SEXUAL ASSAULT

Rape, sexual assault and other forms of sexual violence occur on college campuses just as they do everywhere in society. One in three women and one in ten men in the United States are sexually victimized. One in four to one in six college age women are raped or sexually assaulted. These crimes are rarely reported to the police. Approximately 84% of rapes and sexual assaults are committed by someone the victim knows. Alcohol is often a factor. Sexual assault can affect an individual’s emotional well being, physical health, academic performance and personal life. It can also affect family, friends, and communities. It is important for individuals who have been assaulted to seek medical attention, to consider reporting to the police, and to talk with a counselor or other professional support person. It is also important to remember that rape and sexual assault are never the survivor’s fault.

Mental Health

Many college students struggle with mental health issues. These problems can take many forms such as depression, anxiety, eating disorders, or stress. Some students already come to college with mental health issues, while others develop mental health issues from the stress and pressures of college. It is important that students receive treatment for these issues because mental health disorders can contribute to lack of focus on academic and social obligations, and in the worst case suicide. If your son/daughter is suffering from mental health issues, encourage him/her to seek help from the campus counseling office.

About Partners in Prevention

PARTNERS IN PREVENTION (PIP) IS A STATEWIDE COALITION FOCUSED ON PREVENTING HIGH-RISK DRINKING AMONG MISSOURI’S COLLEGE STUDENTS. THE COALITION IS COMPOSED OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM EACH OF MISSOURI’S 12 STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES AND IS UNDERWRITTEN BY GRANTS FROM THE MISSOURI DIVISION OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG ABUSE, AND MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION’S HIGHWAY SAFETY DIVISION.

For more information about Partners in prevention, go to http://PIP.MISSOURI.EDU

Additional Resources

PIP Brochures Available for Download:

What is Your Degree Worth? Alcohol and Your Career
Women and Alcohol
Predatory Drugs
Ecstasy
Gambling Brochure
Date Rape Drugs
What Every College Student Needs to Know: Information About Alcohol Laws in Missouri
Succeeding in College: A Survival Guide for Future Missouri College Students

Higher Education Center
http://www.edc.org/hec

Parenting Skills
21 Tips and Ideas to Help You Make A Difference
http://www.health.org/govpubs/PHD826/

Keeping your Kids Drug-Free
http://media.shs.net/prevline/pdfs/phd884.pdf

A Brief Guide to Action for Parents

What Every Parent Needs to Know

This publication is brought to you by Partners in Prevention, a coalition of twenty universities in Missouri. Partners in Prevention is funded by the Missouri Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse and the US Department of Education.
INTRODUCTION
AS A PARENT OF A FUTURE OR CURRENT COLLEGE STUDENT, WE KNOW THAT TWO OF THE BIGGEST CONCERNS YOU HAVE ARE WHETHER YOUR STUDENT WILL BE SAFE AND WHETHER OR NOT YOUR STUDENT WILL SUCCEED ACADEMICALLY. BOTH OF THESE CONCERNS ARE UNDERSTANDABLE AND ARE OFTEN CLOSELY TIED TO THE USE OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS IN THE COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT.

AS AN ORGANIZATION OF INSTITUTIONS DEDICATED TO REDUCING HIGH RISK AND UNDERAGE DRINKING AMONG MISSOURI’S COLLEGE STUDENTS, WE THINK IT IS IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO KNOW THE PROACTIVE STEPS SCHOOLS ARE TAKING TO CURB ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE, THE EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM AT MISSOURI’S UNIVERSITIES, AND HOW YOU CAN HELP US BE PART OF THE SOLUTION.

ALCOHOL & COLLEGE STUDENTS
Alcohol use and abuse among college students is a serious problem on many campuses. With the use of alcohol come many risks and consequences. These risks include physical sickness, academic consequences, future career consequences, and potential legal consequences.

LEGAL CONSEQUENCES
In Missouri, there are many laws and campus policies that regulate the use of alcohol. Violating these laws/policies could result in prosecution in the courts as well as through campus judicial offices, which could impose a student suspension or probation from campus. Educate yourself and your son/daughter on the laws that are relevant to them.

