Preventing Alcohol-Related Harms on Campus

A Practical Guide for Post-Secondary Institutions to Promote Healthy, Safe, and Caring Campus Communities

Alberta Health Services

Provincial Addiction Prevention

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Acknowledgements

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Contact

For more information, or if you would like to see examples from your own campus shared in this resource, please contact:

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Introduction

Post-secondary institutions can use this guide to create healthier campus communities by encouraging a culture that supports less risk and healthier choices in relation to alcohol consumption. Effectively facilitating healthy change requires efforts beyond educating students on the harms associated with risky drinking. Comprehensive, multi-pronged campus actions with influences at multiple levels are required[1,2,3,4,5]. The *Preventing Alcohol-Related Harms on Campus* framework presented in this guide encompasses broad, integrated campus actions in the areas of *policy*, *perceptions*, *environments*, and *supports* to enable effective, meaningful, and sustainable impacts to campus life.

> The guide helps users create healthier campus communities by encouraging a culture that supports less risk and healthier choices in relation to alcohol consumption

Share this Reducing Alcohol-Related Harms on Campus [promotional video](#) via your campus social media channels, websites, or campus digital TV screens

Building a Healthy Campus

**Alberta Health Services**

0:11 / 1:39

How to use this guide

This guide, meant for post-secondary institutions and their student leaders and others with a vested interest, provides the user with a *Preventing Alcohol-Related Harms on Campus* framework, offering information, tools, and campus examples on how to create a campus culture that supports less risk and healthier alcohol-related choices.

This Alberta-based guide features initiatives from Alberta post-secondary institutions, recognizing the practicality of adopting, adapting, and applying ideas from campuses working in similar social, geographical, political, and economic contexts.

Parallel to this guide, the AHS Provincial Addiction Prevention team offers consultation support to facilitate successful implementation of your campus initiatives. Funding opportunities for your campus may also be available through establishing a campus coalition, which is discussed later in this guide. The AHS Provincial Addiction Prevention Unit invites you to be in touch to discuss funding and other supports available. Contact us at **Addiction.Prevention@ahs.ca**.

We welcome you to share your campus initiatives with the AHS Provincial Addiction Prevention Unit so they can be featured in this guide. Please note, as new and emerging priorities change in campus communities, campus initiatives featured in this resource may evolve or be discontinued.
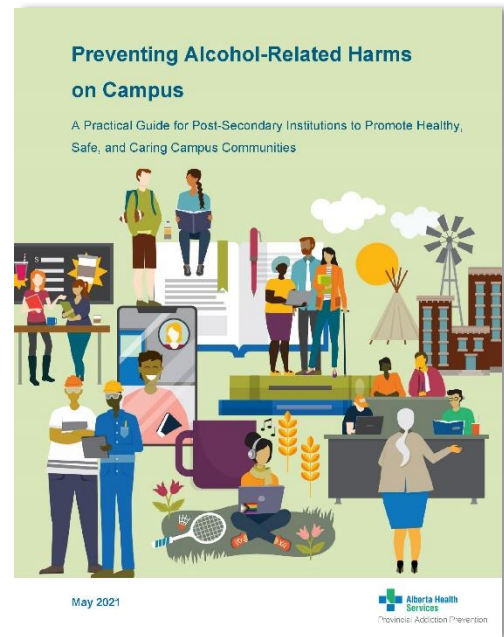
What's the big deal about alcohol culture and student life?

Complex diversity exists among student communities, and, correspondingly, students' choices and experiences with alcohol will be complex and diverse. Generally, however, alcohol is considered part of many students' post-secondary experience. For example, a 2019 report indicated that 65% of Alberta post-secondary students reported consuming alcohol within the last 30 days[6].

Further, a 2018 study examining heavy episodic drinking among post-secondary students highlighted the pervasiveness of drinking culture on campuses along with the explicit peer pressure to "keep up" with peers[7].

College students who drank alcohol reported experiencing the following in the last 12 months when drinking alcohol:*

Percent (%)	Male	Female	Total
Did something you later regretted	35.5	34.4	34.8
Forgot where you were or what you did	25.9	25.7	25.8
Got in trouble with the police	2.7	0.7	1.3
Someone had sex with me without my consent	1.0	2.6	2.2
Had sex with someone without their consent	0.5	0.1	0.3
Had unprotected sex	26.8	27.8	27.3
Physically injured yourself	17.7	15.7	16.4
Physically injured another person	2.6	1.3	1.7
Seriously considered suicide	6.8	6.2	6.7
Reported one or more of the above	54.0	52.8	53.2

*Students responding "N/A, don't drink" were excluded from this analysis.

A drinking culture exacts a toll on students. Forty-seven percent of students binge drank, or drank more than five drinks the last time they "partied" or socialized, and over half reported experiencing one or more negative consequences in the last 12 months when drinking alcohol[6]. For example, 35% did something they later regretted, 27% had unprotected sex, and 16% physically injured themselves[6]. Students also report high levels of anxiety, depression, and sleep problems[6]. Alcohol has a direct impact on these student concerns[8], which students report to be the biggest hurdles to their academic success[6]. Despite this, and largely due to societal norms and expectations around alcohol, students perceive drinking as generally positive, with minimal health or safety risks and an expected part of the post-secondary experience[7].

Students' experiences and attitudes at university can influence and lay a foundation for habits and attitudes in life after university. A 2019 study[9] highlights an alarming trend of harmful alcohol use among young adults. The study examined the rates of emergency department visits attributable to alcohol use in Ontario and uncovered that people aged 25-29 had a 175 % increase in emergency department visits attributable to alcohol use from 2003 and 2016[9]. These realities highlight the need to address drinking culture among post-secondary students and to support students to make healthier alcohol-related choices. Student leaders and campus partners can help reduce the harm associated with risky alcohol use by having comprehensive supports in place that encourage a healthy transition to post-secondary life and that support students to connect in healthier ways.

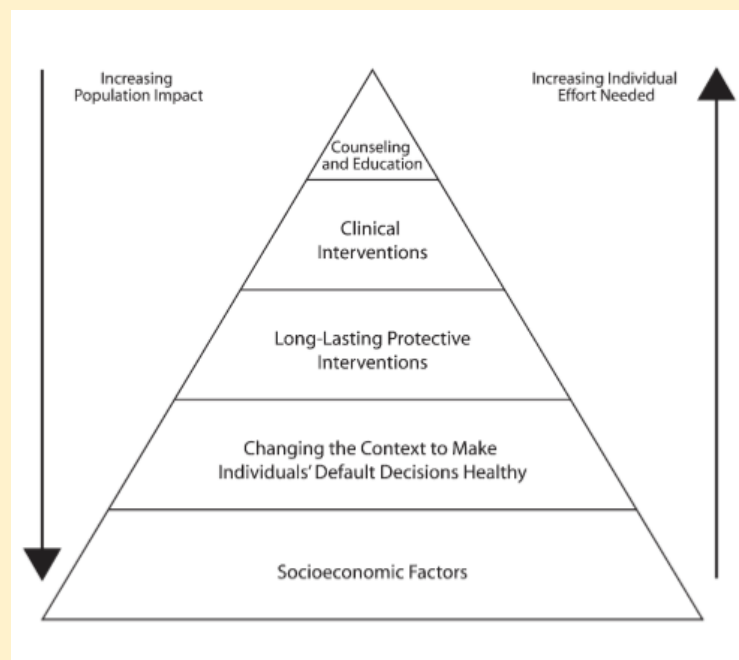# Preventing Alcohol-Related Harms on Campus framework

Education campaigns are a common tool to address alcohol-related harm. While educating students on lower-risk drinking is important, an approach that changes the context (e.g. culture and environment) to facilitate lower-risk drinking at the population level is critical for behavior change.

As shown in the Health Impact Pyramid[11] below, interventions focusing on lower levels of the pyramid tend to be more effective because they reach broader segments of society and require less individual effort. Implementing interventions at each of the levels can achieve the maximum possible sustained public health benefit[11].

Health Impact Pyramid[11]

Less individual effort =
Greater population impact

More individual effort =
Less long term impact

Increasing Population Impact

Increasing Individual Effort Needed

Counseling and Education

Clinical Interventions

Long-Lasting Protective Interventions

Changing the Context to Make Individuals' Default Decisions Healthy

Socioeconomic Factors

Recognizing the importance of changing the context to facilitate healthy decision-making, the *Preventing Alcohol-Related Harms on Campus* framework includes campus actions that aim to change the campus culture and environment to support lower-risk drinking. Let's unpack each of the four elements - *policy*, *perceptions*, *environments*, and *supports*.

For another example of a comprehensive post-secondary framework, check out the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction's Post-secondary Education Partnership Alcohol Harms Framework[12].

Campus policy

Our individual choices are shaped by the systems and conventions in which we live, work, learn, and play. Policies to regulate how, where and when alcohol can be accessed is one of the best ways of contributing to campus-based change and creating a lower-risk culture. Campus policies help to communicate the expectations and norms of drinking on campus as well as provide guidelines for campus and student group events where drinking may occur[2].
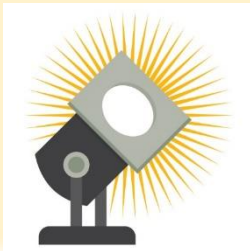
### Campus Spotlight: Concordia University of Edmonton

Concordia University of Edmonton updated its Alcohol Policy in 2017, and event organizers must seek special permission to host events with alcohol on campus. These regulations are to ensure events are safe and enjoyable.

