



Fall Semester: A time for parents to revisit discussions about college drinking

Your teen is ready to launch and leave for the college experience. You will arm your student with books, bedding and a whole assortment of necessities. Make sure you and your teen are armed for the newfound freedom and the enticing world of alcohol and drugs. Here are a few facts and tips to help safeguard your graduate:

1. Various studies have found that 80% of students attending 4 year colleges consume alcohol - 44% drink alcohol at the binge level or greater.
2. Annually, 400,000 students between the ages 18-24 engage in unprotected sex while drunk and say they wouldn't have done it had they been sober.
3. About 25% of college students report academic consequences of their drinking including missing class, falling behind, doing poorly on exams or papers and receiving lower grades overall.
4. More than 150,000 students develop an alcohol related health problem and between 1.2 and 1.5 percent of students indicate that they have tried to commit suicide within the past year due to drinking or drug use.

What you can do:

1. TALK – about the danger and facts about having newfound freedom and the lure of drinking. Talk about the consequences.
2. Discuss legal policies at their school. Including sexual assault laws. For boys and girls!
3. Talk about making better choices as they navigate the college scene reminding them that not everybody drinks!
4. Reinforce protective factors if your student does choose to drink:
 - a. Alternate non-alcoholic drinks
 - b. Don't play drinking games
 - c. Set a limit
 - d. Pace yourself
5. Teach your student the signs of alcohol poisoning and encourage them to look out for their peers.
 - a. The person is unconscious or semi-conscious and cannot be awakened when touched, spoken to, or shaken.
 - b. If they pinch the child and there is no reaction – call 911
 - c. Cold, clammy or pale or bluish skin.
 - d. Slowed breathing
 - e. Vomiting while sleeping or passed out
 - f. Drank a large quantity of alcohol and collapsed
6. Call your child often in the first few weeks of school.
7. Know where your child can get help on campus and direct them there if needed