THE GOOD NEWS
NOT ALL MISSOURI COLLEGE STUDENTS ARE USING ALCOHOL, AND MOST STUDENTS WHO DO CONSUME ALCOHOL ARE DOING SO RESPONSIBLY. IN FACT, STATEWIDE RESEARCH HAS FOUND THE FOLLOWING GOOD NEWS ABOUT MISSOURI COLLEGE STUDENTS:

WHAT ARE MISSOURI COLLEGE STUDENTS LIKE?
MOST MAKE HEALTHY CHOICES
MOST DRINK 4 OR LESS DRINKS PER WEEK
MOST DON’T DRINK AND DRIVE
MOST USE A DESIGNATED DRIVER WHEN THEY CHOSE TO DRINK
MOST DON'T SMOKE

*DATA TAKEN FROM THE MISSOURI COLLEGE HEALTH BEHAVIOR SURVEY SPRING 2008 (N=1,116)

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOUR SON/DAUGHTER REALIZE THE TRUTH ABOUT ALCOHOL ON MISSOURI COLLEGE CAMPUSES. THAT MOST STUDENTS WHO USE ALCOHOL ARE USING IT RESPONSIBLY.

YOUR ROLE
As a parent, it is very important that you discuss the risks and consequences associated with alcohol abuse and alcohol use by those under 21. Share with your son/daughter what your expectations are for their behavior, class attendance, and grades. Hold your son/daughter accountable for these expectations.

COMMUNICATION
After your son/daughter has begun college, continue to communicate with them. Call or email on a regular basis and inquire about their experiences at college. The Century Council recommends the following conversation starters:

BEFORE YOUR STUDENT LEAVES
HOW WILL YOU DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO DRINK AT COLLEGE?
WHAT WILL YOU DO IF YOUR ROOM-MATE WANTS TO HAVE ALCOHOL IN YOUR RESIDENCE HALL ROOM?
WHAT WILL YOU DO IF YOUR ROOM-MATE ONLY WANTS TO DRINK AND PARTY?
WHAT WILL YOU DO IF YOU FIND A STUDENT PASSED OUT?
HOW WILL YOU HANDLE IT IF YOU ARE ASKED TO BABYSIT SOMEONE WHO IS VERY DRUNK?

AFTER YOUR STUDENT IS AT COLLEGE
HOW ARE YOU DOING?
DO YOU LIKE YOUR CLASSES?
WHAT ARE YOU LEARNING IN YOUR CLASSES?
WHAT IS THE PARTY SCENE LIKE?
WHAT KIND OF ACTIVITIES ARE AVAILABLE?
DO YOU ENJOY WHERE YOU LIVE?
DO YOU SEE OTHERS MAKING FRIENDS OR DRINKING BUDDIES?
HOW ARE YOU GETTING ALONG WITH YOUR ROOM-MATE?
ARE YOU FEELING OVERWHELMED?
WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP?

ENHANCING AND SUPPORT
Although your son/daughter is gaining independence by attending college, it is still important for you to give encouragement and support during this time of transition. Your son/daughter will respond best if you respect him/her as a young adult.

GETTING HELP
If you suspect that your son/daughter is struggling with academic, emotional, or alcohol-related issues, there are many offices on campuses to help your student, free of charge. Encourage your son/daughter to seek help through these services by contacting the counseling center, prevention office, or student health center to find out how they can receive help. See a list of university contact information on the back of this brochure.

OTHER ISSUES COLLEGE STUDENTS FACE

OTHER DRUG ABUSE
This category includes illegal, prescription, and over the counter drug abuse. Some college students are abusing drugs, which can have negative physical, mental, and emotional effects for those students. Also, students who abuse drugs are more likely to suffer academically.

GAMBLING
Gambling is one of the most overlooked issues facing college students. Problem gambling is a major threat to academic success and financial well-being. Gambling is a problem on the rise in college populations because of increased availability of gambling sites on-line. The most common reasons students gamble include: stress relief, to make money, risk-taking rush, and excitement to athletic events, boredom or depression, control, and curiosity.

SEXUAL HEALTH
Although not every college student is sexually active, a significant number of Missouri’s college students are. If safe sex is not practiced, there are risks of contracting sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Encourage an open dialogue with your son/daughter on the issue of safer sex and alternatives to sexual activity, such as abstinence. Many campuses offer resources to students such as condoms, STD screenings, and information on healthy relationships, and alternatives to sexual activity.

ALCOHOL & COLLEGE STUDENTS
According to the 2008 Missouri College Health Behavior Survey, most Missouri college students do not use alcohol responsibly. However, there are many colleges and universities that are taking proactive steps to address the issue of alcohol use on their campuses. Some of these colleges have implemented policies that limit the amount of alcohol that can be brought onto campus, while others have banned alcohol entirely. Regardless of the approach taken, it is important for students to be aware of the risks associated with alcohol use and to make informed decisions about their drinking behavior.

FUTURE CAREER CONSEQUENCES
More companies today are conducting background checks on potential employees. For college students convicted of drug and drinking-related offenses, it could prove difficult to find employment or admittance into graduate and professional programs, such as medical or law school.