When creating a new alcohol policy consider:

- What is the governance structure on your campus?
- Who should be invited to the table?
- Who can influence and endorse policy?
- How can you ensure student input?
- How will policy changes be communicated?

If a campus alcohol policy is already in place, review it to consider if it needs updating to reflect current evidence. When reviewing policy, consider:

- Is there anything missing?
- Are there areas for enhancement?
- Is the campus community aware of the policy?
- Who should be involved in reviewing and revising it?
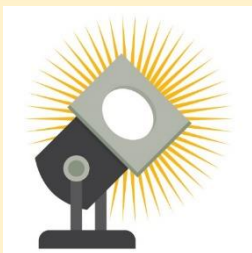
Campus Spotlight: MacEwan University

The Students' Association of MacEwan University (SAMU) student groups department is actively working to reduce the harm associated with high-risk drinking during groups' events. All student groups that plan to host events must fill out a Club Event Approval Form that ensures they have measures in place, such as security, trained staff, and access to safe transportation, to encourage safer drinking and reduce any associated harms. In addition, SAMU funding cannot be applied in any way toward the purchase of alcohol or other intoxicants.

Examples of policy actions to consider for your campus

Restrict days/hours of bar liquor services

Limit bar hours to the recommended hours of 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m[13]. Currently in Alberta, alcohol can be sold on and off premises from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 a.m[14]; these are the maximum hours of operation. However, post-secondary institutions can pass policies restricting these hours on their own campuses. Reducing bar hours reduces the availability and accessibility of alcohol on campus which in turn reduces alcohol-related harm. It also encourages a lower-risk culture.   Consider eliminating the use of last call, as it may encourage students to consume alcohol rapidly, which leads to increased levels of intoxication and can increase the risk of alcohol-related harms.

Campus Spotlight: Grande Prairie Regional College (GPRG)

Grande Prairie Regional College (GPRC) has a bar on campus run by the student union. GPRC's bar is more than just a place to drink alcohol, and it encourages a culture of moderation and low-risk drinking. GPRC's bar has minimal hours (Monday to Friday, with liquor service ending at 10:00 p.m.), welcomes minors for food service, and serves as an alcohol-free space for other activities. The bar is also used for community events and programs held on campus to promote alcohol-free events, such as mental health awareness, safe drinking habits, and addressing addictions.

Campus Spotlight: Lethbridge College

The Lethbridge College Students' Association (LCSA) has a midnight policy, which stipulates that entertainment and services cease at midnight (or before) at all LCSA events, with last call at 11:30PM. Students still have access to free water and bathrooms until 12:30AM. LCSA requires all Clubs and rental users of their social space to adhere to the midnight policy.

Limit availability of alcohol at events and promote safer alcohol service

Limiting the availability of alcohol at events (on and off campus), as well as ensuring there are alcohol-free alternatives, are other ways of reducing high-risk drinking[2]. Limiting alcohol availability can help reduce potential alcohol-related harm. It can also increase campus and public safety. Safer drinking at events can also be facilitated by setting boundaries (e.g., drink tickets must be purchased with a limit on how many each student can purchase).

Considerations for safer alcohol service:

- Serve standard drink units (1.5 oz. for distilled alcohol [spirits], 5 oz. for wine, 12 oz. for beer)
- Don't offer pitchers of alcohol
- Encourage food to be eaten with drinks
- Promote food and alcohol-free drinks
- Provide free non-alcoholic drinks to designated drivers
- Offer food specials rather than drink specials
- Eliminate last-call announcements
- Provide ProServe training for all bar staff
- Provide ProServe training to residence assistants and other volunteers for campus programs where alcohol is available

Not all drinks are created equal! Serving standard drinks accommodates for the varying % alcohol in different types of drinks[15].

A standard drink is:

Beer/Cider/Cooler
341 ml (12 oz.) glass of 5% alcohol content (beer, cider or cooler)

Wine
142 ml (5 oz.) glass of wine with 12% alcohol content

Distilled Alcohol
43 ml (1.5 oz.) serving of 40% distilled alcohol content (rye, gin, rum, etc.)

Campus Spotlight: Southern Alberta Institute of Technology polytechnic (SAIT)

Campus bar policy

- All servers must have ProServe accreditation through the AGLC
- Prior to 3:00 p.m., each customer who orders an alcoholic beverage must also order and consume an individual meal, and will be served a maximum of two alcoholic drinks, which may not be shooters or shots
- After 3:00 p.m., meals are recommended by servers, but not required for service
- Liquor is never discounted (for example, doubles are double the price, not double minus 20 per cent)
- Spirits (cocktails and shooters) are never a daily special
- Last call is moved from 2:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m.
- Food and alcohol specials are paired
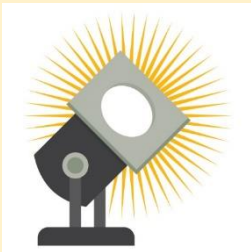
Campus Spotlight: University of Lethbridge

Fresh Fest, an event run by the University of Lethbridge Students' Union (ULSU) is designed to bring new students together, while welcoming back returning ones. During Fresh Fest, students are exposed to several days of activities and events to help build relationships, introduce them to the campus and start their university experience off right.

Fresh Fest offers both alcohol- and non-alcohol-related events. The ULSU and the university's risk and safety department work together to create a responsible and safe drinking environment. Volunteers for this event are offered free ProServe training or re-certification. Volunteers are then responsible for promoting responsible and safe drinking practices and creating a safe drinking environment. Any events where alcohol is served must also have free food and water available.

Physical availability can also be addressed in residence. Some considerations for residence include not allowing kegs, providing safe drinking spaces for students in common areas, prohibiting drinking in private dorm rooms, establishing dry residences or floors, and creating dry residences during orientation week[4].

Campus Spotlight: University of Alberta

In 2012, changes were made to the University of Alberta's (U of A) Lister Hall, one of the residence buildings on campus and home to approximately 1,300 first-year students. While alcohol policies, such as bans on drinking games and kegs in residence were in place, the culture of Lister Hall was known to be heavily based around alcohol and binge drinking.

Concerned that the culture of Lister Hall was significantly affecting residents' academic success, and causing harm to residents, the environment and staff, significant policy changes were introduced, including:

- banning the consumption of alcohol in common areas
- requiring two student resident assistants (RAs) per floor
- developing a first-year curriculum focused on students' personal and academic success
- implementing monthly check-ins between RAs and residents
- increasing community programming in residence with the aim to encourage students to volunteer during orientation week, and every Saturday off campus

A restorative justice program was also introduced in residence to complement the new policies. This approach was successful in helping students understand what changes they need to make, how to identify the potential harm of their actions and how to change future behaviours. It also provides students with connections to other services on campus.

As a result of the above actions, there is a noticeable change to the culture in Lister Hall. It is now a positive community and academic space, and drinking is no longer the dominant culture. While students still drink in and outside of residence, they have reported less peer pressure to drink, and that they enjoy being able to hang out in the common areas or focus on their studies without alcohol. Students have also indicated that there are more non-alcohol-related things to do in the lounge and there has been less overconsumption and less need to take care of drunk people. The reputation of Lister Hall has also changed. It is now seen as a respected place on campus, one that is both a place to do well academically and a place to have fun.

Since the changes were implemented in 2012, over the past several years Residence Services has seen a general decrease in the amount of policy violations surrounding alcohol use and has seen significantly fewer high-risk cases of alcohol use that result in 911 calls for emergency medical support. The continued use of restorative practices as the preferred method of following up with policy violations allows students to think about the harm their actions may have had on the community and/or others, resulting in residents being less likely to repeat the behavior.

Regulate alcohol marketing, advertising, and sponsorship on campus

Alcohol marketing, advertising, and sponsorship increases alcohol consumption[16,17]. Implementing policies to restrict and limit exposure to alcohol marketing, advertising, and sponsorship has been shown to slow the recruitment of new drinkers, reduce heavy drinking, reduce harms, and creates a more balanced picture of the role of alcohol in communities[18].

