

YOU, YOUR COLLEGE STUDENT, AND ALCOHOL.

Parent and Family Resource Guide



UNIVERSITY of
DENVER

STUDENT LIFE

Welcome

Congratulations on enrolling your son or daughter at the University of Denver. This is a time of transition for your student and for you. You are likely deciding how much to stay involved in their lives and how they will respond to their new autonomy.

The Health and Counseling Center at the University of Denver is committed to the health and wellbeing of your student. We know that wellness is connected to student success. Many things interfere with student success. Colds and flu, relationship problems, depression, sleep disturbance, and alcohol abuse can all interfere with your students' ability to achieve their academic goals.

As your student starts the academic year, he or she will face many challenges. As their parents, we encourage you to help him or her work through some of these challenges.

This brochure is designed to help you address one particular challenge - the misuse of alcohol in college. We'll offer tips on how to talk to your student, University of Denver policies, and facts regarding alcohol and campus resources.

The Nature of the Problem: Some Sobering Facts

- Many students will experiment with alcohol when they go to college.
- A significant minority of students may abuse alcohol in their early days in college.
- Thousands of college students across the country get transported to hospitals due to excessive drinking.
- Some students die from alcohol overdoses.

At DU we have many programs in place to educate your child about the risks of excessive use of alcohol. All students are required to complete a well-researched online educational module, AlcoholEdu, before they begin classes. *You can support this initiative by reminding your student to complete the requirement.*

Additionally, during Discoveries New Student Orientation, all incoming students participate in a number of educational sessions about staying well in college. In one session, there is a frank discussion hosted by upper-class students in which the topic of alcohol is addressed.



How You Can Help: Have the Conversation!

Parents may feel that drinking alcohol is a right of passage; they did it during college, so it is okay for their son or daughter to do it during college. The reality is, no matter your own history, it is important to talk to your student about alcohol use.

Here are some key points to remember:

- Have a conversation with your son or daughter about alcohol before they come to campus.
- It's okay to share about your own history of drinking in college (or not).
- Communicate your expectations about alcohol, drugs, and other risky behaviors.
- Recognize that experimentation is normal and that you can't control their actions once they are at the University of Denver.
- Encourage your student to make responsible choices.
- We talk to students about "harm reduction." If you are going to drink, do it safely and responsibly.
- Tell him or her about the consequences of underage or excessive drinking. If they violate University of Denver's Honor Code, there are consequences. In most cases, you will be notified. Students may have a sanction and have unfavorable comments in their record.
- Fake ID's are a felony in Colorado. Explain the risks of using a Fake ID to obtain alcohol.
- Encourage your student to get involved in campus life. We know that involved students are more likely to be successful and less likely to rely on alcohol to fill their free time.

Believe it or not, you, as their parent, still have the strongest influence on their behavior.

Student Conduct

The University of Denver developed its Honor Code to ensure the safety, respect, and wellbeing of the entire University of Denver community. Your student will be exposed to the Honor Code during Discoveries New Student Orientation but a gentle reminder of these policies from you is a good idea.

Good Samaritan Philosophy:

The University of Denver strives to create a caring community. Students are expected to not only look out for their own health and safety but also for that of their peers. When a person's health or safety is threatened, immediate action must be taken.

For instance, if a student is concerned that a peer might be suffering from an alcohol or drug overdose, the Honor Code strongly encourages them to seek emergency assistance for their friend. In most cases, if a student is seeking assistance in good faith, they will likely not be held responsible for a conduct violation. However, they may still be required to attend an educational session. We never want a student to avoid seeking help for fear of the conduct process.

The University will always consider the unique nature of the incident and roles of those who may have been involved.



Students sign the Pioneer Pledge annually to visually pledge their commitment to the Honor Code.



Alcohol Misuse

- Possession, use, manufacture, or distribution of alcohol except as expressly permitted by law or University policy. Alcoholic beverages may not be used by, possessed by, or distributed to any person under 21 years of age.
- Intoxication to the point of endangering one's own health or safety regardless of age.
- Any act which causes a person to consume alcohol without their effective consent.
- Any possession or use on University premises of paraphernalia used to facilitate the rapid consumption of alcohol. This includes but is not limited to beer bongs and funnels.
- Any violation of these Student Conduct Policies while intoxicated regardless of age.
- Intoxication to the point of endangering one's own health or safety regardless of age.

Drug Misuse

- Possession, use, manufacture, or distribution of any illegal drug, or any possession or use of any prescription drug or other controlled substance except under the direction of a licensed physician. The manufacture or distribution of any drug is also prohibited. Marijuana, including Medical Marijuana, is prohibited on campus.
- Being under the influence of any illegal or prescription drug to the point of endangering one's own health or safety.
- Any possession or use on University premises of paraphernalia used to facilitate the use of any illegal drug or other controlled substance in violation of this policy. This includes but is not limited to marijuana pipes and bongs.
- Any act which causes a person to ingest any illegal or prescription drug or other controlled substance without their effective consent.
- Any violation of these Student Conduct Policies while under the influence of any illegal drug, prescription drug or other controlled substance in violation of this policy.



Parental Notification Policy

The University considers student conduct records to be part of a student's educational record, and as such the University complies with all applicable legislation, including but not limited to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Further, the University's primary relationship is with its students, and not with their parents or guardians.

However, the University maintains the right to notify the parents or guardians of any dependent student under the age of twenty-one who has been found responsible for violating any drug or alcohol policies. Notification may be deferred at the sole discretion of the Director of The Office of Student Conduct.

