

A **Discussion Guide** for
drinkingfacts.ca



drinkingfacts.ca

© 2006 Canadian Public Health Association

Drinkingfacts.ca is a project of the Canadian Public Health Association (www.cpha.ca). Financial assistance was provided by Canada's Drug Strategy, Health Canada*.

December 2006

© Canadian Public Health Association, 2006
Permission granted for non-commercial reproduction only.

Canadian Public Health Association
400-1565 Carling Avenue
Ottawa, ON
K1Z 8R1
Tel: 613-725-3769
Fax: 613-725-9826
Email: drinkingfacts@cpha.ca

* The views expressed herein do not necessarily express the views of Health Canada

A Discussion Guide for drinkingfacts.ca

Drinkingfacts.ca is a website for youth about drinking and alcohol. To develop this website, we held focus groups in which youth aged 14 – 18 told us that they need up-to-date, factual information about drinking. They said they wanted to know more about:

- what alcohol does to you
- alcohol poisoning
- emotional and physical consequences of drinking
- drinking and aggression
- short and long-term effects on the body
- how drinking can affect relationships

Youth talked about what is good and not good about drinking, occasions when they drink to get drunk, the pressure to drink, what they drink and risks they face when drinking. In fact, our focus group participants said they appreciated the opportunity to have an honest and open discussion with their peers about alcohol-related issues.

In conjunction with drinkingfacts.ca, this guide is intended for use by parents, educators and others who work with youth to generate discussion about drinking and alcohol. By talking, listening, sharing information and understanding risks, youth will be better equipped to make decisions that are best for them.

To get started, go to www.drinkingfacts.ca. On the 'home' page, you will see the different content areas of the site that can be discussed. The different areas are:

- Did You Know?
- Q & A
- Quizzes
- Videos
- Alcopedia
- Tell your story

Visit the different areas of the site and review the content. Have youth visit the site before getting together in a discussion group. Youth will acquire knowledge that will enhance the discussion and they will also be able to bring forward their questions and opinions.

Here are some ideas for starting the discussion, based on the different areas of the website:

Did You Know?

- On drinkingfacts.ca 'Did You Know?' facts appear on the following pages:
 - Home
 - Videos

- Q & A
- Quizzes
- Download

These facts are listed in Appendix 1; see **1.1 Did You Know? Facts** according to the website page on which they are found.

- Ask youth to review all of the 'Did You Know?' facts on the site. Using the handout **1.2 Did You Know? Questions for Review**, answer the questions as a group.
- Ask additional questions such as:
 - Are there any facts you didn't already know? If so, which ones?
 - Are there any facts you are surprised about?
 - Which facts are the most memorable?
 - Do any of these facts make you think twice about drinking?

Q & A

- Ask youth to review the Q & A area of the site. The Q & A are listed in Appendix 2; see **2.1 Q & A**. Using the handout **2.2 Q & A Questions for Review**, answer the questions as a group.
- Ask additional questions such as:
 - Are there any Q & A you didn't already know? If so, which ones?
 - Is there anything in particular that you are surprised about?
 - Which Q & A are the most memorable?
 - Do any of the Q & A make you think twice about drinking?

Quizzes

- There are 6 quizzes on the site. Quiz topics include:
 - Drinking facts
 - Drinking in Canada
 - Alcohol's effects
 - Intoxication
 - Drinking and injury
 - Alcohol and aggression
- Encourage teens to take the quizzes online. Or, download them from the 'download' page and hand them out. Discuss the answers as a group.

Videos

- Watch the videos or read the transcripts out loud. The transcripts are in Appendix 3; see **3.1 Video Transcripts**. Use the handout **3.2 Video Questions for Review** to generate discussion.

Alcopedia

- Click on random letters; choose terms and discuss them.

Tell Your Story

- Ask youth to read the stories online and discuss them.
- Ask:
 - Have you or has someone you know had a similar experience? What happened in that situation?
 - Do you have an experience that you want to share?

APPENDIX 1

1.1 DID YOU KNOW? FACTS

1.2 DID YOU KNOW? QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1.1 DID YOU KNOW? FACTS

Home Page

In the United Kingdom, glasses and bottles are the most common weapon of assault.

Your blood alcohol content or BAC is the percent of alcohol in your blood. Your BAC increases when your body absorbs alcohol faster than it can eliminate it.

Alcohol is produced by fermenting, and sometimes distilling, various fruits, vegetables and grains.