Consider regulating advertisement in on-campus radio, signs and posters, and social media. Regulation of advertising should also apply to the promotion of events and establishments off campus[2]. To understand what's possible at the campus jurisdictional level please refer to Alcohol Policy for Community Safety, Vibrancy, Health and Well-Being – A Practical Guide for Alberta Municipalities.
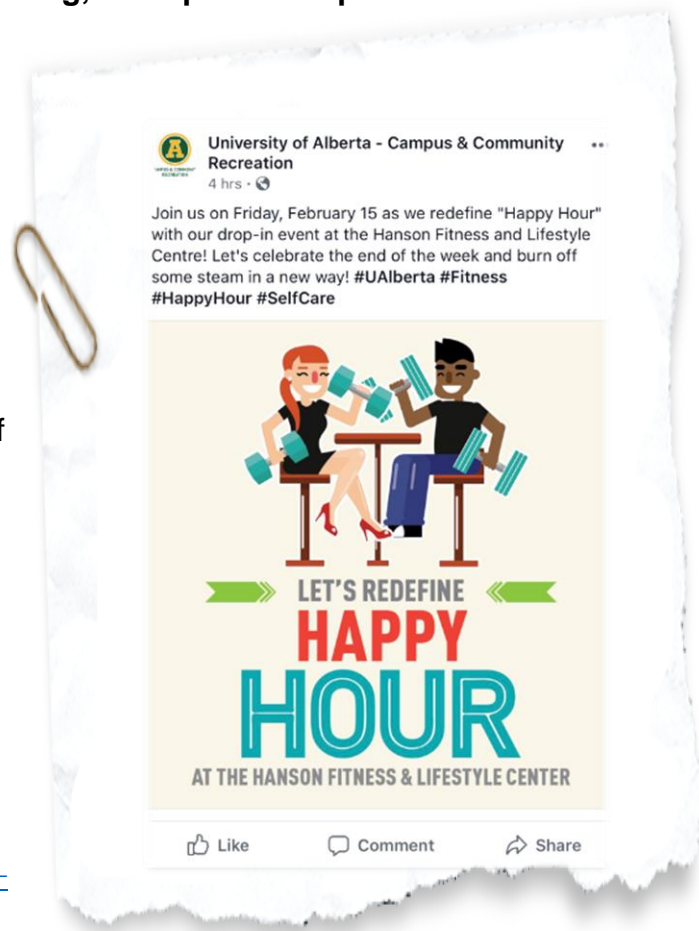
As shown in the social media post captured on the right, your campus may also consider counter-advertising opportunities, subverting alcohol marketing to promote healthier alternatives to connect and unwind.
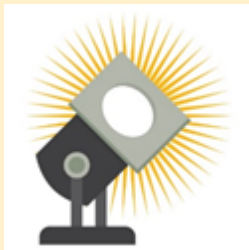
Campus Spotlight: Mount Royal University

Alcohol Advertisement Policy
Events that are advertised on campus that include the sale of alcohol are not permitted to advertise the availability or price of alcohol. Messaging is limited to stating that the event is licensed, but the advertisement must not promote the consumption of alcohol in any way. This pertains to both internal and external event advertisements.

Address alcohol pricing

Access to low-cost alcohol is associated with heavier drinking in the general population[2,19]. The same is true for students with increased intake being associated with cheaper alcohol prices and decreased use linked to higher prices[2]. Consumption and alcohol-related harms can be reduced by increasing the price of alcohol. Consider minimum drink pricing, eliminating drink specials, and providing price incentives for non-alcoholic beverages[19, 2].
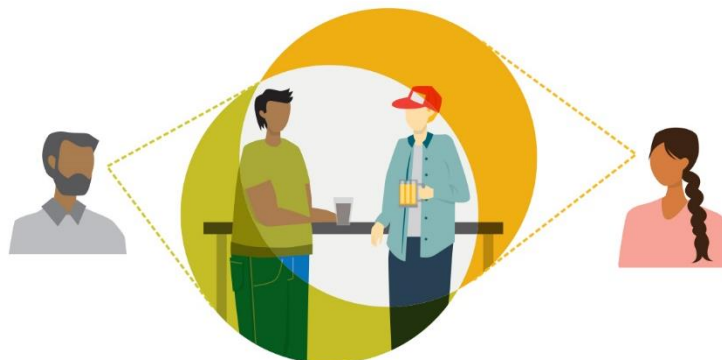
Campus Spotlight: Mount Royal University

Campus Bar Policies
The campus bar spearheads a lower-risk drinking culture by excluding happy hours, and lower priced drinking events and/or evenings. All non-alcoholic beverages have a lower price point than alcoholic beverages, and pop is provided at no charge to designated drivers.

Perceptions

We are all influenced by what we believe to be the "normal behavior," particularly the behaviour of those who are important to us. Our behaviour is influenced by what we perceive others in our social group believe and how they act. Overestimating peers' alcohol use may result in consuming more than what is actually typical, both in terms of how often and how much alcohol is consumed[2]. By being aware of actual peer group norms, students may feel supported to engage in activities that reflect healthier choices. A social norms approach seeks to address any misperceptions and to reduce the gap between actual and perceived behaviour.

Campus Spotlight: Mount Royal University

Social Norm Messaging Coasters
In the campus bar Wellness Services worked with the Students' Association to develop alcohol-related social norm messages placed on drink coasters. The aim is to have students engage in the messaging with their friends and use the messages as a conversation starter.

Typically, misperceptions related to peers' alcohol-use centre on prevalence (how many people are drinking and how often) and drinking patterns and culture (how much are people drinking and how they behave when they drink). Social norms campaigns or interventions begin by collecting and assessing credible data, then identifying the misperceptions and building data-based messages to counter them. Alberta-specific data is available from the Spring 2019 National College Health Assessment (NCHA) II Alberta Reference Group[6], or you can gather your own data from your campus.

How much do your peers really drink?

Check Your Drinking[20] is an online resource that provides an opportunity for students to find out how their own drinking patterns compare to other students.

It is important to note that current literature on the social norms approach suggests that more robust evaluation is needed to determine its effectiveness as a behavior change technique[21]. As such, social marketing should be one of several activities implemented on campus. Combined approaches are the most effective, as no single campaign or activity will result in long-term change.

Campus Spotlight: University of Alberta

The Healthy Campus Unit uses the Dinner and Dialogue tool for their alcohol-use awareness presentation during Community Helpers training sessions as well as at various training programs like the Residence Assistant (RA) Training for Lister Hall and East Campus Village.

The session's goal is to understand and acknowledge that we all come with different perspectives and values related to alcohol and other substance use and that having a conversation about this topic can be polarizing. Community Helpers are encouraged to practice empathy and understanding when having this dialogue with their peers. The presentation includes an overview of alcohol availability for university students, how media can affect alcohol use, statistics on perceived vs. actual use, and a spectrum activity exploring the values of participants regarding alcohol.

The Dinner and Dialogue toolkit is introduced as a resource for participants to use with their own groups. During the session, they have the opportunity to try the toolkit in small group conversations.   Participants are also provided with harm reduction tools they can use to start an alcohol-related dialogue with their community. Participants are also encouraged to reach out to the Healthy Campus Unit team for support should they want a Dinner and Dialogue session with their respective groups.

HEALTHY MINDS | HEALTHY CAMPUSES
creating connections. inspiring change.

Dinner and Dialogue
Engaging Community in Conversations about Drinking Cul

DINNER & DIALOGUE
INGREDIENTS
What is a Dinner and Dialogue?
Why talk about alcohol?
Why talk about our drinking culture?
Is there a 'recipe' for holding a di
dialogue?
Planning a Dinner and Dialogue

This is a guide on how one might host a dinner and dialogue on the culture of alcohol with members of the community. The first part of the guide outlines the reasons one might host

For more information about how to host a Dinner and Dialogue see the [tool][22] developed by the [Healthy Minds, Healthy Campuses Community of Practice](#).

First-year students: Setting healthy expectations

The first year of post-secondary life represents a milestone for many students, with new freedoms and new responsibilities. Students often begin school with excitement and hope, but also have several new transitions they need to manage, such a living on their own for the first time, managing finances, and balancing academics and their social lives. Meeting new people in a new setting can be difficult, and alcohol can reduce inhibitions and initially lower stress in new situations. That's why a students' alcohol consumption usually peaks during their transition from high school to post-secondary[23].

First-year students have been found to drink significantly more, and in riskier ways, than third- or fourth-year students[23]. Drinking among first-year students is often influenced by external events (e.g., orientation week, holidays), personal expectations, peer use, alcohol-availability, and a desire to ease social integration. It is important to support and promote low-risk drinking among first-year students, as patterns of high-risk drinking during the first year of post-secondary can result in patterns that continue into later adulthood.

Consider the unique circumstances and needs of first year students, and consider **hosting alcohol-free events for students** to get to know each other a day or two before the semester starts. Another idea is to provide alcohol-free alternatives during the first six weeks of school, as higher rates of high-risk drinking are typical during these weeks[23].

Think about offering free access to different programs on campus so students can get involved in various aspects of campus life at the beginning of the school year. Hosting an event to promote clubs and programs is a helpful way for students to meet others with similar interests and forge new friendships. A mentoring program between first-year and senior students can also offer a supportive transition to university.

Campus Spotlight: University of Calgary

Before the start of first term, The University of Calgary (U of C) offers a half-day orientation for first year students. Students and their families are provided with a guided tour and tips to help them understand the registration process, as well as how to get involved in campus life, including how to be part of leadership activities, how to access or become a mentor, and an overview of academic programs.

A separate parent-and-family orientation evening takes place without students. Here, family members receive an overview of student services, transportation, safety, campus security programs and concerns students may have. The program ends with a Q&A period, as well as a resource fair that highlights the programs, services, and supports available to students on campus.

Fall orientation is open to all new students and is hosted over four days the week before the term starts. The program relies heavily on senior student leaders who volunteer their time. In addition to activities, events and programs, first-year students are given a theme for their upcoming post-secondary experience. For example, the 2014 theme was "Be a Change Maker." Students are provided with a book to read prior to orientation to create common ground and enhance their level of engagement.

