

COMPOSITION BOOK

**A GUIDE FOR
PARENTS OF FIRST-YEAR
COLLEGE STUDENTS**



pennsylvania
LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD

- ★ 87.9 percent of PA college students believe the average student on campus uses alcohol once a week or more!
- ★ 34.6 percent of PA college students experienced peer pressure to drink or use drugs!
- ★ 59.1 percent of PA college students refused an offer of alcohol or other drugs in the last 30 days!

The first 6 weeks of freshman year are a vulnerable time for heavy drinking and alcohol-related consequences because of student expectations and social pressures at the start of the academic year.²

IS YOUR STUDENT PREPARED?

College may be the first time a young adult is away from parental rules and influence. The pressures to conform to the perceived behaviors of a new social setting, combined with the widespread belief of alcohol use as a college “rite of passage,” can result in potentially dangerous consequences for students. It is important for all college students to know that not everyone is drinking.

A 2017 survey of Pennsylvania college students reveals that 87.9 percent of students believe the average student uses alcohol once a week or more; however, the same survey shows that 29.2 percent of students did not use alcohol in the past 30 days.¹

For many parents and their young adults, discussing alcohol is not easy. Parents may be unsure about when or how to begin the discussion, and young adults may be dismissive or try to avoid the topic of alcohol use altogether. To have an effective dialogue about alcohol, the risks and consequences of underage alcohol use must be expressed.

HEALTH RISKS

Underage and/or excessive use of alcohol has many health risks that include, but are not limited to injury, altered brain development, alcohol dependency or development of an alcohol use disorder and liver damage.³

CAREER CONSEQUENCES

The effects of underage drinking may extend beyond the classroom. More companies are performing background screenings on potential interns or employees that include social media sites such as Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn for irresponsible behavior related to alcohol and other substance use.⁴

Employment or internship opportunities may become limited and/or be denied due to displays of inappropriate conduct and/or criminal activity

on social media. Under certain conditions, employers have the right to deny employment to applicants due to criminal convictions.⁵

ACADEMIC CONSEQUENCES

Missing classes, performing poorly on tests or important projects and memory loss are broad academic consequences a student may face due to alcohol use or misuse in college.² These consequences may lead to course failure, delayed graduation and even withdrawal from college. Retaking courses and/or the addition of semesters not included in a student's original academic plan could cost hundreds to thousands of dollars.

LEGAL CONSEQUENCES

A person under age 21 commits a summary offense if he/she attempts to purchase, purchases, consumes, possesses or knowingly and intentionally transports any liquor or malt, or brewed beverages.⁶

Some colleges add their own consequences in addition to legal charges. These can include academic probation, loss of housing, fines, suspension, expulsion and/or required participation in alcohol courses/education programing.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

The Federal Family Education and Privacy Act of 1998 gives colleges and universities the authority to disclose alcohol or controlled substance violations to parents and guardians. The law permits, but does not require, schools to **notify parents** any time a student under 21 violates drug or alcohol laws. Visit the college's website under the offices of student affairs or student conduct to find out if it practices parental notification. If it is unclear or not stated, contact the college's dean of students.

SOURCES

1. Core Institute. (2017). Core Alcohol and Drug Survey™, 2017 Pennsylvania Aggregate Data.
2. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. (2015, December). College Drinking. Retrieved April 2019, from <https://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/CollegeFactSheet/CollegeFact.htm>.
3. National Institutes on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. (2006). Underage drinking: why do adolescents drink, what are the risks, and how can underage drinking be prevented?. Alcohol Alert, 67, 1-7.
4. Wright, G. (2018, April 11). Despite Legal Risks, Companies Still Use Social Media to Screen Employees. Retrieved April 2019, from <https://www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/hr-topics/technology/Pages/Social-Media-to-Screen-Employees.aspx>.
5. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Pre-Employment Inquiries and Arrest & Conviction. Retrieved April 2019, from https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/practices/inquiries_arrest_conviction.cfm.
6. Pennsylvania Crimes Code.
7. "2017 Pennsylvania Annual Youth Survey State Report," May 2018, Accessed 01 December 2018 via [https://www.pccd.pa.gov/Juvenile-Justice/Pages/Pennsylvania-Youth-Survey-\(PAYS\)-2017.aspx](https://www.pccd.pa.gov/Juvenile-Justice/Pages/Pennsylvania-Youth-Survey-(PAYS)-2017.aspx).

- ★ 69.2 percent of PA 12th graders have used alcohol in their lifetime!
- ★ 62.8 percent of underage PA college students consumed alcohol in the last 30 days!
- ★ 83.0 percent of PA college students consumed alcohol in the past year!

TIPS

- ✕ Take advantage of free things to do on campus.
- ✕ Join a club/intramural sports team.
- ✕ Do laundry.

The Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board
Bureau of Alcohol Education offers a
variety of materials free of charge.

For more information:

lcb.pa.gov

 [PLCB Alcohol Education](#)

Contact us:

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