When you drink, alcohol spreads quickly and evenly throughout your body fluids and tissues. In pregnant women, the brain of the fetus also absorbs alcohol.

A 1.5 ounce shot of 40% liquor contains the same amount of alcohol as a 355 ml can of beer with 5% alcohol. Both are considered 'standard drinks.'

An average adult can process and eliminate the alcohol in one standard drink every 90 minutes, mostly in urine.

Researchers have found that good parent-teen communication helps teens avoid dangerous or harmful experiences when drinking or using other drugs.

Alcohol is a psychoactive drug. It affects your senses, thoughts, emotions and behaviour.

In a recent study, 120 children between the ages of two and six were asked to choose items from a mini grocery store for an evening with friends. 62% chose alcohol.

A study found that cyclists who drink suffer more head and facial injuries than other cyclists, whose injuries are more often to the hip, leg or foot.

Police breath testing machines (breathalysers) can measure your blood alcohol content (BAC) because your breath has exactly the same percent of alcohol that is in your blood.

A driver with a blood alcohol content of 0.10% is 50 times more likely to be involved in a fatal crash than a driver with no blood alcohol.

Videos Page

Saloons used to serve well-salted free lunches so their customers would get thirsty and buy more drinks. Today, bars offer salty snacks for the same reason.

Two 355 ml coolers contain the same amount of alcohol as three regular strength beers of the same size.

In 2004, Canadians 15 and over drank 7.9 litres of pure alcohol per person. A can of 5% beer and a 1.5 ounce shot of liquor each contain 17.5 ml of pure alcohol.

If mixed with alcohol, some antibiotics can cause nausea, vomiting, and stomach cramps.

Although it may help you fall asleep, alcohol makes your sleep less restful. This is one reason why people feel tired after a night of drinking.

Alcohol has a two-part effect on your body. It starts as a stimulant and becomes a depressant.

In a study of drowning deaths between 1997 and 2001, one in four victims had a blood alcohol content at or above 0.08%.

Sir John A. Macdonald, Canada's first Prime Minister, suffered from alcoholism for most of his adult life.

Recent lab research with fruit flies is helping scientists understand how genes are linked to alcohol addiction in humans.

In a recent national survey, 15% of Canadians over 18 said they had had a serious argument because of someone's drinking.

Alcohol impairs perception and judgment. This makes it harder to interpret other people's words and actions, especially when you don't know them well. This can increase your risk of being a victim of sexual assault.

Your risk of head injury increases as your blood alcohol level increases. A study showed that among trauma patients who had been binge drinking, the most common causes of head injuries were assaults, falls and bicycling accidents.

A Canadian study of snowmobile drinking and driving found that 70% of deaths were a result of either a collision with an object or the vehicle falling through ice.

Quizzes Page

Alcohol causes your body to expel four times the amount of liquid you drink. This is called the 'diuretic effect'.

When you are dehydrated, your organs take water from your brain. This causes your brain to shrink and pull away from the skull. This is one reason hangover headaches are so painful.

In Canada, half of all substance abuse treatment involves alcohol.

Beer is made from fermented grains. Most beers have an alcohol content of 3% to 6%. Some have 10% or more.

Passengers who drink on a boat are more likely to fall overboard or drown than sober passengers. This is true even if the boat operator has not been drinking and the boat is not moving.

The 8th century Chinese poet Li Bai drowned in the Yangtze River after he got drunk and fell out of a boat. It is said that he tried to embrace the reflection of the moon.

Alcohol relaxes your throat muscles. This is why some people snore more when they go to sleep drunk.

In Canada, of the 247 fatally injured pedestrians tested for alcohol in 2001, 37% tested at or above .08, the legal limit for driving.

Research shows that a lot of the harmful things that people experience when they drink happen when a man or woman has 5 or more drinks on one occasion.

Vehicle crashes caused by drunk drivers are not accidents, since they happen because of a driver's conscious decision to drive while impaired.

Around the world, alcohol is linked to more acts of aggression and violence than any other legal or illegal drug.

A recent study found that university students who vomited or passed out after drinking were most worried when these events affected their relationships with others.

Q & A Page

John Bonham, the drummer for Led Zeppelin, died after a night of heavy drinking. He choked on his own vomit.

If you are stressed or anxious, alcohol is absorbed in your stomach and intestines at a slower rate.

Carbonation in drinks like beer speeds up the absorption of alcohol. This gives your body less time to process the alcohol.