To further support the transition into post-secondary life, the U of C has implemented the "Ask Me" campaign, which runs during the first month of the semester and is intended to provide continued support to first-year students throughout September. Three hundred staff and faculty, as well as 250 senior student leaders, are trained and wear red buttons to show that students can ask them questions about the campus.

The campus also hosts a session on orientation days called "Student Life Panels," which helps students prepare for the academic challenges of post-secondary life and addresses the differences between high-school and post-secondary education. Panels consist of an undergraduate student and staff from wellness services and leadership and student engagement services to answer questions about topics such as getting involved in campus life and time management. The program was inspired by student feedback indicating they wanted to receive this information before classes began.

Environments

Alcohol is often present at campus and residence events, including social functions, athletic events, and celebrations. Event location can provide cues about expected behaviour and can affect the choices people make while there. A setting can therefore influence if/how people drink alcohol as well as perpetuate perceived norms around drinking.

Targeting settings where high-risk drinking takes place means creating a space that encourages positive behaviours. When alcohol is available, harm reduction is a practical response that can be used to ensure the safety of staff, faculty, and students on campus.

Harm reduction approaches are already being used on Alberta campuses, with 97-99% of students using one or more harm-reduction strategies some of the time[6]. Harm-reduction efforts should use a strength-based approach instead of scare tactics and negative messaging. They can be implemented by individual students but also be implemented by various communities on campus to reduce the risk in their campus environments.

Harm reduction ideas:

- offering free water and food
- encouraging students to keep track of the number of drinks they have
- encouraging students to alternate between alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages
- encouraging students to stay with friends while drinking
- encouraging students to set a personal limit to their drinking
- having students purchase drink tickets in advance
- ensuring students have access to safe rides home
- limiting the amount of alcohol students can purchase at one time

Having alcohol-free options provides students with choices, and hosting alcohol-free events encourages safer use and supports healthy student behaviours[4,24]. Further, these options provide healthy alternatives and reduce the number of drinking days students have and encourage students to **establish their own alcohol-free days**.

Additionally, students' perceptions of campus norms and student drinking patterns may be influenced in a healthy way. During high-risk times (e.g. campus celebrations, exam stress), alcohol-free events can be an effective way to reduce negative alcohol-related behaviours. Lastly, events that are alcohol-free also engage non-drinkers, supporting an inclusive campus culture.

Campus Spotlight: Concordia University of Edmonton

Concordia Students' Association hosted its annual ThunderFest at the beginning of the semester. Free food, including a hotdog bar, and non-alcoholic beverages were provided for students. Approximately 600 students attended ThunderFest 2019, and the total cost of supplying free food was $9.30 per student. This was a record high attendance for the event, and the team found that a steady supply of accessible food and non-alcoholic beverages ensured there were no incidents of damage or injury related to alcohol. Student executives received feedback from those in attendance that free non-alcoholic beverages allowed them to alternate these with their alcoholic beverages to reduce their alcohol consumption.

This event demonstrated that providing food and water at events can be easy, quick and reasonably priced. Actively providing food at events encourages students to use similar harm-reduction techniques when they are drinking off campus as well. Free food and non-alcoholic beverages, including water, will be provided at future events.

Check out the Lehigh After Dark program[25]. This program, offered through Lehigh University, allows students to access funds to host alcohol-free events from Thursday to Saturday between 10:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m.

High-risk drinking is more common from **Thursday to Sunday**. During this time, it is even more important for campuses to use strategies that reduce the harm associated with high-risk drinking[26].

### Ideas to help reduce risk on campus [2, 26]

- Talk to the registrar's office, the dean's office and any other administrators about having more classes scheduled on Fridays.
- Encourage individual instructors to offer office hours and tutoring sessions on Fridays.
- If applicable, have any volunteer work done on Friday to Sunday count towards course credit, or encourage students to join teams that volunteer on weekends.
- Run alcohol-free event programming on Thursday evenings.
- Ensure students have access to safe rides home.
- Limit the amount of alcohol students can purchase at one time.
- Keep gym facilities open later on Thursdays to Sundays, and consider offering free classes like yoga.
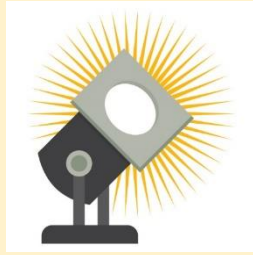
Campus Spotlight: University of Alberta

Campus Recreation at the University of Alberta runs drop in fitness classes late Friday afternoons as a healthy alternative to drinking and to help support a healthy lifestyle approach on campus. To keep fitness classes interesting and students engaged, classes are varied with different instructors each time. They have been popular on campus with full attendance. The initiative is dubbed "Happy Hour" and is promoted through distributing posters on campus, publishing information in the campus Recreation Guide, as well as posting information on social media.

HAPPY HOUR GROUP FITNESS CLASSES

FRIDAY AFTERNOONS • VAN VLIET CENTRE
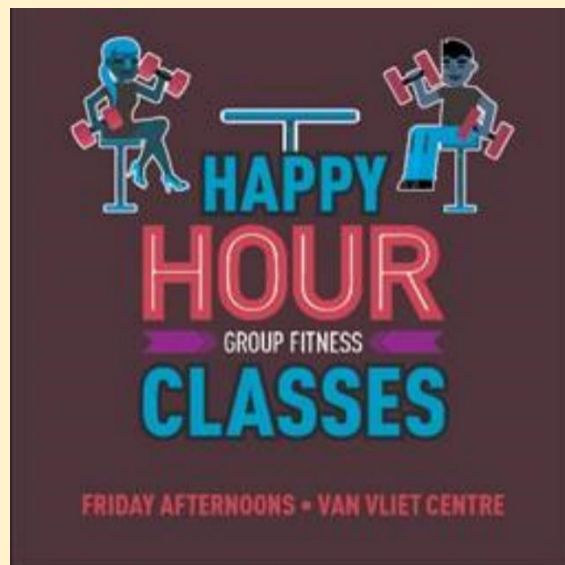
Campus Spotlight: MacEwan University

Peer Health Educators at MacEwan University promote activities that offer alternatives to a night out drinking, like movie nights, board games, free activity classes, etc. One of their most successful events on campus was a 'Yoga Rave'. The Yoga Rave had a party-like environment, provided fun activities before and after the yoga class, and offered students an alcohol-free activity on campus.

Campus Spotlight: Medicine Hat College

Medicine Hat College hosted an event at the campus pub that included a live band, free mocktails, a photo booth, messaging on drinking in moderation, and interactive activities to start conversations with students. Throughout the process of coordinating this event there was a strong focus on developing relationships with various stakeholders on campus and in the community. Local AHS staff, campus pub staff, the campus peer support coordinator, and the students association worked together with the goal to reduce high-risk drinking on their campus.

Campus Spotlight: Mount Royal University

Alcohol-free Events on Campus
New Student Orientation, which happens in September every year, does not have any institutional events where alcohol is available. This shifts the focus of orientation towards learning about campus and connecting with others without the social pressures that can accompany alcohol consumption.

Blueberry Smash
[A mocktail recipe](#) NAIT shared with students in the article "*How to make awesome mocktails for Dry January*" (NAIT, Marta Gold)

In a drink shaker, combine

- 8-10 blueberries
- 1 rosemary sprig
- Honey, syrup or simple syrup

Muddle items together.

Add 1 ounce lemon juice.

Shake and strain into glass filled with ice and top with sparkling water.

Garnish with blueberries and rosemary sprig. For a twist, use several mint leaves instead of rosemary.

Image credit: Blaise van Malsen (NAIT article)

Campus Spotlight: Northern Alberta Institute of Technology

While NAIT has a campus pub, it also offers other outlets on campus for students to connect, have fun, and unwind. In several campus locations NAIT's Campus Recreation team sets out ping pong and foosball tables; during the school year, the tables are used constantly, often with people waiting to play. On the opposite end of the energy spectrum, NAIT also has a well-being lounge which is a quiet room where students are invited to rest, relax, and recharge. Use of electronic devices, doing homework and talking is discouraged in the space.

Campus Spotlight: University of Calgary

Post Alcohol Support Space (PASS)

This space was developed in collaboration with Risk, Student Experience, Campus Security, Residence Services, Student Wellness Services and the Student Medical Response team. It is a confidential, non-judgmental safe place to provide support for intoxicated individuals to reduce their risk of harm, keep them safe, and assess need for medical treatment. PASS is available on Thursday evenings, which is a popular drinking night for students, as well as during large campus events, such as Bermuda Shorts Day. A clever poster campaign about PASS helps create awareness and reduce stigma about this service. Visit Ucalgary.ca/pass for more details.

FORGETTING HOW YOU GOT HOME LAST NIGHT

You can take a **PASS** on that

If you or someone you're with needs a safe, medically supervised, judgement-free place to sleep it off, the Post-Alcohol Support Space is right here on campus — open to members of the UCalgary community on Thursday evenings and for special events.

Call **Safewalk** at **403.220.5333** and ask to take a **PASS**.

