



PRESS RELEASE
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CONTACT
Public Information Office
603-271-9391
Twitter: NHDHHSPIO
Facebook: NHDepartmentOfHealthAndHumanServices

New Hampshire Responds to Excessive Drinking and Substance Use Concerns Among College Students

Concord – The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services is proactively working to address concerns of excessive drinking and substance use among college students with strategies included in the latest Issue Brief, “Drinking and Substance Use Concerns among College Students,” and the supporting publication, “Parenting Through the College Years.” The two publications are an effort to build awareness around the dangers of high risk drinking and other drug use among young adults, which is a national problem.

According to research, 15% of New Hampshire college students think they may have an alcohol problem, and that young adults in NH are more likely to use marijuana and other illegal drugs more than any other age group. The ramifications from this include injuries, unsafe sex, drunk driving, and academic problems.

“The risks at college campuses here in New Hampshire are no different than any other college campus in this country,” said DHHS’ Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services (BDAS) Director Joe Harding. “Not only is college a very different culture, with opportunities to drink and drink excessively, but young people in their late teens and early 20s tend to engage more in risk-taking activities. Sadly, that can lead to a number of unintended consequences, some of those with tragic endings.”

The Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services developed the Issue Brief, “Drinking and Substance Use Concerns among College Students.” It highlights compelling information on the health and safety risks, including increased illnesses, accidents, housing evictions, conduct charges, police arrests and the economic impact when a student may drop out of school due to alcohol abuse or other drug use.

“It is so important for parents as well as students to fully understand the harms associated with high risk drinking and drug abuse,” said New Hampshire Higher Education and other Drug Committee (NHHEAOD) Co-Chair Melissa Garvey. “Parents can still influence their children’s decisions during the college years by talking to them before they head to school and continuing the conversation during high-risk times like holidays, spring breaks, and special events. Don’t be afraid to ask the tough questions, let them know where you stand and seek help if needed.”

“Parenting Through the College Years,” was done in collaboration with BDAS and NHHEAOD and is being mailed to parents of first-year students at a number of NH colleges. The publication specifically encourages parents to stay connected to their kids as they settle into campus life.

Both publications are available at www.drugfreenh.org, www.nhcenterforexcellence.org, www.nhheaod.org, and through counseling and health service departments at individual colleges.