

# Alcohol Awareness & Prevention



Alcohol use is a prevalent issue in America and especially at colleges and universities. College is a time of transition for young adults and we recognize that many students experiment with alcohol. The drinking age is 21 and Kappa Alpha Theta does not condone members drinking underage nor members abusing alcohol. However, we are realistic and understand that the current reality at many colleges and universities is that a number of our members drink. Throughout this handout we will provide you with an understanding of risky drinking as it relates to college campus, the effect of alcohol on individuals and we will provide you with tips on how to create safer environments. Instead of thinking of alcohol as “good” or “bad,” we hope that you’ll begin thinking about healthy compared to unhealthy alcohol use.

## How much alcohol do college women typically drink?

When asked how many drinks college women think other women had during the last time they drink, here were their perceptions:

- 1- 4 drinks – 37%
- 5 – 6 drinks – 35%
- 7 – 8 drinks – 13%
- 9 – 10 drinks – 7%
- 11 + drinks – 3%

When asked how many drinks college women ACTUALLY had the last time they drink, here is what they reported:

- 1- 4 drinks – 48%
- 5 – 6 drinks – 18%
- 7 – 8 drinks – 6%
- 9 – 10 drinks – 3%
- 11 + drinks – 1%

What does this information tells us? College students perceive that others drink more than they actually do. So, next time you’re out with your friends, recognize that others are not drinking as much as you think. Share this number with your members... nearly HALF of all college women drank 1 - 4 drinks the last time they drank alcohol. Encourage them to be a part of the majority if they choose to drink.

## How much is ONE drink?

One challenge that we tend to run into in sororities and other groups in college is that many students tend to underestimate how much they drink. Someone may think that one drink is a red solo cup filled with alcohol when in fact that could be 3 - 4 drinks easily! Here is a graphic to help demonstrate how much is one drink.

### Did You Know: The Lines on a Solo Cup are Measurement Marks



### Prevention Tips:

Practice measuring drinks with your friends! Ask friends to practice pouring a non-alcoholic beverage in the amount of a beer, wine and liquor and then measure it with them. They will probably be surprised by how much more they are actually drinking when going out

# Prevention: Before Problems Occur

**def. of Prevention: Actions taken in advance in order to decrease the likelihood of problems.**

We encourage your chapter and leaders to spend time thinking about how you can prevent problems before they occur. Below are a list of tips for both individuals and for your chapter on how to prevent high-risk drinking as well as alcohol-related consequences for drinking.

## Individual Member Tips: How to play it safe(r) when drinking.

Encourage members to count drinks and set a limit or a plan before going out (remember to factor in time, 4 drinks in one hour is incredibly dangerous for drinking!)

Download a BAC calculator on your phone to help measure your BAC, which is your Blood Alcohol Content. Remember that .08 is the limit for driving, however, in many states people can get in trouble for driving even under that limit. If someone is going out to drink, trying to stay below that number is best to obtain the "fun" benefits when drinking.

Avoid drinking games or taking shots

Eat before going out

Alternate water with alcoholic beverages

Cover your drink

Plan your way home

Talk about expectations with your sisters for the night (staying together, making sure that everyone gets home, etc.)

## Chapter Tips: Creating a safe(r) environment.

Plan chapter events without alcohol at high-risk times (Halloween, homecoming, welcome week, etc.)

Plan events before and after your chapter event to minimize pre-partying

Always have food at events!

Educational program - have someone from the health center or a local counseling center talk to your members about substance use and safe practices

Recognize your leaders for modeling healthy behaviors.

Post signs of alcohol poisoning and numbers for resources throughout your facility if you have one, or give members small cards to post on their mirrors at home or to put in their wallets.

Set chapter norms and expectations about drinking - talk about chapter norms and how your members can support each other in creating safer environments.

## KNOW the Signs of Alcohol Poisoning

Mental confusion or person is unconscious

Vomiting

Seizures

Slow breathing (fewer than eight breaths per minute) Irregular breathing (10 seconds or more between breaths)

Hypothermia (low body temperature), bluish skin color, paleness



# Intervening & Responding to Problems

**def. of Intervention: Paying attention to the warning signs of developing problems and taking immediate action to change the situation when a problem is identified**

Intervening can occur both in emergency situations or in one-on-one conversations with friends. There are several different ways that you can intervene in situations as well as several times prior to drinking, when drinking as well as after a night out. We have outlined a few tips for intervening during problematic situations.

## Tips for intervening when drinking:

Distract her with another activity (take her to get food eat, dance, sit down, go home, etc.)

Encourage her to drink water (not just after drinking, but while drinking throughout the day/night)

Ask her how much she's had to drink and what she's been drinking

Tell her she's had too much to drink

Cut her off

Call 911 if emergency... refer to p. 2 for signs of alcohol poisoning. Lay her on her side and stay with her until medical help arrives. Do NOT transport her to the hospital.

## Intervening when you're concerned (signs there might be a problem):

When: Early or any time is a good time

You've noticed 2 or more negative consequences (relationship, academic, legal charges, not fulfilling obligations, etc.)

Injuries, regrets, poor decisions

Increased tolerance

Blacking out or "browning" out

## Intervening following the incident or when you are concerned:

Approach her one-on-one (even if it is a concern amongst the MDC)

DON'T say "I think you're an alcoholic"

Show the person you care by saying "I'm concerned," "I've noticed," "I'm worried", etc.

## Resources: Where to Go to Get Help

**911:** Call 911 in the case of an emergency.

**Campus and Local Police:** List numbers for both your campus and local police throughout your facility or provide them to you members. They might also be willing to come and talk to your sisters about ways to keep themselves safe, trends in drinking, and provide other tips.

**Chapter Advisor:** Your advisor is there to support you. Don't be afraid to use her as a resource as well.

**Health Center/Counseling Center/Alcohol and Drug Office:** Many campuses have educational programs for student organizations. You can also talk to them about encouraging members to attend counseling session if you have concerns about their substance use or other behaviors. You should NEVER diagnose someone with a problem, but you can encourage them to talk to someone about their problems. You can also call and get help with how to have that conversation. **Talk One-to-One** is also available as a resource... their number is 1-800-756-3124.

**Local Counseling Center or Hospital:** There are a number of community practitioners available as well to provide you with support and guidance.