For more information, visit: ucalgary.ca/pass

Post **A**lcohol **S**upport **S**pace

To reduce drinking and driving and enhance campus safety, your campus can allow students, staff and community members to park their vehicles on campus until late in the morning the day after campus-wide events with or without a parking pass. Consider making this type of parking available every night that your campus bar is open. Your campus can also consider setting up a safe-ride program through your student union. This could involve partnering with a local cab company, or local transit, to offer reduced student rates from campus events where alcohol is served. Additionally, ensure campus safe-walk programs are available and easy to access. Consider printing SafeWalk information on campus event tickets, such as bar events.
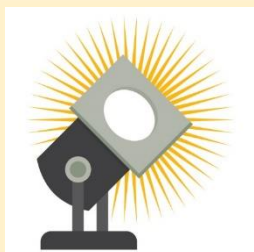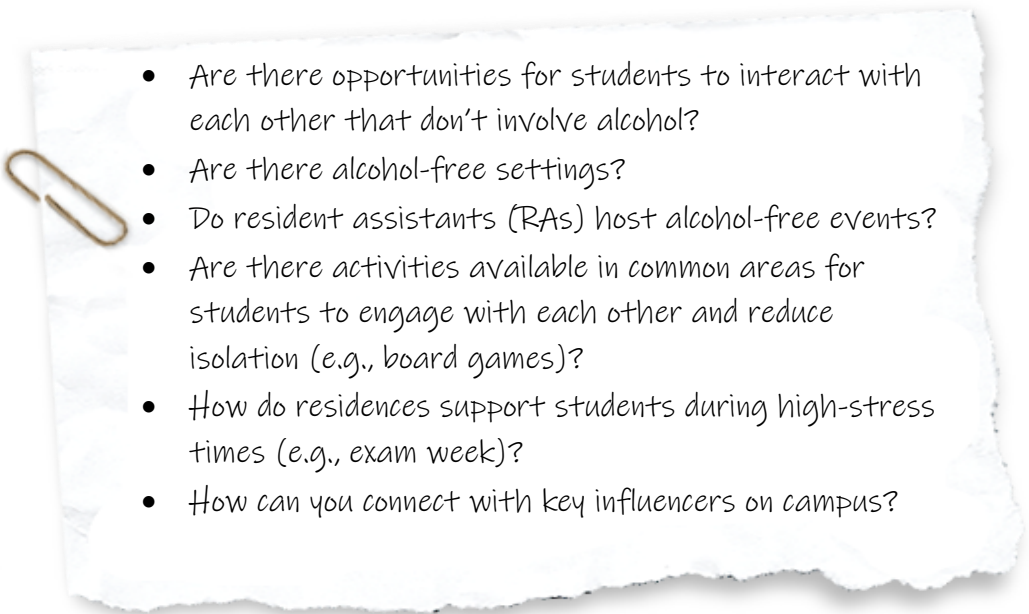
Campus Spotlight: Lethbridge College

Lethbridge College Student's Association has a shuttle service at their cabaret-style events to provide patrons access to safe transportation.

Residence Strategies

High-risk drinking may be common in campus residences. Since residences are unique, solutions can be unique too. Some campuses have dry residences, some have buildings where alcohol is permitted (with regulations) and others have dry floors (along with those that are not)[4]. On some campuses, residences are dry only during orientation week[4].

Think about what residence policies and practices are in place on your campus, for example, are there limits on where students can drink? What types of alcohol can be consumed there? How much alcohol per student is permitted? And, how many guests per room are allowed?

Consider reasons students drink and create options that support and encourage healthier behaviors.

- Are there opportunities for students to interact with each other that don't involve alcohol?
- Are there alcohol-free settings?
- Do resident assistants (RAs) host alcohol-free events?
- Are there activities available in common areas for students to engage with each other and reduce isolation (e.g., board games)?
- How do residences support students during high-stress times (e.g., exam week)?
- How can you connect with key influencers on campus?

Resident Assistants (RAs) are key influencers for students. Make sure you have supports, training and resources available to RAs so they can support students who are transitioning to and living in residence.

Campus Spotlight: Olds College

To complement safer drinking practices on campus, the students union and campus residence provide regular alcohol-free programming and activities to students, including free passes for gym, pool and yoga nights, as well as free tickets to the college sport teams' home games. The on-campus residence also has an alcohol-free space called The Nest that provides a pool table, foosball table, couches and a big-screen TV with projector. Movie nights are coordinated regularly by resident assistants, and students can also coordinate their own movie nights.

Harm Reduction Approaches for Residence[4]

- Place limits on the size and type of special events involving the consumption of alcohol in residences.
- Place limits on where alcohol can be consumed (e.g., in common areas versus individual dorm rooms).
- Limit the number of people who can be in a private room, thereby reducing the likelihood of private-room parties, which RAs and security aren't able to easily monitor.
- Place limits on when alcohol can be consumed in a residence common area.
- Require that RAs regularly hold non-alcoholic events.
- Require resident assistant monitoring in common areas or where alcohol is permitted.
- Do not permit:
    - Drinking games and the use of drinking paraphernalia (e.g., beer bongs) that encourage high-volume consumption in residences.
    - Alcohol in glass bottles.
    - Bulk alcohol containers, such as kegs or so-called "Texas mickeys."
    - Alcohol during orientation week.

Supports

For individualized support, including treatment services, it is important for students to know what on- and off-campus options are available as well as to receive evidence-informed, educational information to make healthier choices. On-campus supports will differ from campus to campus but may include wellness centres, student union services, and peer support groups. Ensure students know what these supports are and how to access them by providing this information in a number of ways including via campus social media, student orientation packages, or health centre pamphlets.

Campus Spotlight: Mount Royal University
Students Counselling Services and Health Services

At Mount Royal University, counsellors are available at Student Counselling Services to talk to students about their own, or a friend or family member's drinking. Student counselling is a service that is available on-campus to all students, free of charge. Physicians are available in Health Services to talk to campus members if they have a concern with their own drinking. Physician services are covered under the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan.

Campus Spotlight: NorQuest College
Peer Connections

To help students transition to life at NorQuest, the Peer Connections initiative serves to bring together students and create a sense of belonging and friendship. Participants of the Peer Connections initiative are matched with other students who are also looking for a campus buddy to spend time with and get to know. The initiative offers students the opportunity to expand their network and meet new people from around the world; explore the college and surrounding areas with a familiar face; gain linguistic, social and cultural support; socialize and create lasting friendships with others; and gain access to information about life at NorQuest.

In Alberta, free off-campus addiction and mental health services are available 24 hours per day, seven days per week through Alberta Health Services (AHS)[27].

AHS Addiction Helpline 1-866-332-2322
AHS Mental Health Helpline 1-877-303-2642

For helpful, evidence-informed resources, request that student health services provide alcohol awareness information to students, such as offering information about standard drink units and the Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines[15], which supports individuals who choose to drink to decide when, where, why, and how much they drink. Consider how the information is communicated – is it merely informational or prescriptive? Or does it aim to engage people, prompt them to reflect on their choices, encourage dialogue about alcohol, and strengthen intent[28]?

Key influencers on campus, such as RA's, student orientation leaders, peer health educators, and students trained in the Community Helpers Program[29], can also be provided resources, tools and information needed to support students. Training may include how to talk about low-risk drinking, how to identify students who are high-risk drinkers, and services students can turn to for support.

Campus Spotlight: Red Deer College

Campus Addiction Counsellor
Red Deer College's addiction counsellor in the Counselling and Career Centre is responsible for meeting with students to provide onsite addiction counselling for those presenting with their own concerns or expressing concern about someone close to them. In addition to these one-on-one sessions, the counsellor provides education across campus pertaining to addiction prevention, harm reduction, and supports available on campus for students to access.
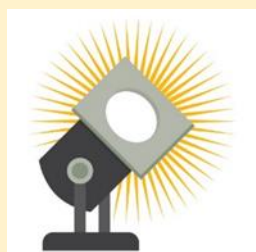
Campus Spotlight: University of Calgary

Harm Reduction Advisor

The University of Calgary has a harm reduction advisor to provide clinical support for students with an alcohol or other substance use problem. Students can access the harm reduction advisor by self-referral or though the campus medical and counselling teams. The harm reduction advisor also provides guidance and expertise on harm reduction messaging on campus.

Another supportive tool for students is Check Your Drinking[20]. It is an anonymous, interactive online self-assessment tool that provides a personalized assessment feedback report based on user responses to a small set of questions about their personal drinking patterns. This report provides detailed feedback to the user about how their drinking habits compare to others their age and gender in order to correct any misperceptions, as well as a financial breakdown of their spending on alcohol and safer drinking tips.

Campus Spotlight: University of Alberta

The University of Alberta has promoted a similar tool for their students, called Check Yourself. The key ways the university marketed this tool included:

- Basic marketing: Lower-cost marketing strategies created a general awareness about the Check Yourself site, such as posters in common areas.

- Intensive marketing: Special strategies, such as Zoom media ads, presentations to special groups and friendly competitions among different residences and sports teams, with a prize for the group who completed the most online assessments.

- Personalized invitations: A personalized email sent to all U of A students, inviting them to try the Check Yourself tool.

- Targeted referrals: A direct referral of an individual to the Check Yourself website by a residence staff member, campus peace officer or Office of Student Judicial Affairs in response to a specific concern or problem.

Mobilizing the campus community

Initiatives to reduce alcohol-related harms on campus are most successful when supported by multiple partners[2]. Bringing together a wide range of campus and community stakeholders helps ensure a shared vision, maximize campus resources, and build commitment.

