WHAT WE KNOW

Nationally, binge drinking (4 or more drinks in 2 hours for women, 5 or more for men) among young adults is one of the most prevalent and dangerous behaviors on college campuses. Binge drinking rates can vary depending on college enrollments and student living arrangements. The figure below shows that alcohol abuse is higher among young adults enrolled in college who live on campus or who live independently off campus than among college students living at home. College students who do not live at home have higher rates of binge drinking than young adults not enrolled in college, whether they live at home or independently.

Students are not just at risk for higher alcohol use, but for other drug use as well. Young adults in New Hampshire are more likely to use marijuana and other illegal drugs than other New Hampshire age groups. They also use these drugs at a higher rate than young adults in the Northeast region.
WHY IT MATTERS
The consequences of excessive drinking and substance use affect virtually all college campuses, college communities, and college students. The statistics below help remind parents and others of the need to check with college students to talk about risks and to support their safety and well being.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HEALTH</th>
<th>CRIME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Injury</strong></td>
<td>599,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 are unintentionally injured under the influence of alcohol.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alcohol Abuse and Dependence</strong></td>
<td>31% of college students met criteria for a diagnosis of alcohol abuse and 6% for a diagnosis of alcohol dependence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unsafe Sex</strong></td>
<td>400,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 had unprotected sex and more than 100,000 report having been too intoxicated to know if they consented to having sex.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Problems/Suicide Attempts</strong></td>
<td>More than 150,000 students develop an alcohol-related health problem, and between 1.2 and 1.5% of all US college students indicate that they tried to commit suicide within the past year due to drinking or drug use.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Death**: 1,825 US college students between the ages of 18 and 24 die from alcohol-related unintentional injuries, including motor vehicle crashes.

**Vandalism**: About 11% of NH college student drinkers report that they have damaged property while under the influence of alcohol.
### COST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Problems</td>
<td>About 25% of college students in NH report academic consequences from their drinking including missing class, falling behind, doing poorly on exams or papers, and receiving lower grades overall. With tuition rates in NH averaging $14,576 per year for a 4-year public college and $34,419 for a 4-year private college, negative impacts to academic performance can become very costly to parents and students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop-Outs</td>
<td>Between 1/3 and 1/2 of all students leaving college leave due to alcohol related issues. As above, with the high cost of tuition and the cost of opportunities lost, students and families are paying a high price when students leave school from the negative consequences of alcohol or other drug abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of Financial Aid</td>
<td>For students who may use drugs, the financial consequences could be even more severe if they are convicted of a drug offense. According to federal regulations, students convicted of a drug offense that occurred during a period of enrollment while they were receiving Title IV Federal Financial Aid may lose eligibility for Federal Aid. This may include both grants and loans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Damage</td>
<td>More than 25% of administrators from schools with relatively low drinking levels and over 50% from schools with high drinking levels say their campuses have a “moderate” or “major” problem with alcohol-related property damage.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### WHAT WE CAN DO

Community institutions such as health clinics, businesses, local government, public safety, and others can help to address the risk behaviors among college populations through local media campaigns, student educational programs, mentoring programs, free and confidential screenings for college students, alcohol- and drug-free activities for young adults, strict adherence to liquor laws by restaurants and other alcohol licensees, and strong policy enforcement by colleges and employers with recovery supports made available.

### Sources for Why It Matters

WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE

YOUR STUDENT’S COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY:

• Website, Health Promotion Office, Health Services, Counseling Services

RESOURCES FOR COLLEGES:

New Hampshire Higher Education Alcohol and Other Drug Committee - www.nhheaod.org

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism: College Drinking Changing the Culture: Parents


Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention - www.edc.org/hec

RESOURCES IN NEW HAMPSHIRE:

Technical Assistance for organizations, schools and businesses interested in prevention and early intervention best practices:
http://www.nhcenterforexcellence.org

Substance misuse policy and advocacy resources and training: http://www.new-futures.org

NH substance misuse information and educational materials: http://www.drugfreenh.org

NH Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services: http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/dcbcs/bdas/


GENERAL INFORMATION:

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence - www.ncadd.org

Alcoholics Anonymous - www.alcoholics-anonymous.org

This issue brief was produced and disseminated by the New Hampshire Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services, New Hampshire Center for Excellence and the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and was developed in partnership with the New Hampshire Higher Education Alcohol and Other Drug (NHHEAOD) Committee.