In a 2000 survey of students at a major U.S. college, 19% said they had thought about calling for help for a friend who was severely intoxicated. Only 4% actually did.

A study found that parents learned more about their teens' drinking activities from the teens themselves than from other sources.

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome is a result of a woman drinking alcohol during pregnancy. Its characteristics include birth defects and permanent damage to the baby's brain.

There is no known safe level of drinking alcohol for pregnant women. Experts strongly recommend that a woman who is or could be pregnant stop drinking altogether.

In a study involving 695 men and women, alcohol consumption went down by 26% when there was a full moon.

In the 1970s, the legal drinking age in most provinces was lowered from 21 to 18 or 19. Quebec's drinking age was lowered from 20 to 18.

In the 1970s, the legal drinking ages in Saskatchewan and Ontario were raised from 18 to 19.

In December 2002, wild elephants entered a village in northern India looking for food. The animals got drunk on a supply of homemade rice beer and trampled six people to death.

Under the Criminal Code of Canada, people who commit sexual assault are criminally responsible for their actions, even if they are drunk at the time.

Download Page

In 2004, alcohol consumption was highest in Luxembourg and the Czech Republic.

Alcohol triggers the release of dopamine and endorphins into your bloodstream. This is why you feel relaxed when you drink.

In the United Kingdom, alcohol is mentioned in almost one-third of divorce papers filed. This means that one or both partners' drinking habits contributed to the break up.

Yukon and Northwest Territories require warning labels on alcohol sold in stores.

Alcohol can increase the feeling of drowsiness caused by non-prescription allergy drugs.

Drinking lowers your body temperature. You might feel warmer since alcohol increases blood flow through the veins.

The term 'brand name' comes from distillers' practice of branding their company names on wooden barrels of whisky.

Patients in hospital emergency rooms who have been drinking heavily are more likely to suffer from a head injury than other patients.

In Canada, impaired driving is the most common criminal offence.

A Canadian study found that 26% of trauma patients with severe injuries resulting from an ATV crash had been drinking. Most were not wearing a helmet at the time.

One Canadian survey found that 5% of females and 24% of males had their most recent experience of aggression in a bar.

In Canada, the number of collisions involving impaired drivers went down by 60% between 1980 and 2003.

1.2 DID YOU KNOW? QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Home page

1. What is your BAC?
2. How is alcohol produced?
3. What is a standard drink?
4. How long does it take to eliminate one standard drink from your body?
5. A drunk driver is how many more times more likely to be in a fatal crash than a driver who is sober?

Videos page

1. What can happen if you mix alcohol and certain medications?
2. Do you sleep better when you have been drinking?
3. Two 355 ml coolers contain the same amount of alcohol as how many regular strength beers of the same size?
4. What percent of Canadians over 18 said they had a serious argument because of drinking?
5. Among trauma patients who had been binge drinking, what were the most common causes of head injuries?

Quizzes page

1. Drinking alcohol causes your body to experience the 'diuretic effect'. What is happening?
2. Drinking alcohol causes your body to become dehydrated. What do your organs do to compensate?
3. Why do some people snore more when they go to sleep after drinking?
4. Can drunk drivers be held criminally responsible for their actions? Why?
5. More than any other legal or illegal drug, what is alcohol linked to?

Q & A page

1. If you are stressed or anxious, is alcohol absorbed more quickly or more slowly?
2. How does the carbonation in beer affect how you absorb the alcohol?
3. What is Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder?
4. What is the safe level of drinking for a pregnant woman?
5. Under the criminal code of Canada, if a person who is drunk commits a sexual assault, can they be held criminally responsible for their actions?

Download page

1. Why do you feel relaxed when you drink?
2. What can happen if you mix alcohol and non-prescription allergy drugs?
3. Where does the term 'brand name' come from?
4. What is the most common criminal offence in Canada?
5. Patients in hospital emergency rooms who have been drinking heavily are more likely to suffer from what injury?

APPENDIX 2

2.1 Q & A

2.2 Q & A QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

2.1 Q & A

Drinking and Alcohol

1. Why is it important to know the facts about drinking?

Some people say that the best way to learn about drinking is from experience. In other words, try it and find out how much alcohol you can tolerate, what you like about drinking and what you don't.

Sometimes learning from experience isn't a good idea. Yes, you can learn about alcohol by experiencing its effects but this can have negative consequences for you and other people, such as getting drunk and having an argument with a friend or driving under the influence of alcohol.