This notification is intended to encourage communication between students and their parents or guardians. Regardless of whether notification has occurred, the University's priority and obligation is to correspond and otherwise conduct business directly with students, and not through parents, guardians, or any other third party.

Endangerment

Any act that directly or indirectly creates a substantial risk to anyone's health or safety (including one's own health or safety) regardless of intent. This includes but is not limited to the use or abuse of any substance that results in medical evaluation or assistance.

For the complete list of student conduct policies please visit the Office of Student Conduct website: www.du.edu/honorcode

Colorado Laws

When dealing with things such as alcohol use and false identification it is important to remember that there are several Colorado laws regarding underage drinking and false identification. For some violations, students may face legal consequences beyond any violation of the Honor Code. Students should understand that there are some careers/licensures that will not allow felonies and this will have a long-term affect on your son or daughter.

If a student gets caught with a fake ID on campus, the University of Denver's Department of Campus Safety will refer them to the Office of Student Conduct. If the student gets caught more than once, Campus Safety will report the violation to the proper law enforcement agency and criminal prosecution may be pursued. This will only pertain to students who get caught with false identification on campus. If an incident happens off-campus law enforcement may be involved on the first offense. When communicating your expectations to your son or daughter, be sure to include some of the above information.



Collegiate and Campus Norms

The media often portrays students as heavy and regular drinkers. The truth is that most college students generally make healthy decisions regarding alcohol use. Students perceive their peers to be drinking much more than they actually do.

Here are some good talking points while communicating your expectations to your son or daughter. After each statistic there are parentheses which include a simple talking point you can use.

- In the last 30 days 35% of students abstained from alcohol
(Point: Not all college students drink alcohol)
- Students thought that only 6% of their peers abstained from alcohol in the last 30 days. Students believe that 31% of their peers drank on 10-14 of the last 30 days (Point: Students believe that more college students drink than actually do)
- 27% of students didn't drink alcohol last time they socialized; 20% had one or two drinks; 20% had 3 or 4 drinks
(Point: Most students party responsibly when they choose to drink)
- Students thought that 34% of students had 5-6 alcoholic drinks last time they partied; 15% had 7-8 drinks; 10% had 9-10 (Point: It seems like students drink more drinks when they choose to drink than they actually do)
- When asked in the last two weeks, "how many times did you drink five or more alcoholic drinks in one sitting, 65% said none (Point: Most students do not binge drink)



General Alcohol Facts

As a University, we educate students about techniques to monitor their drinking. We recognize that no institution can completely prevent underage or excessive drinking. While we set clear expectations in our Code of Conduct, you, as their parent, can reinforce this by encouraging them to abide by the code or to ensure that they drink responsibly if they are going to experiment with alcohol.

Here are some useful facts that we share with incoming students. You can help by reinforcing the message

- The liver can only process one standard drink per hour. When people drink more than one drink per hour they start to feel the affects of alcohol and there is no way to speed this process up. If someone were to drink five standard drinks it would take approximately five hours for all the alcohol to pass through their system and to be sober again.
- Not all drinks are created equally. A Long Island Iced Tea can have as much alcohol as 3 to 6 beers. A standard drink size for a beer is 12 ounces (a can); 5 ounces for a glass of wine (there are typically 5 servings in a bottle); 1.5 ounces of hard alcohol (a pint has 11 servings).
- Eating before and while drinking slows down the absorption of alcohol into the blood stream. Eating foods high in protein, such as milk or cheese, coats the stomach and intestines.
- Alternating between alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks helps to pace drinking.
- Alcohol is a diuretic and dehydrates the body. Drinking water will help ward off the side effects of dehydration such as headache and overall achiness.
- No matter how you cut it, drinking games are not a good idea. Just by the nature of the games they encourage people to drink more and more quickly than they normally would.

Alcohol-Free Late Night Programming

In addition to the preventive measures in place to support your students, Campus Life provides a long list of alternative programming on campus. From weekly Late Night @ DU programs, including “DU Unplugged” an acoustic night at the Pub, to monthly Trivia nights; from weekend programming such as attending a play at the Denver Performing Arts Center or free tickets to the Museum, the Student Activities office works to promote and sponsor alcohol free programs. In addition, every Thursday night during the academic year, the University of Denver Programming Board (DUPB) features a free screening of recently released movies.

Most recently, DU hosted its inaugural “The Big Event” - the largest late night event to ever take place on campus. The purpose of “The Big Event” was to create an atmosphere that was fun, but would also be an alternative to a night out drinking and/or other risky behavior. The event drew over 1500 students who participated in events such as comedy shows, laser tag, dance performers, canvas painting, karaoke, henna artist, and a lot more. In all our programming we strive to build a safe and inclusive environment.

Thank You

Thank you for continuing to invest in your son or daughter’s future. Alcohol can be a big part of the collegiate culture. By talking to your son or daughter, you tell him or her that you can still be involved in their life without being physically close to them. You, as parents, are still one of the biggest influences on their behavior. You are an important part of their life and what you say does matter. Continue the conversation throughout their college career and beyond.

Campus Resources

Various resources are available to help support your student. The Health and Counseling Center offers affordable assessment, counseling, and referral for students with alcohol and other drug concerns as well as general mental health and adjustment issues.

Health and Counseling Center

303.871.2205

info@hcc.du.edu

www.du.edu/duhealth

Parent & Family Relations

303.871.3708

parents@du.edu

www.du.edu/studentlife/parents

Student Conduct

303.871.3111

www.du.edu/studentconduct

Student Outreach and Support

303.871.4724

care@du.edu

www.du.edu/studentssupport



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STUDENT LIFE

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