

Let's Talk Alcohol Harm Prevention

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SPEAKERS

Paola, Kate

Paola 00:04

Welcome to Live Well, Be Well, a podcast where we speak candidly about all things wellness. My name is Paola and my pronouns are she/her/hers.

Kate 00:11

And I'm Kate, my pronouns are she/her/hers, as well.

Paola 00:15

And we're the well-being peer educators at UC San Diego. On this episode of Live Well, Be Well, we'll be discussing alcohol use and resources available. So, we hope you get inspired. We hope you feel connected, and we hope you discover new ways to live your best life. Let's get started.

Kate 00:30

So, we kind of wanted to first start off with the question, why college students turn to drinking alcohol. Some possible reasons are, it's a coping mechanism. So, we see it has the ability to ease stress and anxiety from school, work, and really just life in general. We also see another reason could be peer pressure. Being within that environment, you don't really want to be singled out for choosing to abstain from drinking. And we see within evidence from the UCSD student survey, we saw that the percentage of UCSD students that drank one or more alcoholic beverages in the last 30 days was very high, it was 66%. And we saw the percentage of UCSD students that had more than five drinks, the last time they partied and socialized, was 28%. So, we see that alcohol is affecting the college experience and could create a college culture that is reliant with using alcohol. And this could lead to unhealthy drinking habits.

Paola 01:43

And on that, there's a lot of alcohol exposure that people see when they first come to college. It's their first time going to parties, it's their first time getting to binge drinking. There's beer gardens for grad students where there's alcoholic beverages served. And I think because of this, people don't know what to do. And I know that I've been to parties where people just over drink. They aren't aware of what's

going on. They aren't aware of their surroundings. And I think that if you're over 21, here are some safe drinking tips to practice next time you feel like having some alcohol.

Paola 02:19

Drink water between your alcoholic beverages. I think one, this helps pace out the amount of drinks you're having, and two, it keeps you hydrated, so that you don't have a bad hangover, or just get too drunk. Also eat food before, during, and after. It's never a good idea to drink on an empty stomach. You will get sick. And it's a good idea just to keep eating afterwards, and during, so it just soaks up the alcohol that you're having. Also, limit the number of drinks before you begin drinking. I think it's good to know your limit; how much gets you tipsy, how much gets you drunk. And then just to keep count of how many drinks you're having, so you don't go overboard. And then, I think the last important one, is to pour your own drinks, you never know who is pouring your drinks, what they're going to do, what they're going to put in there. And also, just stay with your drinks at all times. That way you know what's in your drink, and there's no possibility of anything going wrong.

Paola 03:15

And then some coping mechanisms to deal with stress rather than alcohol. I like picking up new hobbies, baking, reading, painting. Recently, I've been into rollerblading. It's a good de-stressor, and kind of like a good way to get some exercise in. Also experimenting with non-alcoholic beverages: tea, coffee, mocktails, different smoothies, different juices. It's really good. And then yoga and stretches. I think it helps calm you down, de-stress you. And then an important one is to surround yourself with people who will get you to your goal. If you're around people who binge drink, who drink a lot, you're going to be doing that because that's the environment that you're in. That's the way you can connect with them. But if you're around people who are willing to support you through trying to limit your alcohol use, it'll be much easier to fulfill your goal.

Kate 04:06

Also some coping mechanisms to deal with stress for me rather than alcohol is exercise, so I go on daily runs. This is just a way for me to release stress through my sweat, which is kind of funny. In my opinion, also I create well-balanced meals. For me personally, whatever I put into my body, I hope it makes me feel physically better. So that's having a good amount of vegetables, proteins in my diet, carbohydrates, all of that. Also, I make time in my schedule for self-care, just so I won't feel overwhelmed with balancing school and work. I did struggle with trying to balance that time management because life gets overwhelming and different obstacles come in the way. But I found throughout this year, I was able to find what worked best for me, and creating a time for self-care every day. So whether that be-- I have meditation, I journal, or even as simple as talking to friends or watching TV. Just making sure I have a time to relax and really just taking care of myself. And also, a reminder, and to reiterate what Paola said, is just really surrounding yourself with people who will help you get to your goal. You're not going through this process alone. You have not only access wellness peer educators, but we have a lot of resources on campus that could help you as well.

Paola 05:35

And one of those resources is the Medical Amnesty Program are also known as MAP. It reduces the barrier to seek medical assistance for emergencies involving alcohol and other controlled substances

and to help promote community and well-being safety. So, this program allows you to get medical attention and medical help without them seeking student conduct, and you getting in trouble for having alcohol or having a certain substance.

Kate 06:03

In addition to that, we also have UCSD Health Promotion Services. The first program is known as BASICS, which stands for a Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students. This was designed to assist students in examining their drinking and other drug use behavior in a judgment-free environment. We also have the Collegiate Recovery Program. It provides a safe space and supportive community for students in recovery or seeking recovery from addiction. You have the opportunity to engage with other UCSD students, to attend support group meetings, and also have the opportunity to go to sober social events, or just get in the loop about volunteer opportunities and upcoming events.

Paola 06:47

And then there's us and we're the well-being peer educators at UC San Diego. We are fellow peer students who use research-based information about maintaining good health and present a non-judgmental event to peers to make educated decisions about their health. Our specialty is alcohol, tobacco and other drugs and we host workshops in regards to alcohol and substance abuse. So be on the lookout for events coming up this quarter.

Kate 07:12

So that concludes this episode of Live Well, Be Well. If you liked what you heard and would like to learn more about topics related to health and well-being, there's much more to come. Be sure to follow us on Instagram under @UCSD WPE. Stay tuned for our next episode of Live Well, Be Well. Until next time, be kind, be true, be you and remember to be well is to live well.