This website provides factual information so you can learn about alcohol and then make informed decisions. Whether or not you choose to drink, knowing the facts will help you – and people you care about – stay safe. Each person has his or her own reasons for deciding whether or not to drink. It is important to respect the decisions of others.

2. Why do some people drink and others choose not to?

People drink for different reasons. They drink because they enjoy it and it's part of their home or social life. Some people drink to deal with painful experiences. Others choose not to drink. This may be because they don't like the taste or the effects of alcohol or because they have had a problem with alcohol in the past.

3. What is heavy drinking?

Drinking doesn't have to be harmful. But sometimes it is, especially if you drink a lot. Heavy drinking means you drink too much on one occasion or over a long period of time. Long-term heavy drinking is sometimes called 'chronic alcohol abuse' and can lead to liver, brain and nerve damage as well as alcohol addiction.

Short-term heavy drinking is sometimes called 'acute alcohol abuse'. It is also sometimes referred to as 'binge drinking'. It is linked to alcohol poisoning, violent and non-violent injuries and aggression. Research shows that many of the harmful things that happen when people drink heavily occur when a man or a woman has 5 or more drinks on one occasion.

4. What are some of the laws around drinking and buying alcohol in Canada?

In Canada, you must be 19 to drink alcohol in all provinces and territories except in Alberta, Manitoba and Québec, where you must be 18.

Provinces and territories prohibit the sale of alcohol before or after a certain time of day. Also it is illegal:

- to buy alcohol for someone who is under the legal drinking age
- for a restaurant, bar or store to sell alcohol to someone if they are underage or if they are already drunk
- to drink alcohol in a public place without a permit

5. What is a standard drink?

The following are all standard drinks:

- a 355 ml (12 ounce) can of 5% beer
- a 146 ml (5 ounce) glass of 10% to 12% wine
- 44 ml (1.5 ounce) of 40% hard liquor or spirits

It takes about 90 minutes for your body to absorb and eliminate one standard drink. The exact time depends on:

- how much you weigh
 - whether you are male or female
 - the strength of your drinks
 - how old you are
 - your drinking history.

Alcohol and your Body

1. What happens after a person starts drinking?

When you drink, some of the alcohol is absorbed in your stomach. The rest, about 80%, is absorbed in your small intestine. How quickly the alcohol is absorbed depends on the level of the alcohol in the drink and how full your stomach is. A stronger drink, which has more alcohol in it, is absorbed more slowly.

After you start drinking, you will start to feel the physical effects of the alcohol. This is related to the blood alcohol content (BAC). Your BAC goes up when you are drinking alcohol faster than you can eliminate it.

2. How does your body process alcohol?

Once alcohol enters your bloodstream it goes to your organs. Your kidney, lungs and liver start to remove it right away. Your kidneys expel 5% in urine. You exhale another 5% in your breath. This is why a roadside breathalyzer test can be used to measure a person's blood alcohol content (BAC). Your liver breaks down the rest of the alcohol, which then leaves your body in urine.

3. How does alcohol affect your brain?

When alcohol enters your bloodstream, it quickly reaches your brain. As your blood alcohol content (BAC) increases, different parts of your brain are affected, starting with the cerebral cortex. The cerebral cortex is the outer layer of your brain. It is responsible for thought, mood, reasoning and memory.

Alcohol also affects the cerebellum, the area of the brain that is responsible for movement and balance. This is why people walk off-balance or stagger when they are drunk.

Finally, alcohol affects the medulla. This controls automatic brain functions such as breathing and body temperature. This is why a person who is severely intoxicated often has slow or irregular breathing.

4. Why are women usually more affected by alcohol than men?

On average, a male body is about 66% water. A female body is about 55% water. This means the female body has 11% less water for alcohol to dissolve into. When a man and a woman with similar weight and body type drink the same amount of alcohol, the woman will end up with a higher blood alcohol content (BAC).

Many women are more sensitive to alcohol just before they get their period. Men have more of a special stomach acid that breaks down alcohol called ADH (acetaldehyde dehydrogenase).

5. Why is it not a good idea to mix alcohol and other drugs?

Mixing drugs is dangerous and can be fatal. Since alcohol is a depressant, mixing it with other depressant drugs slows down your central nervous system. This can result in confusion, injury, dehydration, vomiting, reduced breathing and even coma and death.

