

## Campus Community Town Hall Meeting Talking Points

According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism's College Drinking: Changing the Culture Web site, "The consequences of excessive and underage drinking affect virtually all college campuses, college communities, and college students, whether they choose to drink or not." [1] Use the following talking points for your Town Hall Meeting media outreach and presentations to encourage the campus community to mobilize behind its prevention. Replace or supplement these statistics with local data for even greater effect.

### Prevalence

Alcohol is the drug of choice for college students:

- ▶ Among full-time college students in 2010, 63.3 percent were current drinkers, 42.2 percent were binge drinkers (consuming five or more drinks at one time in the last 2 weeks), and 15.6 percent were heavy drinkers (binge drinking on at least 5 days out of the past month). [2]

### Consequences

Underage drinking contributes to a range of costly health and social problems, including traffic fatalities, suicide, physical and sexual assault, brain impairment, alcohol dependence, academic problems, and alcohol and drug poisoning. [3] Estimated *annual* consequences of alcohol use by college students follow [1]:

- ▶ **Academic Problems:** About 25 percent 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.
- ▶ **Death:** 1,825 college students between the ages of 18 and 24 die from alcohol-related unintentional injuries, including motor vehicle crashes.
- ▶ **Injury:** 599,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 are unintentionally injured under the influence of alcohol.
- ▶ **Assault:** 696,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 are assaulted by another student who has been drinking.
- ▶ **Sexual Abuse:** 97,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 are victims of alcohol-related sexual assault or date rape.
- ▶ **Unsafe Sex:** 400,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 had unprotected sex, and more than 100,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 report having been too intoxicated to know if they consented to having sex.
- ▶ **Health Problems/Suicide Attempts:** More than 150,000 students develop an alcohol-related health problem, and between 1.2 and 1.5 percent of students indicate that they tried to commit suicide within the past year due to drinking or drug use.
- ▶ **Drunk Driving:** 3,360,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 drive under the influence of alcohol.

- ▶ **Property Damage:** More than 25 percent of administrators from schools with relatively low drinking levels and more than 50 percent from schools with high drinking levels say their campuses have a "moderate" or "major" problem with alcohol-related property damage.
- ▶ **Police Involvement:** About 5 percent of 4-year college students are involved with the police or campus security as a result of their drinking; 110,000 students aged 18 to 24 are arrested for an alcohol-related violation such as driving under the influence.
- ▶ **Alcohol Abuse and Dependence:** 31 percent of college students met criteria for a diagnosis of alcohol abuse and 6 percent for a diagnosis of alcohol dependence in the past 12 months, according to questionnaire-based self-reports about their drinking.

## Trends

Alcohol use by college students is becoming more dangerous, with excessive consumption and combinations of alcohol with other drugs:

- ▶ While underage drinking, including binge and heavy drinking, has declined steadily among 12- to 20-year-olds since 2002, binge drinking by full-time college students has remained fairly constant. In 2010, more than 42 percent of college students were binge drinkers.[2]
- ▶ Emergency room visits involving energy drinks increased from about 1,000 in 2005 to more than 13,000 in 2009, representing a tenfold increase in 5 years. About half (52 percent) of emergency room visits were by patients aged 18 to 25 who had combined energy drinks with alcohol or other drugs.[4]

## References

1. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. (2010). A snapshot of annual high-risk college drinking consequences, from <http://www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov/StatsSummaries/snapshot.aspx>.
2. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2011). *Results from the 2010 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Summary of national findings*, from <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/NSDUH/2k10Results/Web/PDFW/2k10Results.pdf>.
3. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2011). *Report to Congress on the prevention and reduction of underage drinking*, from <http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Report-to-Congress-on-the-Prevention-and-Reduction-of-Underage-Drinking/SMA11-4645>.
4. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (November 22, 2011). Emergency department visits involving energy drinks. *The DAWN Report*, from [http://www.samhsa.gov/data/2k11/WEB\\_DAWN\\_089/WEB\\_DAWN\\_089\\_HTML.pdf](http://www.samhsa.gov/data/2k11/WEB_DAWN_089/WEB_DAWN_089_HTML.pdf).

## Additional Resources

For more information on underage alcohol use and its prevention among college students:

- ▶ Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Prevention of Underage Drinking's Statistics Web page, at <http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/Statistics.aspx>;
- ▶ National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism's College Drinking: Changing the Culture Web site, at <http://www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov>; and
- ▶ U.S. Department of Education Higher Education Center for Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Violence Prevention Web site, at <http://www.higheredcenter.org>.