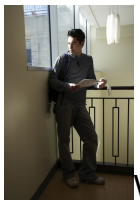

Washington State University Imposes Early-Morning Friday Classes To Combat 'Thirsty Thursday'

In response to a student who died from alcohol poisoning last school year, Washington State University (WSU) is taking precautionary measures to reduce the amount of drug use and binge drinking.

Changes include more early-morning Friday classes, more alcohol-free floors in residence halls, and alcohol screening for at-risk students.

"If something as simple as the timing of a student's academic classes will help prevent excessive drinking behavior, then it's a good science-based practice to implement," said Dr. Bruce Wright, executive director of WSU's Health and Wellness Services.

That's not all that the university has in store for its booze-loving incoming freshmen. Underage students are subject to parental notification if they are caught violating alcohol or drug policies. University officials are also considering the removal of fraternity freshman housing.

"We know from multiple national studies and local data that freshmen are more likely to experience alcohol-related harm than other students and that freshmen fraternity members are in the highest risk category," Wright added.
"The idea is to eventually have all freshmen living in the residence halls where trained personnel are on hand 24/7."

A recent study conducted by The Parternship at Drugfree.org shows that teenagers getting ready to enter college aren't all that worried about the effects of binge drinking. In fact, 45 percent of the individuals between grades nine and 12 said that they didn't know why binge drinking was such a big deal.

Around 68 percent of respondents admitted to consuming alcohol, with their first drink at the average age of 14. Participants' explanations for why they drank included "because it is fun" and so that they won't feel left out.

"You're seeing this weakness in this generation of teens' attitudes around drug and alcohol use," said Steve Pasierb, president of The Parternship at Drugfree.org.

"It's not like this generation of kids thinks they're more bulletproof than others, but they really don't see any harm in that heavy drinking."

Source: Medical Daily

Early use of alcohol can draw young people into a host of problems and aggravate existing ones. Each year, approximately 5,000 young people under the age of 21 die as a result of

underage drinking. This includes about 1,900 deaths from motor vehicle crashes, 1,600 as a result of homicides, 300 from suicide, and hundreds from other injuries such as falls, burns, and drownings. Click here to read more about underage drinking and college.