

# Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD)

Stony Brook University has a strong commitment to maintain a community of wellness and create a safe environment for learning. The Center for Prevention and Outreach at Stony Brook University recognizes the importance of educating our students on AOD-related issues in order for them to make informed and healthy decisions.

## Did you know?

- When students binge drink they increase their risk of physical injury, fighting, unwanted sexual contact, sexually transmitted infections, blackouts, alcohol overdose, and even death
- Drinking too much alcohol in one sitting can cause depression of the central nervous system resulting in a shutdown of vital organs and possible brain damage or death
- 1825 college students die from alcohol overdose and related injuries every year (NIAAA, 2009)
- Alcohol interferes with your ability to achieve REM sleep and loss of adequate sleep can have a negative impact on your academic performance

## Marijuana

### Did you know?

- Science has shown that marijuana can produce adverse physical, mental, emotional, and behavioral changes
- Marijuana can be both psychologically and physically addictive
- Nearly one in ten first-year students have a cannabis use disorder (CASA Report, 2007)
- Students who had used cannabis reported problems such as concentration difficulties, regularly putting themselves in danger, and driving after using marijuana (DEA, 2008)
- Marijuana use can worsen depression and lead to other mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, anxiety, and even suicide

Nationally, 22.9% of college students meet the criteria for alcohol abuse or dependence (CASA Report, 2007), more than double the proportion found in the general population. Stony Brook is serious about its commitment to help students who may be struggling with these issues.

## Education

- [e-CHUG](#) and [e-TOKE](#) are free and anonymous online personal feedback tools to help students assess their alcohol and marijuana use
- Ongoing educational workshops and informational programs
- [Peer Education programs](#) such as “[Swallow This!](#)” an education through the performing arts program and “[CHOICE](#)”, a peer program designed to help students make healthy choices in their environments
- The [Red Watch Band](#) program is a nationally recognized program developed through Stony Brook University that educates student on how to identify alcohol poisoning in peers and learn how and when to call for emergency help.



## Understanding Alcohol and Binge Drinking

Excessive drinking or binge drinking has long been recognized as a major problem on college campuses. Consequences of binge drinking include lower grades, property damage, relationship difficulties, legal trouble, and even death, just to name a few.

Drinking alcohol impairs judgment. Binge drinking is defined as a large consumption of alcohol per sitting that leads to physical and cognitive impairment. Currently binge drinking is having more than 5 drinks in one sitting for males and 4 or more drinks in one sitting for females. When students binge drink they increase their risk of physical injury, fighting, unwanted sexual contact, blackouts, and fatal alcohol overdose.

## Alcohol Overdose

Drinking too much alcohol in one sitting can cause depression of the central nervous system resulting in a shutdown of vital organs and possible brain damage or death.

## Blackouts

Blackouts are when we are unable to remember events that have taken place while remaining conscious during that time. Blackouts occur when students consume enough alcohol to interfere with brain functioning. The brain can no longer form memories.

## Tolerance

Tolerance is the degree to which your body has adapted to a given blood alcohol level. Each time you drink your tolerance will increase. The higher your tolerance the more alcohol you will need to drink to feel the same effects. High alcohol or other drug tolerance puts you at risk for increased health problems related to your use and at risk for developing an addiction.

## Understanding Your Personal Relationship with Alcohol

We all have our own personal experience with alcohol. Whether we use alcohol ourselves or not, alcohol is a prevalent fixture in our society. Understanding our own personal feelings, beliefs, and experiences with alcohol give us a better understanding of the choices we make.

## Resources Available at SBU

- Substance abuse counselors can provide confidential individual and group counseling, assessment, and referrals
- On campus, student-run Alcoholics Anonymous meetings; as well as local and easily accessible off campus self-help meetings
- Student Recovery Group is composed of students helping students stay alcohol-free and drug-free

For more information about services and educational programs please contact Lara Hunter LCSW—CPO/Counseling and Psychological Services (631) 632-6720