made me realize my risk of becoming or maybe already being a problem drinker. My dad's an alcoholic and so I'm also at greater risk. I will take care in quantity and frequency."

J.H. "I have begun cutting back on my drinking."

A.K. "I will take better care of friends when they pass out."



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