Establishing a campus coalition

Consider forming a campus coalition to reduce alcohol harms on campus. A campus coalition is a diverse group of on- and off-campus members who represent various community sectors and campus services/departments. They work together to prevent and reduce alcohol and other substance-related harms in their campus community. A coalition takes a comprehensive look at the campus environment and endeavors to contribute to population-level changes to the entire campus community, rather than focusing only on individual-level behaviour[30]. The unified voice of a campus coalition also helps to raise and maintain awareness of, and institutional attention to, alcohol and other substance-use costs and harms as well as emerging trends on alcohol and other substance use on campus.

When establishing a coalition on campus, consider all the people/group(s) who may have a "stake" in the coalition's work. Not all stakeholders need the same amount of engagement, and different stakeholders may need to be involved at different stages of the coalition's projects. The list below offers some suggestions for stakeholder involvement.

Alumni

Athletic coaches/directors

Building maintenance

Deans of faculties

Departments
(e.g., health services, risk management, sports and recreation)

Facility management

Faculty

Faith groups

Financial services

Food and beverage services

Graduate students

Health professionals
(e.g., Alberta Health Services)

Information technology

International students

Local police

Nearby neighbourhoods' reps

Parents

Parking services

Peer Support

Presidents/provosts

Protective services including SafeWalk

Recovery community on campus

Residence directors, coordinators and assistants

Staff

Student clubs

Student union

Campus Spotlight: University of Alberta

Coalition for Action on High Risk Drinking

The Coalition for Action on High Risk Drinking at the University of Alberta (U of A) in Edmonton is mandated to serve as a coordinated resource to support the U of A in responding to issues related to high-risk drinking among students. The coalition's main goals are to collaborate and share information; provide consultation and advice to coalition partners and the university community; monitor trends in alcohol use and alcohol-related incidents on campus; and support interventions and policies designed to reduce alcohol-related harms at the U of A. To meet these goals, the coalition brings together a diverse group of stakeholders, such as Campus Protective Services; Residence Services; Gender Based Violence and Prevention Program; Risk Management; Graduate Students' Association; Sexual Assault Centre; Injury Prevention Centre; Student Conduct and Accountability; Office of the Dean of Students; and Students' Union; AHS; other Edmonton and area post-secondary institutions; etc.

AHS Support to Campus Coalitions

A vital component of preventing alcohol and other substance harms is the partnership of community stakeholders to discuss issues, share resources, and generate ideas and solutions. Recognizing the importance of this type of collaboration, one of the core functions of the AHS Provincial Addiction Prevention Unit is to support coalitions, including campus coalitions. Community/campus coalitions registered with AHS have access to several capacity building supports to help them identify local opportunities and find practical tools to build and implement their coalition's actions. Coalitions registered with AHS also have access to community capacity grant funding of up to $5000 annually to support coalition activities. For more information, contact addiction.prevention@ahs.ca.

Involving industry partners

Carefully consider the implications of inviting industry partners into the work of your coalition. While involving industry may offer opportunities for sponsorships or other incentives, their involvement may convey another message to the campus community.

In certain situations, it may make sense to include industry partners. For example, you may want to engage with local pubs and bars to promote the same harm reduction approaches or messages as your coalition. This may mean working with local bars to hang posters or provide drink coasters with harm reduction messaging – such as safer drinking tips, phone numbers to campus services etc. Local bar owners will have a vested interest in the safety and security of their patrons and any potential impacts high-risk drinking might have on the surrounding community.

In other situations, industry involvement may be contradictory to the coalition's aims. For example, industry may offer to sponsor student activities and events with the purpose of evoking a favorable perception of their brand. Evidence points to motivation for sponsorship being rooted in industry promotion. Evidence also suggests that alcohol industry-funded education may lead to more harm than benefit[18]. In these scenarios, the coalition may want to carefully consider if industry priorities detract from the creation of a healthy campus community, particularly since alcohol marketing, advertising, and sponsorship lead to increased alcohol use[17].

Should a situation arise where industry involvement becomes a possibility, reflect on the meaning of their involvement. What will their involvement look like? Are there parameters around the scope of their involvement? Are there ethical considerations to consider? What could be potential motives for their involvement? Are there mutual aims to be considered? In what ways could involving industry partners be beneficial to the coalition's work? In what ways may it be detrimental - and do the 'pros' outweigh the 'cons'?

Maintaining your campus coalition

To maintain interest, coalition members need to feel that what they are doing is making a difference. Celebrate successes of the group, and build on these successes to move onto new goals and strategies. Endeavor to provide roles and responsibilities that match the strengths of each member. Consider taking a group asset inventory or group resume, creating an account of skills and strengths each member has to offer. Acknowledge peoples' contributions by hosting appreciation events and crediting successes to particular individuals.

Once the group has come together, it is valuable to develop a Terms of Reference. It will help your group develop a vision about what they wish to achieve, how, and with whom. A Terms of Reference defines the purpose of your group, its membership (including the roles and responsibilities of each member) and usually a breakdown of the work that will be completed. It is important to be clear in what it means to be involved in the group, including time commitments, roles, and responsibilities. A Terms of Reference can also be consulted when new members join the group, or when there is transition among members. Consider reviewing it periodically to ensure it still aligns with your group's priorities and areas of action.

Additionally, always be on the lookout for possible members. Keep a list of potential partners you would like to recruit, and find creative ways to promote the coalition's work in the campus community to attract future members.

For more information on forming and maintaining a coalition, visit Coalitions Work a website that offers a wide range of services and tools for coalitions at any stage.

Creating a campus action plan

Begin with a Needs Assessment to Determine the Objectives for your Plan

Creating your unique campus action plan, that supports less risk and healthier choices in relation to alcohol consumption, begins with a needs assessment which can be completed in six steps.

A needs assessment is the process of gathering and examining data and information to understand your campus. A needs assessment helps ensure that work isn't being duplicated and campus resources are being used effectively. It also helps to develop and customize a plan that matches unique campus needs.

First, decide and clarify the purpose of your needs assessment. This will help you navigate next steps. Consider what you already know, what you need to know, and what you will do with that information. Things to consider could include:

- What contributes to high-risk drinking on campus?
- What is already in place to address high-risk drinking on campus?
- What would people view as a success on campus?

Second, decide who to get information from. Reach out to a several groups and stakeholders from all areas to obtain the most accurate picture of your campus. This will provide you with the most accurate information about what is currently happening, and what needs to be happening, on your campus.

Third and fourth, prepare your questions for the groups/stakeholders you have identified and **collect your information**. By gathering information from a diverse group of people, you will have the most accurate information about what is currently

happening, and what needs to be happening, on your campus. Students, for instance, have valuable perspectives of what is already happening on campus as it relates to alcohol. Other campus groups, such as the student health centre, can provide information about common topics students seek support for, as well as the available health supports and resources. Campus security can provide information on the frequency and severity of alcohol-related incidents on campus.

What contributes to high-risk drinking on campus?

What supports, activities and initiatives are currently in place to reduce high-risk drinking on campus?

What else needs to be put in place?

What are stakeholders doing on campus to reduce high-risk drinking?

What would people view as a success on campus?

Consider gathering data from existing sources as well as collecting new information. Campus surveys, such as the National College Health Assessment, can provide an accurate picture of current alcohol use, students' perceptions of their peers' alcohol use, and the harms or negative consequences experienced by students when drinking.

Data can also be collected from security incident reports or residence reports. Methods for collecting information may include interviews, focus groups, surveys, campus forums, and/or anonymous suggestion boxes. Consider which method is best suited for the intended participants.

Fifth – determine how the information you have collected will be organized and analyzed. You can organize and analyze your data quantitatively and qualitatively.

- Quantitative data includes information that can be counted in some way.
- Qualitative data includes opinions, ideas and suggestions made by various people.

Organize both types of data into relevant categories. This will help you get the clearest representation of your campus's activities, resources and services. As you do this, keep in mind the purpose of your needs assessment and what questions you want answered

Sixth – your campus needs assessment is complete and your coalition is now ready to identify opportunities, build on existing campus strengths and successes; identify current gaps in programs, resources and initiatives; and determine what actions your coalition will move forward.

Determine your objectives and activities to achieve them

Based on the coalition's objectives, decide which activities will help you achieve them. Examples of your coalition's objectives may include:

- increasing the number of campus alcohol-free activities,
- reducing the number of alcohol-related incidents,
- increasing harm-reduction practices at events where alcohol is present,
- increasing the number of students who feel supported not to drink, or
- increasing collaboration on campus to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harms.

You may also consider facilitating a visioning exercise with a diverse group of campus partners and stakeholders, such as the exercise provided in the Appendix of this guide. A visioning exercise can help generate a shared vision and common goals among campus partners. It is an aspirational way to reflect on the "big picture vision" for a healthy campus in relation to preventing alcohol harms. Once this vision has been articulated, the group can then think about creative ways to realize that healthy vision.

Reflect on the campus examples featured earlier in this guide, and consider which activities will support the unique aims of your campus coalition and vision for a healthy campus. Once activities are decided, plan who is responsible for each activity, when each activity will start and finish, and what resources are required for each activity. A work breakdown structure, budget, task duration table, and project timeline are a few project management tools your coalition may find helpful when planning activities.

