

With over 50,000 students and 16,000 employees, New York University is large, complex, and urban – and also the world's largest private university. The city of New York itself serves as the campus for the University. For these and other reasons, engaging the student body around alcohol use remains an on-going challenge.

Consistent with its strong commitment to the health and safety of its student population, NYU has developed a comprehensive, innovative, university-wide program to address student alcohol use, one of the greatest risks to the health and wellbeing of college students today. Based on data from the Spring 2004 ACHA-NCHA survey NYU's rate of binge drinking was 41%, above both the national reference group rate of 37%, and well above the Healthy Campus 2010 target of 20%.

NYU considers itself to be “a private university in the public service.” Consistent with this vision, the NYU Division of Student Affairs exists to “enhance the quality of life for students both in and outside the classroom.” University alcohol education and risk reduction efforts contribute to these same goals and are essential to maintaining a healthy living and learning environment. Efforts are categorized into the following five sections:

- 1) Orientation programming
- 2) Screening initiatives on campus
- 3) Collaborative intervention programs based in the Student Health Center and in Residential Life and Housing Services
- 4) Media and peer-driven efforts
- 5) Other collaborative efforts across the University community and beyond

This comprehensive, sustained and evidence-based programming includes web-based interactive programming for both freshmen and upperclassmen, a student written and performed theatrical event which discusses risk reduction strategies and community impact of alcohol, primary care screening for alcohol, peer workshops, and the SAFE program (short-term counseling interventions stressing motivational and cognitive-behavioral approaches for both individual and group interventions). Collectively, this alcohol education and risk reduction programming is unique in scope and innovation and proven in its efficacy.

The Alcohol Education and Risk Reduction program was developed to meet several specific goals, which it has now done:

- 1) Increasing the dissemination of information about alcohol and its potential effects on health and well-being
- 2) Reducing the rate of binge drinking on campus
- 3) Minimizing the consequences from binge drinking