

## Low Risk Drinking Is:

- Thinking about whether you will drink & what you will drink before the party
- Being 21 or older
- Eating a meal before drinking
- Drinking no more than one drink per hour; maximum 1 for women, 2 for men
- Always knowing what you are drinking
- Alternating alcohol-free drinks throughout the evening
- Knowing how you will get home safely before you go out
- Never mixing alcohol with any other drugs or medication
- Abstaining is the safest choice

**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.**

## High Risk Drinking Is:

- Chugging, drinking games, shots (drinking anything out of a punch bowl, trough, hose, or funnel)
- Drinking to get drunk (intoxicated)
- Driving after drinking or riding with someone under the influence
- Drinking too much too fast
- Going to parties where people drink too much
- Not knowing what is in your glass or leaving it unattended
- Mixing alcohol with medications or illegal drugs

## WWU Stats:

According to the Spring 2008 National College Health Assessment at WWU:

- 72% of students used alcohol in the past 30 days
- 32% of students did something they later regretted as a result of their drinking
- 36% of students had 5 or more drinks (defined as binge drinking) when they partied

However, most Western students make safe choices about alcohol use, including choosing not to drink:

- 64% of students have 0, 1, 2, 3, or at the most 4 drinks when they party (20% had 0 drinks)
- When at a party or going out, 98.5% of students who drink usually or always:
  - alternate non-alcoholic with alcoholic beverages
  - determine in advance not to exceed a set number of drinks
  - choose not to drink alcohol
  - use a designated driver
  - eat before and/or during drinking
  - have a friend let them know when they have had enough
  - keep track of how many drinks being consumed
  - pace drinks to one or fewer an hour
  - avoid drinking games
  - drink an alcoholic look-alike

## Campus Resources

### Prevention and Wellness Services

Old Main 560 :: (360) 650-3643  
[www.wvu.edu/chw/preventionandwellness/](http://www.wvu.edu/chw/preventionandwellness/)

### Student Health Center

Campus Services :: (360) 650-3400  
[www.wvu.edu/chw/student\\_health/](http://www.wvu.edu/chw/student_health/)

### Counseling Center

Old Main 540 :: (360) 650-3164  
[www.wvu.edu/chw/counseling/](http://www.wvu.edu/chw/counseling/)

A Prevention & Wellness Services publication, adapted from a Century Council brochure, [www.centurycouncil.org](http://www.centurycouncil.org). To request this brochure in an alternate format, call (360) 650-2993. AA/EO Institution.

# PARENTS, you're not done yet

## Have you talked with them about drinking in college?



# Parents

You're Not Done Yet



Have you talked with them about drinking in college?

And don't forget these very important topics:

Family beliefs and values regarding school.

How to get help on campus.

How to refuse a drink or offer to smoke marijuana.

## Right Now:

Share realistically your own experiences with drinking, both positive and negative. Be clear in what you expect from your son/daughter about such things as:

- attending class
- drinking and driving
- financial responsibility
- choices regarding drinking
- study time vs. social time
- staying in touch
- other drug use

Here are some conversation starters you may want to use:

- What do you expect the college social scene to be like?
- How will you decide whether or not to drink at college?
- What will you do if you find yourself at a party with only alcohol to drink?
- What will you do if your roommate only wants to drink and party?
- What will you do if you find a student passed out in the bathroom?
- How will you handle it if you are asked to baby-sit someone who is very drunk?

## Once they are at college:

Since the first 6 weeks of college are a very high-risk time for first year students, you may want to call, write, or email frequently and be supportive.

Ask some questions such as:

- How are you doing?
- Do you like your classes?
- What is the party scene like?
- What kind of activities are available?
- Are you enjoying residence hall life? Why?
- Do you see others making friends or just drinking buddies?
- How are you getting along with your roommate?
- Are you feeling overwhelmed?
- What can we do to help?

Most college students make responsible decisions about the use or non-use of alcohol. However, we also know that:

Availability of Alcohol +  
Absence of Parents +  
Desire to Fit in =  
**Potentially risky drinking decisions.**