Poor Grades by College Students Linked to Alcohol Use

According to a recent survey of 56,000 college students, those who report D and F grade point averages consume an average of 11 alcoholic drinks per week, while those who earn mostly A's consume an average of three drinks per week. The survey also reported that 36% of college students report driving while intoxicated. However, there is hope for prevention efforts. The survey revealed that alcohol consumption and binge drinking have declined at schools where federally-funded prevention and education programs were enacted. Additionally, it was found that nearly 40% of students don't drink at all in an average week.

Johnson Institute Observer, Spring 1993

Effects of Prenatal Exposure to Nicotine

Researchers have long wondered about the impact of prenatal exposure to drugs on a child's vulnerability to drug abuse. With regards to nicotine, this question has recently been addressed.

Dr. Denise Kandel of Columbia University found that daughters of women who smoked cigarettes while they were pregnant are four times more likely to begin smoking during adolescence and to continue smoking more than daughters of women who did not smoke during pregnancy. The study suggests that nicotine, which crosses the placental barrier, may affect the female fetus during an important period of development so as to predispose the brain to the addictive influence of nicotine more than a decade later.

Specifically, Dr. Kandel analyzed follow-up interview data on 192 mothers and their first born adolescents. The analysis revealed that 26.4 percent of girls whose mothers smoked while pregnant had smoked in the last year. By comparison, only 4.3 percent of girls who were not prenatally exposed to nicotine had smoked in the last year. While more prenatally exposed boys had also smoked in the last year compared with boys whose mothers had not smoked during pregnancy, the difference was not statistically significant.

To ensure that it was a mother's prenatal smoking and not her postnatal smoking that affected her daughter's smoking, the researchers analyzed the impact of those mother's smoking both during and after pregnancy. They found that, regardless of the amount or duration of current or past maternal smoking, the strongest correlation between maternal smoking and daughter's smoking occurred when the mother smoked during pregnancy.

Smoking activates several brain neurotransmitter systems including the dopamine system, which is involved in the reinforcing effects of addictive drugs in general. Dr. Kandel points out that, "The children whose mothers smoked during pregnancy are not only going to be more likely to smoke, but also may be more likely to use and become dependent on other drugs." Dr. Kandel hopes to research this issue by following the adolescents in her study for another six years.

NIDA Notes, Sept./Oct. 1995

FUNDING IN PART BY THE CITY OF MANHATTAN
Quit Smoking Football Style!

Just like all the great football teams in history, you can not succeed without a strong offense and defense. This is also true for the millions who try to stop smoking every year. Prepare for your “football game” by following these great offensive and defensive strategies. Before you know it, you could be in the next Smoke-free Superbowl.

Offense

• Maximize your motivation by listing on paper reasons for you to quit (health, bad breath, cost, early facial wrinkles, smoker’s cough, cancer, etc.).
• Drink extra fluids (however, caffeine and alcohol may trigger cravings).
• Get plenty of rest and healthy food.
• Avoid sweets because they may also trigger cravings.
• Try the “buddy system” and ask a friend to quit with you.

Defense

• Carry a supply of cigarette substitutes such as sugarless gum, carrot sticks, toothpicks, and sunflower seeds.
• Brave the cravings—take a deep breath, hold it for a few seconds, and exhale slowly. Repeat this several times. The craving should subside in 1 or 2 minutes.
• Mark your milestones with small, personal rewards.

A final reminder before the “big game:” Just as a football team can come back from behind, so can you. Sometimes a relapse occurs. Don’t let it distract you from your long term goal of making it to the Smoke-free Superbowl.

Underage Drinkers at Colleges Suffer More Alcohol-Related Problems

Underage drinkers on this nation’s college campuses use alcohol as often as legal-age college students…and experience many more problems because of their drinking. Specifically, 86% of college students under age 21 use alcohol. 84% of legal-age students use alcohol. Compared with older students, underage drinkers report their alcohol and other drug use leads to twice as many injuries and fights. Underage drinkers are also twice as likely to be victims of sexual misconduct. Finally, they suffer more hangovers, nausea, vomiting, memory loss, impaired academic performance, and more suicidal thoughts and actions.

Prevention Pipeline, July/Aug. 1993

Negative Consequences of Alcohol and Other Drug Use Within the Past Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative Consequence</th>
<th>Percent of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Had a hangover</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Became nauseated or vomited</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Later regretted actions</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drove while intoxicated</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Got into an argument or fight</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missed a class</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Been criticized for my drinking habits</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced memory loss</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performed poorly on a test</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had a hangover 6 or more times</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Presley, Cheryl, Philip Meilman, and Rob Lynia, Alcohol and Drugs on American College Campuses, Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University, 1993.
How Long Does It Take The Body To Rid Itself Of These Substances?