Using alcohol and stimulant drugs (e.g., caffeine, cocaine, amphetamines) together can make you think you are sober, but you're not. You are still impaired and will be until the alcohol leaves your system.

Another example is the combination of marijuana and alcohol. Using marijuana and alcohol together is more dangerous than using each drug separately. As the driver of a vehicle, if you mix even small amounts of marijuana and alcohol, you are putting yourself and your passengers at risk.

6. Will alcohol help raise your body temperature when you are cold?

No, it will do the opposite. When alcohol reaches your bloodstream, it causes your small blood vessels to expand. This increases the flow of blood in your body. Although you may feel warm, your body temperature actually drops. This is why it is not a good idea to drink alcohol to "warm up" when you are exposed to cold air or water.

Safety

1. Why is it important to eat before or while drinking?

When you drink, some of the alcohol is absorbed in your stomach. The rest is absorbed mainly by your small intestines. If you have no solid food in your stomach, the alcohol will pass more easily and quickly into your bloodstream. When you have an empty stomach, all of the alcohol in one standard drink will be in your bloodstream after 30 minutes.

If your stomach is full, the same amount of alcohol will take as long as 90 minutes to get fully into your bloodstream. When you have a full stomach, this gives your brain and other organs more time to process the alcohol.

2. Will caffeine or an energy drink sober you up?

Caffeine and other substances found in energy drinks won't reduce the amount of alcohol in your body or the time it takes you to process it. The only thing you can do to sober up is give your body the time it needs to eliminate the alcohol. On average, that means about 90 minutes for each standard drink you had.

3. Why do some people choke on their vomit when they pass out drunk?

Alcohol irritates the walls of your stomach. That's why you often vomit when you drink heavily. When your body has a certain blood alcohol content (BAC), the alcohol slows down your gag reflex to the point where it no longer works properly. Instead of being ejected out of your mouth, the vomit stays in your throat, causing you to choke.

4. What is the recovery position?

The recovery position is the name of the position used to prevent people from choking on their own vomit. To put someone in the recovery position you:

- raise the person's arm above their head
- roll them on their side towards you
- tilt their head to make sure their airway is open
- tuck the nearest hand under their cheek to maintain the position of the head

Keep an eye on them, look for signs of alcohol poisoning and call for help.

5. What happens if you pass out from alcohol poisoning?

If you fall asleep or pass out, your body continues to absorb the alcohol you drank up to that point. You might need to have your stomach pumped in the hospital. This involves inserting tubes and valves down your esophagus into your stomach. A syringe is used to draw out your stomach's contents and then your stomach is flushed with a saline solution to make sure that nothing is left.

You could also be given a charcoal solution that is piped directly into your stomach. The charcoal neutralizes the alcohol and prevents it from entering the bloodstream.

6. Does alcohol reduce your level of anxiety?

Although a small amount of alcohol may relieve anxiety in the short-term, over time alcohol will actually increase your anxiety level. Using alcohol to get relief from anxiety is one reason people become dependent on alcohol.

7. How does alcohol tolerance work?

If you are a regular heavy drinker, your body will eventually develop a tolerance for the effects of alcohol. Tolerance develops because your liver is able to process alcohol more quickly and you also learn to compensate for the effects of alcohol in your body. Tolerance is a sign of potential alcohol dependency and addiction.

8. How does long-term heavy alcohol use affect the liver?

Your liver is prone to the effects of alcohol. It breaks down alcohol and other toxins into less harmful substances and removes them from your body. Drinking heavily over a long period of time can lead to inflammation of the liver, or 'alcoholic hepatitis'. Effects include nausea, vomiting, fever, loss of appetite, abdominal pain and yellowing of the skin.

70% of people with alcoholic hepatitis develop cirrhosis of the liver. This means that liver tissue is replaced by permanent scar tissue. Eventually the liver stops working.

Alcohol and Aggression

1. Does alcohol cause aggression and violence?

Alcohol is often associated with violent behaviour. Research shows that alcohol does not cause a person to be violent but it does increase the likelihood that a person, especially a man, will turn to violence in certain situations. Sometimes people use alcohol as a way of excusing behaviour they know is wrong. Alcohol is never an excuse for aggression.

2. How does alcohol affect your judgment?

Alcohol affects your judgment because it affects your cerebral cortex. The cerebral cortex is the outer layer of your brain responsible for thought and consciousness. When you drink, the alcohol makes it harder to understand and to communicate with other people. It also slows down or 'depresses' your brain functions that help you resolve conflicts peacefully.

