

Choices and Consequences

MAKING THE RIGHT DECISIONS



**Myths & Facts
Safe Partying
Fake IDs
Brain**

**Going Against the Crowd
Alcohol Poisoning
Harassment**



MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT ALCOHOL

MYTH: Alcohol isn't as harmful as other drugs.

FACT: Alcohol increases your risk for many deadly diseases. Drinking too much alcohol too quickly can lead to alcohol poisoning. Alcohol can kill you.

MYTH: Adults drink, so kids should be able to.

FACT: A young person's brain is still developing. Teens who drink at age 15 are five times more likely to become dependent on alcohol as adults than those who start after age 20.

MYTH: I can sober up with coffee or a cold shower.

FACT: On average, per drink it takes 2-3 hours for alcohol to leave the body. Nothing can speed up the process.

MYTH: I won't gain weight if I only drink liquor.

FACT: Alcohol in any form slows down your metabolism and provides fat storage. Adding alcohol to your diet is merely adding empty calories, which could result in significant weight gain over time.

MYTH: Beer and wine are safer than hard liquor.

FACT: One 12-ounce bottle of beer or a 5-ounce glass of wine has as much alcohol as a 1.5 ounce shot of liquor.

MYTH: Teens should “practice” drinking in high school to learn their limits early so as not to go wild in college.

FACT: Heavy drinking in high school can prevent teens from developing the necessary skills to have an emotionally healthy adult life.

MYTH: Everyone reacts to alcohol the same way.

FACT: Many factors affect a person's reaction to alcohol (body weight, metabolism, gender, etc). In addition to that, a genetic predisposition to developing alcohol abuse problems may exist.

MYTH: Drinking will make me cool and well-liked.

FACT: Stumbling around and vomiting is not cool. Alcohol will make you say things you normally wouldn't say and do things you normally wouldn't do. If you get caught, you will end up in court and possibly face a fine and/or community service.

MYTH: People who drink too much only hurt themselves.

FACT: Alcoholics have families. Each of the 12 million problem drinkers in this country affect at least four other people.

MYTH: Drugs are a bigger problem than alcohol.

FACT: Alcohol kills over six times the number of people killed by cocaine, heroin, and every other illegal drug combined. Alcohol is the number-one drug problem of today's youth.

MYTH: The worst thing that can happen is a hangover.

FACT: If you drink enough alcohol fast enough, you can get alcohol poisoning, which can kill you in only a few hours.

MYTH: A DUI arrest is not a big deal.

FACT: The average DUI arrest —after paying bail, fines, attorney fees and insurance-premium increases—is about \$10,000. You will have your driver's license suspended and a criminal record.

MYTH: I can fool the breathalyzer test.

FACT: No, you can't.





**GOING AGAINST
KNOWING YOU**

1. Always be in control

When you're in a situation where you feel pressured to drink, remember that you have options. You can take the easy route and just go home, or you can stand up for yourself and enjoy your night soberly. Regardless of what you do, real friends will respect your decisions, and you could inspire others to follow your example.

2. Take a firm stance

Don't be embarrassed to have strong opinions. You'll never regret not doing drugs or alcohol. Having a healthy lifestyle is more important than giving into pressure from people you won't even remember in a few years.

3. Don't be rude

Whatever your opinion is, express it nicely— and don't expect everyone to understand it. It's great to know who you are, but don't put others down who disagree with you. There's no need to be angry or confrontational —merely standing up for yourself is enough to get your point across.

4. Getting caught up in a moment can be dangerous

It's easy to fall into bad decisions when everyone else is encouraging you to. Step back, think, and focus on how you feel about what is happening. If it doesn't feel right, it probably isn't. Don't let anyone convince you to do something that makes you uncomfortable. You'll thank yourself later.

**STAY OFF THE CROWD
USE YOUR OPTIONS**



SAFE PARTYING

There are many causes for celebration during one's high school career – school dances, prom, graduation, and parties in general. These events only happen once in your lifetime, so you should make the most of them. Unfortunately, every year students are killed or seriously injured as a result of drinking or being involved in alcohol-related crashes. In addition to drinking and driving, accidents happen when you're distracted – even if it's just for a few seconds. High school is a stressful time, and partying might seem like a way to ease your nerves, but alcohol and drugs will only make life more difficult. You might...

