



July 23, 2009

To All Parents of New USU Students:

We are honored and excited that your student has chosen Utah State University to be their home away from home. We also want to congratulate you in your son/daughter's academic achievement to date. We know the important role parents play in helping their children set goals and make good decisions.

The goal of the Student Wellness Center is to educate students, staff and faculty in the development of skills necessary to enhance their personal wellness and ability to be successful in the Five Areas of Life (Spiritual, Mental/Emotional, Physical, Social, and Financial). This means we're here to help them succeed not only in academics, but in all other aspects of their life.

We are dedicated to the prevention and education of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use, and the consequences that may occur when students engage in these behaviors. Use of any substance can affect one or all of the Five Areas of Life. There are many factors that contribute to a student making the decision to use a substance, which include but are not limited to: availability of substances, the friends one associates with, coping skills, education, and awareness.

We want to give you all the information we can so that with your help, your student can make healthy decisions during his/her college career. First we want to let you know that your son/daughter has made a great decision in choosing Utah State University. USU has an extremely low substance use and abuse rate compared to other colleges and universities nationally. Over 84% of USU students choose not to drink at all, compared to 18% of college students nationwide (defined as no alcohol use in the past year). The following information includes Utah State University's Student Code relating to alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs along with information on communicating with your student about these issues. We have also included a brochure about alcohol use on college campuses that we hope you will be able to use as you talk with your student.

USU Student Policy: Possession, consumption, distribution, manufacture, or storage of alcohol and/or illegal drugs anywhere on campus is prohibited by the Utah State University Student Code. Off-campus University functions are subject to federal, state, or local laws. Crimes committed on or off campus violate University standards and may subject students to discipline under the non-academic section of the student code. Disciplinary actions, which may include referral to the Substance Abuse Program, probation, suspension, and/or expulsion, are designed to maintain the institution's integrity, protect individual rights, and help students solve personal problems. Violation of this code by students under the age of 21 may also result in a parental notification. Staff and students are expected to report violations of campus regulations to the Office of the Vice President for Student Services.

*visit <http://www.usu.edu/studentervices/studentcode/> for a complete version of USU's Student Code

How to Communicate with Your Student: Youth report parental disapproval of underage drinking as the key reason they chose not to drink (parentsempowered.org/). Good communication with your son or daughter can assist him or her in making healthy decisions when it comes to the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.

1. Set clear and realistic expectations regarding academic performance and substance use.
2. Stress that alcohol is toxic and excessive consumption can fatally poison the human body.
3. Teach the risks associated with underage drinking.
4. Make it clear that underage alcohol consumption and alcohol-impaired driving are both against the law.
5. Explain that underage drinking may damage growth processes in the brain.
6. Tell your student to stand up for his or her right to a safe academic environment.
7. Know the alcohol scene on campus and talk to your student about it.
8. Avoid tales of drinking exploits from your own college years.
9. Tell your student to intervene when classmates are in trouble with alcohol.
10. Encourage volunteerism in community work and participation in other positive activities.

We hope that this information assists you in communicating with your son/daughter and that it provides them with the knowledge they need to make informed decisions.

Please feel free to call or email me with any questions or concerns, and once again, we welcome your student to Utah State University!

Sincerely,

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