3. What is 'alcohol myopia'?

The word 'myopia' means being unable to see things when they are far away as clearly as when they are close. Researchers use the phrase 'alcohol myopia' to describe why people tend to focus on what's happening around them 'in the moment' without thinking about the potential consequences of their actions. This helps to explain why people sometimes regret something they said or did when they were drunk.

4. How is drinking connected to sexual assault?

Alcohol is often a contributing factor in sexual assault, especially if the victim and attacker don't know each other well. Drinking makes some people less reserved and increases the chance they will be aggressive. An attacker may even buy a victim drinks to make them an easier target.

Some people believe that they are not accountable for their actions when they're drunk. This is wrong. In fact, a person who gets drunk and sexually assaults someone is still legally responsible for their actions. In Canada, they can be charged, tried and convicted of sexual assault.

5. In the context of sex, what is 'consent' and why is it important?

People often communicate in ways that are not obvious or direct. This is especially true when it comes to dating and sex. The Criminal Code of Canada states that a person has to freely and knowingly consent to any sexual activity before another person can make a move. If you are with someone and you are not sure if they want to engage in a sexual act, you should wait. This is especially important when you have been drinking because your ability to understand someone's consent will be reduced. You may also be unclear about your own consent to sexual activity when you have been drinking.

6. If a person gets drunk and is sexually assaulted, can they be blamed for their attacker's actions?

Alcohol affects your ability to notice danger signs and this can put you at risk for sexual assault. If you are sexually assaulted, it is important to know that that you are not responsible for 'causing' your attacker to assault you.

2.2 Q & A QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Why is it important to know the facts about drinking?
2. What are some of the laws around drinking and buying alcohol?
3. What happens in your body when you drink?
4. How does alcohol affect your brain?
5. Why does alcohol affect women more than men?
6. What can happen if you mix alcohol and other drugs?
7. Why is it better to drink when you have a full stomach?
8. How do you put someone in the recovery position?
9. What organs can be affected by too much drinking?
10. How is drinking linked to sexual assault?

APPENDIX 3

1.1 VIDEO TRANSCRIPTS

1.2 VIDEO QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

3.1 VIDEO TRANSCRIPTS

Julie's Story

It was really, really hurtful. And the thing is, I can't take it back.

It was summertime, we're hanging out and then, you know, people get bored, so they start playing drinking games, which, OK, that sounds like a fun idea, so you kinda wanna, like, I don't know, keep up or whatever, like you're playing games, and we were playing 'kings'; it's a card game, like every different card you pull, there's a different action that you have to do or that kind of thing, right?. Certain cards mean chug this, and you can't stop until the other person stops chugging; it's called 'waterfall'. Anyways, the guy in front of me does it. Girls, it takes you way less to get drunk and I don't think a lot of the times that girls think about that, like, you know, like, guys get really drunk too, but you might be bombed off three or four beers, and he's had five or six, and he's not as drunk as you, you know, cause you're smaller. So we're chugging and this and that; anyways, we're there for a while and after a couple of hours, I'm drunk.

Whatever time I got home, way too late, broke curfew. My mom was probably worried sick. Eight o'clock in the morning I had to work, and came home and went to bed, and there was no way I was getting up.

So when I wake up at, like, eleven o'clock, three hours after my shift, I hadn't called in, nothing. I'm freaking out. I'm the one who's supposed to open and answer the phones and everything. Customers are there. There's no one there to greet them. So when I finally drag my ass in there, like, I was crying 'cause I was, like, oh my God, I'm going to get my ass fired, and that's what actually ended up happening.

That was kind of, like, an eye opening experience for me I guess you could say, because I was, like, whoa, when you're sober, it's a lot easier to see how much of a retard someone's acting like. I swore at her and I called her, like, mean names. She remembers it way better than I do. My mom was a wreck. It took quite a while for her to trust me as easily as she did before. It was really, really hurtful. And the thing is, I can't take it back.

Claire's Story

Being drunk does not mean that you deserve to be violated.

I was seventeen years old. My best friend was dating a guy who lived in a boys' residence. So we had gone there one night and I had been introduced to alcohol. I ended up hooking up with one of the guys at the residences. I really thought this guy was fabulous. I thought that he was, you know, into me, all this stuff.