Entirely forget the night. Consuming alcohol can leave the evening in a complete blur.

Ruin your reputation. You never know who's going to be watching you as you stumble around, slur your words and make a fool of yourself. High school is awkward enough as it is –there's no need to add alcohol into the equation to make it even worse.

Get arrested. Unless you're 21, it's illegal to purchase and possess alcohol. In addition, there's zero tolerance for underage drivers being under the influence. You might end up in jail – a place your parents won't be happy to pick you up from.

Tips:

1. Wherever you're going, make sure to always wear your seatbelt. Limit the people in your car for fewer distractions, and tell everyone to buckle up.
2. On weekend nights (especially around prom season) be cautious on the roads for distracted drivers.
3. NEVER allow someone who has been drinking or who is under the influence of marijuana or any other substances to drive. Being under the influence of anything means they should not operate a vehicle.
4. Remember, tired drivers are dangerous too. If you can't keep your eyes open, you shouldn't be driving.
5. If you need a ride home, call a trusted adult. Your safety is more important than anything else, so even if you're miles away at 4am, they will come get you.
6. Before you go out, always make sure your cell phone is fully charged.
7. Just be smart. If you feel uncomfortable in a situation, leave. There's nothing wrong with groups of teenagers hanging out, but it is possible to have fun without drinking – and you'll feel a lot better in the morning if you don't.
8. Never accept a drink from someone you don't know, and never leave a drink unattended. You never know what someone slipped in your cup. Don't give anyone the chance to take advantage of you.
9. Don't underestimate the power of camera phones. With the click of a button, your most unflattering moments can be documented. It's funny when it happens in the movies. It's not funny when everyone with internet access sees you as a drunken mess. All it takes is one night to lose the respect of the people who care about you. Employers and colleges routinely look potential employees and students up online. Make what they find worthwhile instead of embarrassing.
10. Don't carry fake or altered identification. If you are injured, this could delay medical attention or notification of your parents.

alcohol poisoning

FACTS, SIGNS & WHAT TO DO



FACTS ABOUT ALCOHOL POISONING

While some people laugh at the behavior of others who are drunk, or think it's even funnier when they pass out, the bottom line is that alcohol poisoning can kill you.

Alcohol poisoning occurs when the alcohol content in a person's blood increases to the point where it slows down the normal functioning of the brain and how it communicates with other parts of the body.

For example, a fatal dose of alcohol can stop the brain's ability to control involuntary actions, such as breathing and the gag reflex (which prevents choking.) With the absence of these vital functions, a drunk person who passes out can choke on their own vomit and die. They could also lose bladder control.

Did you know that a person's blood-alcohol content can continue to rise even while passed out? Even after a person stops drinking, alcohol continues to circulate through the body. Therefore, it's always dangerous to assume that when a drunk person passes out, he or she will just sleep it off.

SIGNS OF ALCOHOL POISONING:

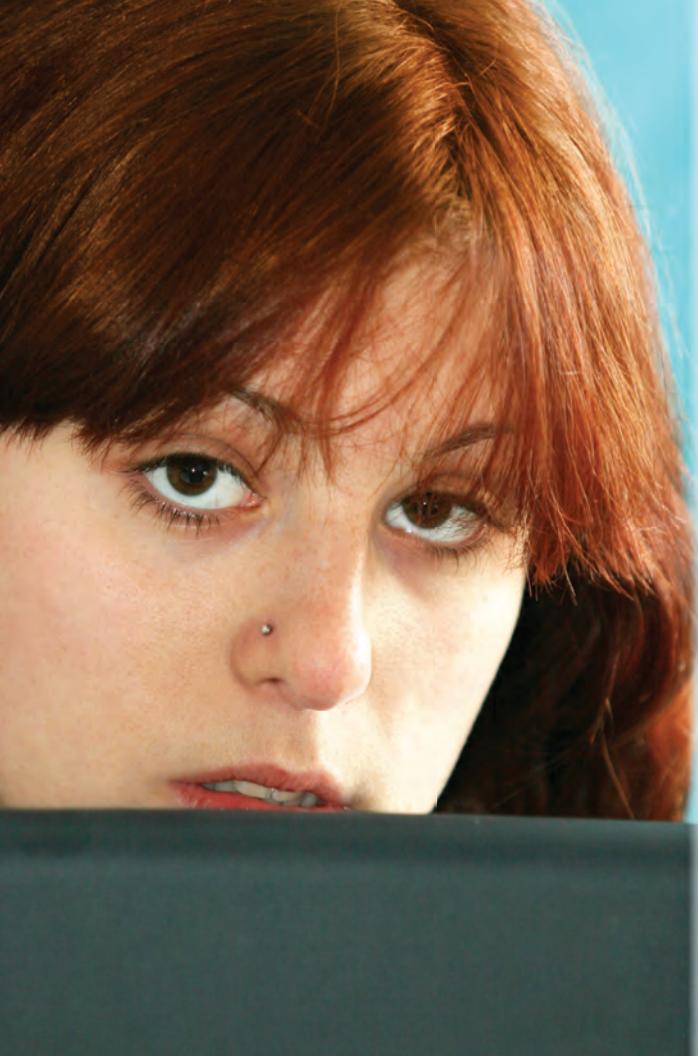
A person experiencing alcohol poisoning may display the following signs and symptoms:

- Mental confusion, slurred speech, or unconsciousness
- Inability to be woken up
- Absence of reflexes
- Continuous or excess vomiting
- Seizures
- Slow, shallow, or irregular breathing
- Low body temperature, paleness, or bluish skin color
- Unpredictable behavior

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP:

If you believe a person may be suffering from alcohol poisoning, you can help in the following ways:

- Know and recognize the signs and symptoms.
- Take action immediately.
- Be aware that a person who has passed out could die.
- Don't leave the person unattended.
- Try to keep the person awake.
- Sit the person up, or roll them on his/her side to prevent choking on vomit.
- Call 911. Don't attempt to treat the person yourself.
- Monitor the person's pulse and breathing until the ambulance arrives.
- If trained, perform CPR if necessary.
- Remember, a person with alcohol poisoning can't just sleep it off!



Harass

Tips for Texting/Internet Use:

Harassment:

If someone sends you a hateful message via cell phone or the internet, don't send a hateful message back in response. It not only makes the situation worse, but it makes you look just as bad as they do. Be the bigger person and ignore them. You can also "block" them from contacting you via any digital device.

Don't Retaliate:

The best retaliation is reporting offensive messages to the police. You could charge the sender with harassment, or at least scare them out of sending any more messages. Stop the cycle before it starts.

ment

Sexting is never a good idea:

Really. When you send an image of yourself, you lose all control of where it's going. Think of all the people you would never want to see that picture. By sending it to just one person, you're inviting the possibility of anyone —parents, teachers, siblings, respected adults —seeing it. Now think of the embarrassment you can avoid by not sending it in the first place.

Not only is it a bad idea, but sexting could result in felony charges:

If you're under 18, a naked picture of yourself is considered child pornography. If your 19-year-old boyfriend or girlfriend sends the pictures, they could be charged with distributing child porn and have to register as a sex offender. Sharing scandalous pictures with your current love interest is not worth the potential humiliation or legal consequences.



**CYBER BULLYING
AFFECTS REAL LIVES !**

A photograph showing a close-up of two hands. One hand is holding a stack of US dollar bills, while the other hand is holding a fake identification card. In the background, several other fake ID cards are scattered on a dark wooden desk. The scene suggests a transaction involving forged documents.

FAKE IDENTIFICATION

Don't borrow trouble.

**It may seem fun to have a fake ID...
until you get caught with it.**

If you are carrying fake identification, or someone else's identification, and are involved in an accident, your medical attention could be delayed. In case of death or serious bodily injury, the police could notify the wrong family, because they don't know your true identity.

A conviction for possessing, manufacturing, selling, or using fake identification may appear on your permanent criminal record. A police record can limit your options when you are job hunting. It can also impact your admission into college or graduate school.

