

OFFICE OF STUDENT
OUTREACH &
SUPPORT:
WELLNESS,
ALCOHOL & DRUG
EDUCATION (WADE)
PROGRAM



**Parents are
Protective
Factors Against
Alcohol Use:**

Students who perceived higher parental monitoring during the summer before college were **significantly less likely** to transition to experiencing alcohol-related consequences.

Students who perceived their parents were more permissive about drinking during the students' senior year of HS were **significantly more likely** to transition to weekly alcohol use, heavy episodic drinking, and consequences during college.

(Walls, Fairlie & Wood, 2009)

DID YOU KNOW?

- 1 in 4 incoming freshmen have not consumed alcohol in the last year.
- 28% of incoming freshmen who do drink have blacked out at least once in the last month

(MyStudentBody, Fall 2011)

Parents Guide: Conversations about Alcohol

Orientation 2012

Congratulations! Your child is a first year SJU student!

Welcome to the long summer of preparation and anticipation, excitement and apprehension for both you and your student!

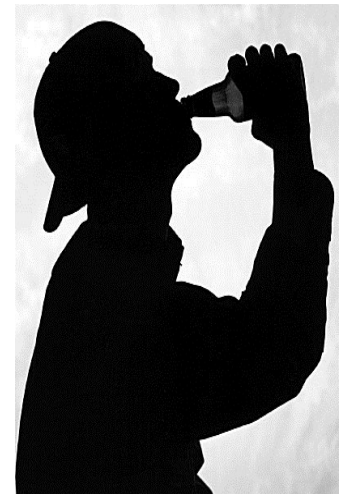
In the Jesuit spirit of "caring for the whole person," SJU partners with parents to ensure your student will make a positive transition to college. The Wellness, Alcohol & Drug Education (WADE) Program, which is a part of the Office of Student Outreach & Support, takes an active role in educating students about wellness issues. The health and safety of all SJU students is of the utmost importance. Through collaboration with numerous offices on campus, WADE helps to provide an array of resources and services.

Whether you believe it or not, you still have an influence on your student's

decision making and can be a big help in your student's successful transition to college life.

Your child is preparing to be away from home, perhaps for the first time and may not admit it, but feels insecure in a new social setting and wants to fit in. Studies have shown that family and peers alike can influence drinking behavior actively, by explicitly discouraging irresponsible alcohol use, or passively, by providing models of positive drinking behavior (NIAAA, 1997).

Once in college, your student will have the ability to make all decisions on their own. Your student will also have the full responsibility to deal with the consequences. Be direct when discussing drinking at school and share



your expectations. It is important to consider and discuss alcohol's impact on safety issues and academics. Discuss the cost of alcohol abuse in dollars and in sense. It is important your student understands your concerns and expectations before heading off to college.

Information is KEY!

You have a large role in preparing your student to make responsible choices. If there is a history of alcoholism in the family, it is very important to discuss this. While the interplay between genetics and environment is not entirely clear, if there is a family history of any addiction, there is a higher risk for abusing alcohol. Also, if

your student is already dealing with any mental health issues, alcohol abuse can worsen or create new symptoms. Keep this in mind when discussing alcohol with your student.

Believe in your own power to help your student avoid trouble. Be knowledgeable about alcohol and other drug issues. Learn what you can

about the issues related to alcohol and other drugs. Be factual and straightforward. Correct misperceptions.

Be a role model. Be honest about what you will do if an alcohol or drug violation occurs and then follow through. For more info, visit: www.sju.edu/wade and click on the link for Parents.

Parental Notification

SJU partners with parents in alcohol and drug education efforts and notifies them in accordance with FERPA guidelines in instances of alcohol or drug violations. SJU notifies parents with a letter and/or phone call after the alcohol or drug violation, depending on the situation.

For more information, please contact the

Wellness, Alcohol & Drug Education (WADE) Program at

wade@sju.edu

(610) 660-3462

or visit our website at www.sju.edu/wade

WHEN should you talk about alcohol and other drugs?

All the time! For many parents and young adults, bringing up the subject of alcohol is not easy. You may be unsure of when or how to begin and your student may try to dodge the conversation. Start the discussion now and continue the conversation often.

Try having the conversation in the car since you don't have to look each other in the eyes and neither of you can run away from the topic.

Join forces with another adult that your student trusts such as their aunt, uncle, older sibling, cousin, coach, etc. Utilize these people to also have the conversation with your student about this topic.

After Orientation is a great time to discuss what you both learned at your visit to SJU; ask what your student is excited or anxious about and share your excitement and worries as well.

Lecturing usually does not work so try to bring up the topic when in a **casual setting** doing some type of recreation you both enjoy.

Bring **friends** into the conversation. For example, if your student's best friend is also gearing up for college, ask their thoughts on alcohol when you are all together. Do not bring it up during a fight or argument. **Timing is key** to make sure your student is open and willing to talk.

HOW should you talk about alcohol and other drugs?

Avoid scare tactics. Be open and honest. Remind your student that they can always be honest with you as well.

Recognize the social aspects of alcohol. Recognize that the student might see positive aspects of drinking such as networking and socializing. Recognize many students find it easier to follow the

crowd and the majority of students do drink at some point in college. Recognize that simply telling your student to abstain will not work.

Relate to your child as best you can. Remember when you were 18? Remember that feeling of leaving your family and gaining freedom? Relate that feeling to what your student is going

through; heading off into the unknown with tremendous academic strain. Remind them that you do understand.

Responsibility is now in the hands of your student. Discuss the privileges and the consequences that come with that responsibility. Your student must learn to make these choices on their own. Discuss responsibility.

Discussion Starters ...Now and Once College Life Begins

Remember that this is a discussion and not a lecture. Be open and supportive.

Prior to Starting College:

Q: You will be faced with the decision to drink in excess at some point. What do you think your reaction will be?

Q: Did you learn anything at Orientation about the drinking culture of SJU?

Q: What are you most nervous about when making new friends at SJU?

Q: You'll have a lot of decisions to make in college and you might even make some mistakes. Just know that you can talk to us about anything—even if you do make a mistake. We won't freak out. We want you to count on us to help you make the best decisions and stay safe, ok?

Once College Life Has Begun

Q: How are you and your roommate getting along? Do you have similar styles in

what you do for fun?

Q: What is the culture there? Is it heavily focused on drinking and drugs?

Q: Have you witnessed anyone make a fool of themselves while drunk? What was that like?

Q: Tell me about your new friends. Do any of them dabble in drugs at all? How do you feel about that?

Q: Do you know where to go for help if you or a friend is having issues with alcohol?