So I got myself to the point of being drunk. So he escorted me down the hallway, down the stairs into a basement. He took me to a room that was right in between the computer lab and the library, so I knew that there was going to be nobody on either side.

So at this point I'm starting to feel, a bit like, okay, this guy wants to do something here. He closes the door behind him. At this point the alcohol is really reacting with me, because it's had a bit of time to set in and I start feeling drowsy, so, I also start to feel a bit uncomfortable because he sat me on a table and then proceeded to spread my legs out and get in between my legs, and he kissed me. So at this point I'm thinking okay 'I'm not into you' and I didn't really want to be kissed. I'm thinking okay I've had enough. So I said 'listen, I want to go back upstairs'. But instead of taking me upstairs, he takes me and he lies me down on the floor. I'm drunk and I don't remember exactly what I said but I know it was something to the effect of, you know, 'I'm really tired, I don't feel well'. And then he said "uh, have you ever given a blow job before"? I said 'no, no, no, I'm too drunk'. I don't want to do that tonight. The next thing I remember is that I started to pass out, and I started to feel him go for my pants.

So at this point I suddenly had a kick of energy, got up and started to dart for the door and he came right behind me and tried to prevent me from leaving. I ran to the other end of the basement and up the stairs and started sobbing. I was not making any sense. I was inconsolable, you know, I was really feeling quite stupid and quite violated. I just could not believe that this had happened to me. I knew the signs. The warning bells didn't go off in my head, probably a big factor in him not hearing me say no. Alcohol played a huge role for both of us. Being drunk does not mean that you deserve to be violated.

Eric's Story

I'd fight my friends and my family became scared of me.

Well I started drinking when I was thirteen. I didn't drink a lot. By the age of 15, I was drinking pretty much every weekend. By the time I turned 18, I was drinking by myself and last year I was drinking all day. I'd wake up in the morning and start drinking.

At first, I was drinking, it was just fun and games, you know, I was happy and in a good mood all the time. It was always sort of like an adventure for us, but then it started being, like, a routine. We'd drink all the time for no particular reason, it became a habit.

Everything started going wrong. I started feeling angry after a while, feeling rage and being paranoid mostly all the time. I felt it was, like, me against the world, you know, everybody was against me. I was always right, everybody else was wrong. I'd fight my friends and my family became scared of me.

When I drank I'd fight some guy that was twice my size. I'd hit people on the head with bottles, just waiting for a fight. This one time I was sitting inside a house, and these two guys walk in and they acted like they owned the place. I had my smokes on the table, and one of them took one of my smokes and didn't ask or anything, just took it. I knew I was going to do something, like I was gonna feel violent. I left, and half an hour later I came back, and I had brought a knife with me. I hit him over the head a couple of times with the wrong end, you know, I didn't want to kill him, and I bent my knife. I felt good at the time that I did it, but after that when I woke up the next day and I wasn't feeling the alcohol no more, I said, "Oh, my god what did I do?", you know, and that's when it hits you.

I haven't drank in two months and three weeks and two days from now, and I feel much better about myself. When I threw alcohol in the mix everything spun out of control.

3.2 VIDEO QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Video 1: Julie

This video focuses on how drinking can have a negative effect on your relationships, such as with your family or employer.

Ask:

1. Have you ever thought about whether alcohol affects women and men differently? Have you noticed differences? If so, what were they?
2. How can alcohol affect on your relationships? Your job?
3. What do you think of drinking games?
4. Julie says, "I can't take it back". Have you or someone you know ever said or done things while drinking alcohol that you/they have regretted?

Video 2: Claire

This video focuses on alcohol and aggression.

Ask:

1. When you are drinking, are you at a greater risk of being sexually assaulted?
2. Alcohol can affect your judgment. Have you have been a situation where you would have acted differently if you were sober?
3. Alcohol often plays a part in sexual assaults. Is a person who is drunk and sexually assaults someone still legally responsible for their actions?
4. Claire says, "Being drunk doesn't mean that you deserve to be violated". What do you think of this statement?

Video 3: Eric

This video focuses on alcohol and violence.

Ask:

1. What is a reasonable age for someone to start drinking?
2. How would you describe someone who has a problem with alcohol?
3. Alcohol doesn't cause someone to be violent but it does increase the chance that a person, especially a man, will turn to violence in certain situations. If you find yourself in an aggressive situation, what is the best way to react?
4. If you think you have a problem with alcohol, it is important to get help. What can you do if you need help?