There is no such thing as a perfect fake ID. Law enforcement officers can detect false identification. In addition, businesses that sell and serve alcohol are trained to spot fakes. If you are using fake identification to purchase alcohol, chances are you will eventually be caught. Is it worth the risk?



Fake I.D.s 101

1. Possession of any License or I.D. that has been altered, made, borrowed or purchased in a novelty shop or online, is illegal.
 - ~ It is Illegal to possess someone else's I.D.
2. Do not Impersonate someone else.
(That's identity theft!)
3. What could happen if I use a fake I.D.?
 - ~ My license can be suspended.
 - ~ I could get a fine.
 - ~ I could lose my college scholarship, or
 - ~ I could get kicked out of school.
 - ~ Possible criminal record.
 - ~ Limited Career Opportunities....

Brain

Alcohol:

The younger a person starts using alcohol, the more likely an addiction will develop. Based on studies, 47% of those surveyed who started drinking before the age of 13 met the criteria for alcohol dependence at some point in their adult life, while only 9% of those who started drinking at the age of 21 developed alcoholism.

The region of the brain that is critical for forming new memories, the hippocampus, is particularly affected by alcohol use during the teen years. Youth who drink show reduced brain response and score worse than non-drinkers on vocabulary, general information, memory, and memory-retrieval tests. Verbal and non-verbal information is most heavily affected, with a 10% performance decrease in alcohol users.

Brain activity during sleep is important for learning and for memory. Since alcohol impairs sleep quality, the information you learned in school won't be correctly transferred from short-term to long-term memory during sleep.

Use your brain, Think about it!





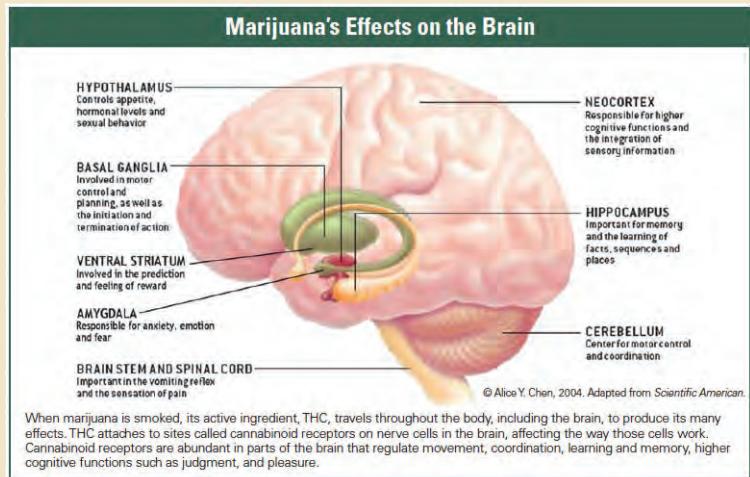
Marijuana:

Marijuana is Harmless? Short-term effects of marijuana use include memory loss, distorted perception, trouble with thinking and problem solving, and anxiety. Students who use marijuana may find it hard to learn, thus jeopardizing their ability to achieve their full potential.

Heavy marijuana use is associated with cognitive decline in about 5% of teens, which suggests that the heaviest users could lose 8 IQ points.

Marijuana relaxes you? Studies have shown an association between heavy marijuana use and increased rates of anxiety, depression, suicidal thought and schizophrenia.

Marijuana isn't as harmful as Tobacco: Marijuana contains many of the same cancer causing chemicals found in tobacco. Puff for puff, the amount of tar inhaled and the level of carbon monoxide absorbed by those who smoke marijuana, regardless of THC content, are three to five times greater than among tobacco smokers.



When marijuana is smoked, its active ingredient, THC, travels throughout the body, including the brain, to produce its many effects. THC attaches to sites called cannabinoid receptors on nerve cells in the brain, affecting the way those cells work. Cannabinoid receptors are abundant in parts of the brain that regulate movement, coordination, learning and memory, higher cognitive functions such as judgment, and pleasure.

THINK ABOUT IT



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Liquorcontrol.vermont.gov

