

# HEALTHY DRINKER PROFILE

## **Healthy Drinkers...**

### **Recognize alcohol as a potent drug**

Ethanol is the active ingredient. Classified as a food, it has 100 calories per ounce for 100 proof distilled spirits and has no nutritional value. 1 can (12 ounces) beer = 1 glass (5 oz.) wine = 1 shot (1oz.) of 100 proof liquor. It takes about one hour per drink to “clear” alcohol from the body. When not used responsibly, alcohol can become addictive.

### **Know their family history**

Healthy drinkers are more likely to come from families where the parents were not heavy drinkers and did not send conflicting messages about alcohol use. Most children or alcoholics do not develop problems with alcohol. However, children of alcoholics are twice as likely to develop a problem with alcohol than children of non-alcoholics. The healthy drinker is aware of the pattern of alcohol use by parents and grandparents and uses this information to develop effective drinking patterns of their own.

### **Drink two to three drinks daily or less**

That old standby of “know your limit” is too ambiguous. Many people believe they “know their limit” but their limit is too high. Some of these people end up as chronic alcoholics. A more precise definition of a safe limit is needed. Research supports the following guideline: The average healthy adult who drinks two drink or less daily and does not exceed a three drink peak at any drinking occasion will suffer no health impairment and will most likely not develop alcohol addiction.

### **Abstain periodically from alcohol use**

Periodic abstinence allows the muscles and organs of the regular drinker the opportunity to “detoxify” from alcohol breakdown products. The most important reason for the healthy drinker to abstain regularly is to maintain a healthy relationship with alcohol by avoiding tolerance to an addictive drug. Healthy drinkers respect the decision made by non-drinkers and provide non-alcoholic beverages when entertaining.

### **Identify healthy role models and protective cultural rituals**

There are many adult drinkers who enjoy alcohol without having alcohol problems. Cultures and families where drinking is common but alcohol abuse is not, have rules and rituals which protect them from harm. Healthy drinkers drink within these rules and seek drinking advice from adults who have a history of responsible alcohol use.

### **Drink for positive reasons**

The healthy drinker drinks to celebrate, share and communicate, not to relieve pain, forget problems or overcome fears.

## A COMMITMENT TO ACTION

Make a commitment to improve your health and the health of those around you (your community). Pledge to yourself or to your community that you will to one or more of the following in an effort to reduce the risk of alcohol-related health consequences on campus.

1. I will make sure a drunk or drugged person is not left alone.
2. I will participate in sober dating, driving, diving, etc.
3. I will serve/request non-alcoholic drinks at social events.
4. I will challenge misperceptions that “everyone is doing it”.
5. I will maintain a safe drink level if I choose to drink.
6. I will not use alcohol with other drugs or medications.
7. I will be sober when I participate in athletic or recreational events.
8. I will take responsibilities for my actions even if under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.
9. I will hold others responsible for their actions even if under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.
10. I will continue to examine my personal limits and adjust them to lower risk to myself and others.