

College Students' Drinking Habits Formed in First Six Weeks of College



College freshmen's drinking habits are often formed during the first six weeks of school, according to an expert from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA).

In the first six weeks, first-semester freshmen often start drinking or increase the amount they drink, says Aaron White, Program Director of NIAAA's College and

Underage Drinking Prevention Research. They may drink because of student expectations and social pressures, he notes. "Students show up with all these expectations about the role that alcohol is going to play in their lives in college, and they just get a little bit nuts with the freedom," he said.

In many cases, college freshmen are living away from their parents for the first time, and they often have easier access to alcohol, even though drinking is illegal for those under 21. However, many new college students already have experience with alcohol by the time they arrive, White said. "Colleges more or less inherit the problem than create it," he said. "But the college environment can nurture (it), certainly."

Students' drinking often tapers off throughout the rest of a student's college years, the Associated Press reports. "You show up (to college) and you start doing what you think you're supposed to be doing, and then find out that there's no way to sustain that without flunking out," White observed.

About four out of five college students drink alcohol, according to NIAAA. About half of college students who drink also consume alcohol through binge drinking. An estimated 1,825 college students between the ages of 18 and 24 die each year from alcohol-related unintentional injuries.

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. To learn more, [please click here](#).