A **work breakdown structure** is a methodical way to "break down" a large project into component parts. It helps identify work needing to be done and communicated to members[31]. It logically organizes work so that it can be scheduled and assigned to coalition members. It also helps identify required resources. A simplified example using a work breakdown structure is shown below.

Example: Hosting a Student Group Event

Book a Venue	Decorations	Invitations	Food	Entertainment
Call around for availabilities	Decide on theme	Create graphics for social media ads	Explore caterer options	Explore live bands
Confirm/Pay for venue	Buy Decorations	Post ads on social media	Confirm/pre-pay caterer	Confirm/pay live band
	Decorate Venue	Allow for RSVPs		
		Send reminder emails		

Sub Categories

Tasks

Once a work breakdown structure is completed, you can develop a **budget based on the tasks** identified.

Task	Best Guess ($)
Confirm/Pay for venue	$350
Buy decorations	$150
Create graphics for social media ad	$50
Post ads on social media	$0
Confirm/pre-pay caterer	$400
Confirm/pay live band	$400

Create a **task duration table** to determine how many days each task will take.

Task	Best Guess (time)
Explore live bands, caterers, venues	3 weeks
Confirm/Pay for venue, food, live band	1 day
Decorate venue	1 day
Create graphics for social media ads	1 week
Post social media ads	3 week
RSVPs	3 Weeks
Send reminder email	2 weeks

Create a project timeline including specific start and end dates for each activity. Closely monitor the tasks that could potentially disrupt the completion of other tasks.

Name	Task	March				April				May			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Moses, Jesse, Adam, Jaimie	Explore venues, caterers, live band	■	■	■									
Shaina, Leela, Jamie	Create graphics for social media				■								
Shaina, Leela, Jamie	Post on social media					■	■	■					
Shaina, Leela, Jamie	Collect online RSVPs					■	■	■					
Jesh	Send out reminder email									■	■		
All	Help out on day of event											22nd	

You can also work backwards when creating a timeline – starting from the end deliverable and working your way back to the beginning. This will help when figuring out the actual dates tasks need to be started and completed. Remember to consider holidays, special events, and unknown circumstances.

Check out the University of Kansas Community Toolbox[32]. You'll find helpful tools to create a community action plan.
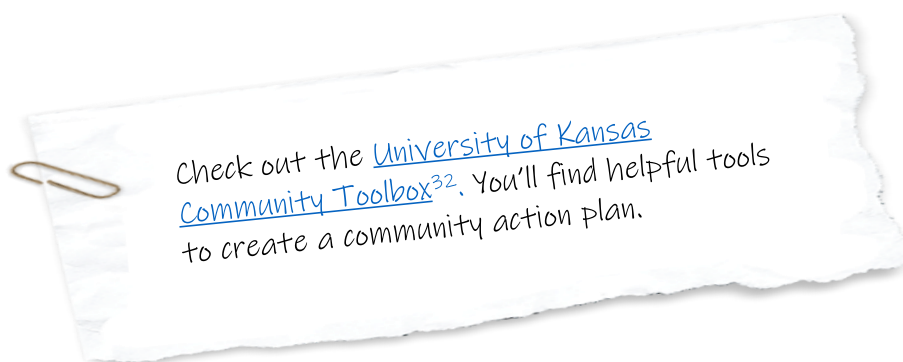
Evaluating campus activities

Evaluation can help you assess how well current initiatives are doing, gain insight into past initiatives, and provide an opportunity to reflect and identify future changes. Some evaluations are straight forward and some are quite complex. This section provides you with the foundations to get started on your evaluation and offers suggestions for additional evaluation resources. However, you may want to consider consultation with departments on your campus that specialize in conducting research or evaluation.

Evaluation starts at the beginning of planning your initiative, program or policy. Creating a logic model will help you describe your initiative/program/policy and your expected outcomes.

Components of a Logic Model

Resources/inputs
The resources needed to implement your initiative/program/policy, including human, financial, organizational, and community resources.

Activities
The actions needed to implement your initiative/program/policy, including developing promotional material, building relationships, and providing services.

Outputs
The measurable and direct products or results of initiative/program/policy activities.

Outcomes
The results or changes your initiative/program/policy intends to achieve. Outcomes can be short-, medium- or long-term. Consider what differences were made, and what changes you wanted to see in participants' knowledge, behaviour and skills.

Impact
The intended or unintended changes to the campus as a result of your initiative/program/policy activities, usually over the long term.

The following is a figure from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation[33] that shows the basic layout of a logic model, as well as how to read it. This will help you understand what to consider during planning, and how each step of a logic model answers a series of "if-then" statements.

Certain resources are needed to operate your program

*If you have access to them, **then** you can use them to accomplish your planned activities*

*If you accomplish your planned activities, **then** you will hopefully deliver the amount of product and/or service that you intended*

*If you accomplish your planned activities to the extent you intended, **then** your participants will benefit in certain ways*

*If these benefits to participants are achieved, **then** certain changes in organizations, communities, or systems might be expected to occur*

Resources/ Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
1	2	3	4	5

Your Planned Work   **Your Intended Results**
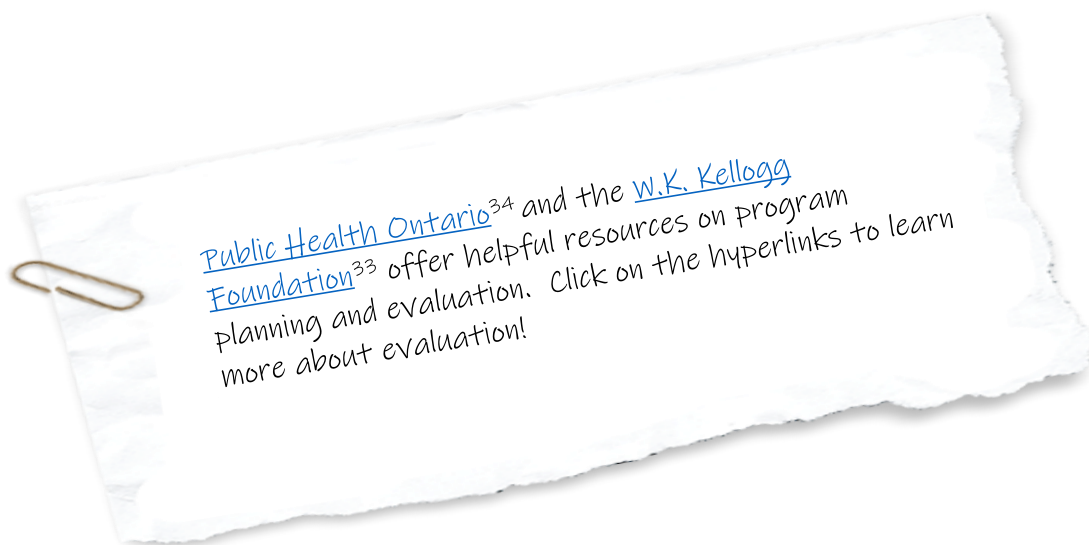
When deciding what you want to find out from your evaluation, think about whether you want to focus on the outcome, the process or both. If you focus on outcomes, you might ask whether your activity reduced the number of alcohol-related incidents on campus after an event. A process evaluation, on the other hand, might ask how well something was implemented. Evaluating the process helps improve implementation.

Public Health Ontario[34] and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation[33] offer helpful resources on program planning and evaluation. Click on the hyperlinks to learn more about evaluation!

Conclusion

Post-secondary communities play a critical role helping students to develop a healthy foundation of attitudes and behaviors. Campus actions, such as those described in this resource, can help to reduce alcohol-related harms and promote healthy, safe, and caring campus communities.

This resource is meant to encourage a dialogue about promoting campus wellness and reducing alcohol-related harms and offers a multitude of possibilities to draw inspiration from. We hope the information provided will encourage you to get involved, especially emerging student leaders, and to engage in a coordinated effort at your institution to enhance student health.

Stay in touch as you develop your own campus initiatives by contacting us at addiction.prevention@ahs.ca. We would love to hear from you!

Other AHS Resources on Reducing Alcohol-Related Harms

Check out this [municipal guide](#)[35] on alcohol policy for community safety, vibrancy, health, and well-being.

Alcohol Policy for Community Safety, Vibrancy, Health and Well-Being
A Practical Guide for Alberta Municipalities

View full guide
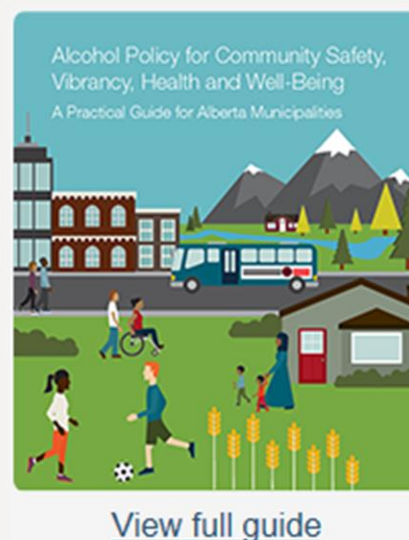
Appendix: Preventing alcohol-related harms on campus visioning exercise

About this exercise

Imagining an ideal future allows one to ask questions and envision a future that builds on present potential. It focuses on optimistic possibilities rather than focusing on current problems. Complex issues, like alcohol use among post-secondary students, require imaginative, comprehensive approaches from diverse perspectives. This exercise prompts participants to think differently and encourages the exploration of new strategies and new perspectives to effect positive change.