A substance may be detected in the body for a longer period of time, depending upon individual differences, the amount taken, the route by which it is taken, and individual body composition and metabolism. Thus, these are general guidelines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>1 day (average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anabolic Steroids</td>
<td>1–8 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphetamines</td>
<td>1–7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbiturates (sedatives)</td>
<td>1–3 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>3–7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>1–2 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heroin</td>
<td>4 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSD</td>
<td>30 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana</td>
<td>2–6 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicotine</td>
<td>3–7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCP (phencyclidine)</td>
<td>1–8 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dept. of Health Education, University of Kansas, 1994

Celebrate Safe!

With the approaching holidays comes lots of celebrating. So why not make the effort to ensure your celebrations are safe? Here are five ideas for keeping things under control and safe at your celebrations.

1. Offer a choice—Be considerate of your guests. One third of adults don’t drink at all. Also, your guests may be taking medication or pregnant. Thus, if alcohol is being served, offer a variety of nonalcoholic beverages as well.

2. Don’t push refills—Wait until the glass is empty before you offer another drink.

3. Don’t double up on drinks—A lot of people count their drinks and doubling up is more alcohol than they can handle. Use a jigger to avoid “guestimates” of how much you are pouring.

4. Serve dinner or snacks—This is important because it slows down the rate at which alcohol is absorbed into the bloodstream. It also slows the rate at which people drink.

5. Friends don’t let friends drive drunk—Be sure everyone arrives home safely. Thus, provide safe rides, taxis, or allow them to “sleep it off” at your place.

Have a Safe and Happy Holiday!!

GHB

Gamma-Hydroxybutyrate (GHB), also known as “G,” or “Liquid X,” is a relatively taste-free drug which comes in powdered, liquid, or capsule form. It was formerly sold by health-food stores and gyms as a sleep aid, anabolic agent, fat burner, enhancer of muscle definition, and a natural psychedelic. It was also used by rifle shooters to reduce tremors. GHB occurs naturally in the body, however it is not a nutritional requirement. Thus, it is an example of a drug being promoted as a natural supplement.

When combined with alcohol, GHB can have similar side effects to that of Rohypnol (see Higher Education, Fall 1995). Alone, the side effects of GHB include:

- abrupt, intense drowsiness
- vomiting
- slowing of the heart
- drop in body temperature
- seizure or coma
- respiratory collapse
- giddiness, silliness, and dizziness
- interferes with mobility
- small increase in blood-sugar levels
- respiration becomes slower and deeper
- significant decrease in cholesterol
- semi-consciousness

In November 1990, the Food and Drug Administration issued a warning that GHB can cause seizures, coma, respiratory arrest, and death, especially when used with alcoholic beverages. It is now illegal to sell GHB in the United States. However, there were two reported cases from the Truman Medical Center in Kansas City where the patients developed a coma due to GHB ingestion. It is believed that GHB is in the Manhattan area!
Anabolic Steroids

Bear Bryant, the legendary football coach at the University of Alabama, used to say after his team had an unimpressive win, “Sometimes you lose when you win.” This statement could also be applied to those athletes who use steroids. They might gain some weight, but sooner or later they will be wearing a loser label. Anabolic steroids may put muscle on some people while they are lifting weights, but the list of side effects is long and severe.

Many people who use steroids are aware of the possible side effects, but they think that most of the problems will be in the future. This is a very naive view. The established side effects and adverse reactions possible from anabolic steroids are: acne, increase in cholesterol level, clitoris enlargement, edema (water retention in tissue), fetal damage, heart disease, hirsutism (hairiness in women), increased risk of coronary artery disease (heart attack, stroke), jaundice, liver disease, liver tumors, peliosis hepatitis, male pattern baldness, prostate enlargement, sterility, stunted growth, swelling of feet or lower legs, testicular atrophy, cancer, and death. In those users aged 12 through 17 years old, steroid use is also significantly and positively associated with the use of cigarettes, alcohol, and illicit drugs.

Other possible side effects and adverse reactions include: abdominal or stomach pains, aggressive, combative behavior (“roid rage”), bone pain, male breast development, depression, frequent urge to urinate, high blood pressure, impotence, insomnia, kidney stones, rash, sexual problems, unnatural hair growth, unpleasant breath odor, unusual bleeding, and vomiting blood.

The popularity of anabolic steroids is attested to by the growth of a large black market. Conservative estimates put the black market gross for steroids at $100 million a year. Many of the black market products come from underground labs and foreign countries. The quality and purity of these products are questionable.

The appetite for anabolic steroids is created by society’s value of good looks, masculinity and “playing to win.” The important message here is it is not important to win at all costs!