When to use this exercise

This exercise may be useful to initiate dialogue on preventing alcohol-related harms on campus with potential campus stakeholders. Your campus coalition could also use it for setting objectives. You may modify this exercise to meet your group's unique needs. The minimum suggested time for this activity is 45 minutes.

Visioning exercise

Part 1: Guided Imagery read out (5-10 min)

Adapted from Text of Healthy City Guided Imagery, T. Hancock (1986)[36]. The facilitator should read the text slowly, taking five to ten minutes, allowing plenty of time for people to "look around" and imagine an image for themselves.

Now we are going to take a trip to the future, to your ideal healthy campus community, about 20 years from now. This is not the campus as you remember it, nor is it the place you think it will probably be – this is your campus as you would like it to be if everything works out well and it truly becomes a healthy community. So make yourself comfortable – you may find it useful to close your eyes so that you can "see" more easily the future in your mind's eye.

I want you to imagine that it is 20 years from now and you are hovering over the campus, perhaps in a balloon or a helicopter. Look down beneath you. What does it look like? What time of the year is it? Look across the campus and look at the shapes of the buildings and structures. Can you see how people move around? What sounds come up to you as you hover above?

Now, descend slowly towards the center of the area, look at the buildings and the public spaces as you come down. We are going to land in the center of the area in the morning of a working day. As you get closer to the ground, listen again to the sounds, and smell the scents of the campus. Land on a busy corner and look around you. Who is there? What are they doing and how are they getting around? How do they react to each other? What does this space look like? How safe does it feel? What activities are going on?

Now imagine yourself on a different part of the campus, perhaps in one of the buildings. What activities are going on there? Imagine it is lunchtime, and you are in the middle of a busy cafeteria. What is being sold, and how is it being sold? What sort of food are students eating? How does it look? How does it smell? What are people doing apart from eating? How does all this relate to the wellness of students and staff in this community?

As the school day draws to an end change location to a residence hall. Walk with students through their residence building. Remember, this is an ideal healthy community. How does it look? What sorts of facilities are there? What kinds of open spaces? What type of services? Who lives there, and how do they relate to each other? How does this residence community feel? Does it feel safe? How do students relax – or do they relax? What do they do they do in their free time in the evenings, or is it free?

Now walk outside again. It is dark. How does it feel to be out at night? Who is out there? What is going in the community at this time?

Now imagine it is a weekend – pick any season of the year you like. Remember, this is your ideally healthy campus community. What do people do on their weekends? What do they do with their leisure time? What recreational, educational, or other activities do they undertake? What kinds of activities are available to people?

Are people working on the weekend? Who is working? What sort of work are they doing?

Now before we leave this ideal healthy campus community, think back on all you have seen. Did you see first year students, international students, students with disabilities, graduate students, and students with children? How is life for them?

Now I want you to come slowly back to the present time, reflecting on all you have seen. Think about the most striking things you saw, heard, smelled or touched? What was it that really made an impression on you about this ideal healthy campus?

Part 2: Small group discussion (5-10 min)

Facilitator explains the following.

In small groups, or by turning to the person next to you, discuss the following: What did you see? What did you imagine generally, and as it relates to alcohol and other substance use on the campus?

Part 3: Small group discussion (10-20 min)

Facilitator hands out Campus Action Cards (there are four sets in total representing the four key action areas on campus: Policy, Environments, Perceptions and Supports (see the provided card cut-outs below). Each set comes with a description of its campus action along with a couple of examples. You can choose to provide all four sets to each small group, or one set per group depending on the time you have for the discussion. Copies of the Reducing Alcohol-Related Harms on Campus guide may also be provided for reference.

** as an add on to the activity, you may provide or choose one or more Unique Identity Cards (see provided card cut-outs below) to each group and participants can work through the activity as the person on their card. Participants may suggest additional identities they'd like to consider.

Facilitator explains the following.

You are a group of campus stakeholders who want to make a positive change in your campus community.

Consider the specific campus action your group has been assigned. Use the campus examples provided for inspiration. Based on the campus action assigned to your group, brainstorm ideas for potential initiatives that would contribute to making an ideal healthy campus community as it relates to students and alcohol use. If using the identity cards, try to consider ideas from the perspective of a person who identifies with this community, remembering that each person has many identities all at the same time.

Part 4: Large group discussion (10-20 min)

Each group shares two to four main ideas from their tables.

Part 5: Large group (15-30 min)

As a large group, participants decide and prioritize which suggested ideas are viable options to explore for implementation on campus.

Campus Action Card Sets

Campus Action: Policy

Alcohol policy, is defined as "a set of measures in a jurisdiction or society aimed at minimizing the health and social harms from alcohol consumption"19.

Using policy to shift a campus culture towards moderate alcohol use has the greatest impact on students' high risk drinking. Regulating how, where, and when students can access alcohol is one of the best ways of contributing to change at the campus community level.

Policy Example

Campus Spotlight: Mount Royal University

Campus Bar Policies
The campus bar spearheads a lower-risk drinking culture by excluding happy hours and lower priced drinking events or evenings. All non-alcoholic beverages have a lower price point than alcoholic beverages, and pop is provided at no charge to designated drivers.

Policy Example

Campus Spotlight: Mount Royal University

Alcohol Advertisement Policy
Events that are advertised on campus that include the sale of alcohol are not permitted to advertise the availability or price of alcohol. Messaging includes that the event is licensed, but the advertisement must not promote the consumption of alcohol in any way. This pertains to both internal and external event advertisements.

Campus Action: Perceptions

Students' behaviours are influenced by their perceptions of what others in their social groups are doing. Social-norms marketing seeks to address any misperceptions and reduce the gap between actual and perceived behaviour. If students overestimate their peers' alcohol use, they will likely drink more than what is actually typical. This is true for how often students drink and also for how much students drink. By being aware of actual peer group norms, students can make informed decisions, peer pressure is reduced, and individuals will be more likely to engage in activities that reflect healthier choices

Perceptions Example

Campus Spotlight: Mount Royal University

Social Norm Messaging Coasters
In the campus bar, previously The Hub, now West Gate Social, Wellness Services has worked with the Students' Association to develop social norming messages around alcohol use on drink coasters so that students will engage in the messaging with their friends and use it as a conversation starter.

Perceptions Example

Check Your Drinking
Check Your Drinking is an anonymous, interactive online self-assessment tool that provides a personalized assessment report based on user responses to a small set of questions about their personal drinking patterns. This report provides detailed feedback to the user about how their drinking habits compare to their peers in order to correct any misperceptions. The report also provides a financial breakdown of their spending on alcohol and safer drinking tips. Campuses may want to consider promoting this social norming tool among their students.

Campus Action: Environments

Alcohol is often present at campus and residence events including social functions, athletic events and celebrations. Event location can provide cues about expected behaviour and can affect the choices people make while there. A setting can therefore influence how people drink alcohol as well as perpetuate perceived norms around drinking. Targeting settings where risky-risk drinking is common means creating a space that encourages positive behaviours. When alcohol is available, harm reduction is a practical response that can be used to ensure the safety of staff, faculty and students on campus.

Environments Example

Campus Spotlight: Lehigh University

The [Lehigh After Dark program](#) offered through Lehigh University, allows students to access funds to host alcohol-free events from Thursday to Saturday between 10:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m.

Environments Example

Campus Spotlight: University of Alberta

Campus Recreation at the University of Alberta runs drop in fitness classes late Friday afternoons as a healthy alternative to drinking and to help support a healthy lifestyle approach on campus. The initiative is called, "Re-defining Happy Hour."

Campus Action: Supports

It is important for students to know what on- and off-campus support options are available, such as counselling services. It is also important that students can access evidence-informed, educational information that can help them to make healthier choices. Ensure students know what supports are available and how to access them.

Supports Example

Campus Spotlight: NorQuest College

To help students transition to life at NorQuest, the Peer Connections initiative serves to bring together students and create a sense of belonging and friendship. Participants of the Peer Connections initiative are matched with other students who are also looking for a campus buddy to spend time with and get to know. The initiative offers students the opportunity to expand their network and meet new people from around the world; explore the college and surrounding areas with a familiar face; gain linguistic, social and cultural support; socialize and create lasting friendships with others; and gain access to information about life at NorQuest.

Supports Example

Campus Spotlight: University of Calgary

The University of Calgary has a harm reduction advisor to provide clinical support for students with an alcohol or other substance use problem. Students can access the harm reduction advisor by self-referral or though the campus medical and counselling teams. The harm reduction advisor also provides guidance and expertise on harm reduction messaging on campus.

Unique Identity Cards

Identity Card First year student	**Identity Card** Parent of a Student	**Identity Card** Student who is also a parent
Identity Card International Student	**Identity Card** Campus Bar Manager	**Identity Card** Building Maintenance Staff
Identity Card Residence Coordinator	**Identity Card** Dean of Students	**Identity Card** Counsellor
Identity Card Athletics Coach	**Identity Card** Campus Nurse	**Identity Card** Students' Union President
Identity Card Chemistry Instructor	**Identity Card** Alumni	**Identity Card** Graduate Student

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