

Saint Vincent College Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention and Education Efforts

1. A campus taskforce finalized a Five-Year AOD Strategic Plan in spring 2017, and implementation is underway. Many facets of the strategic plan involve the efforts detailed below.
2. The College offers MyStudentBody.com to all incoming freshmen in the summer before and during the fall. It is both a prevention course on alcohol, drugs and sexual violence as well as a survey. From 2010 to 2016, the College offered a similar course, AlcoholEdu.
3. Each summer at Academic Orientation, a session is held with the incoming students and their families detailing policies and expectations related to alcohol and other drugs, and encouraging the families to continue the discussions.
4. During Welcome Weekend, we build upon this effort with speakers and residence hall floor discussions, and throughout the year efforts continue to be focused toward all students, including emails each semester sharing policies and support, Alcohol Awareness Month, Healthy Campus Fairs, programming, posters and other educational messaging. Many offices on campus offer support and guidance to students struggling in this area, and programs are offered throughout the year through departments such as Residence Life, the Wellness Center, and Campus Ministry.
5. The Wellness Center shares information about AOD with all varsity coaches at the start of each year.
6. Outreach to off-campus students includes outreach from Student Affairs, reminding students of the College's policies and expectations for off-campus living, and discussing alcohol and other drugs.
7. A Campus Community Coalition was founded in 2008 by the College, bringing together representatives of Saint Vincent and the surrounding Latrobe and Unity Township communities for discussion about any issues of mutual interest which may arise, and to encourage Saint Vincent students to recognize and enjoy their membership in the local community. Members contact one another with concerns or suggestions, and the group meets in person yearly.
8. The Dean of Students communicates with landlords and local law enforcement and follows-up with concerns regarding off-campus issues.
9. Campus Ministry and Student Affairs provide outreach to off-campus students through programming in the Citrone Family Community Center.
10. The Dean of Students is a member of the Westmoreland County Drug Overdose Task Force and the Wellness Director is a member of the Westmoreland County Campus Partnership, where AOD issues are addressed and discussed.
11. Residence Life staff is trained in this area to better support and guide campus residents.
12. We have local recovery support through Gateway Rehabilitation (outpatient), on-campus AA groups and local NA groups.
13. We have many alternative activities focused on creating a fun and relaxing college environment (without the use of alcohol and drugs).
14. Additional support for programming is received from Prevention Projects.
15. Our Student Conduct Office refers students for counseling consultations regarding alcohol and drug use.
16. Counseling and Advocacy is provided on campus through the Wellness Center, as detailed on the next page.
17. Career Center provides brochures about how alcohol and other drug use can impact careers.
18. These efforts all ensure our compliance with the Drug Free Schools and Campuses Act.

How Drugs and Alcohol Can Affect Students:

Some students may be using drugs or alcohol to try and relieve some of the stress and pressure of college life. These students may not realize that drugs and alcohol will not actually relieve stress in the long run. Drugs and alcohol don't solve problems; they tend to create problems or making coping with them more difficult. Drugs and alcohol can interfere with the student's physical and mental ability. The student can be negatively affected by the use or overuse of drugs and alcohol. Substance use can have lasting effects on the brain and body. Judgment and physical abilities can be impaired, causing the student to struggle in academics, athletic performance, relationships and responsible decision-making.

Be Safe: If you do choose to drink, be responsible

If you make the choice to drink, the best way to stay safe is to drink legally and in moderation. The following tips are things you can do to stay safer if you decide to consume alcohol:

- Eat food before going out. Continue to snack throughout the night.
- Keep track of your drinks; know your limits and stick to them!
- Sip your drinks, rather than chugging them.
- Pace yourself to one serving per hour.
- Alternate between alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages.
- Keep hydrated; drink water throughout the night.
- Avoid drinking games and avoid shots; they can lead to dangerous levels of intoxication.
- Keep an eye on your drink — do not leave it unattended.
- Give yourself time. The only thing that will sober you up is time —not a cold shower or coffee.

Recognizing Alcohol/Drug Problems:

Assessing a potential substance abuse problem can be difficult. Some possible signs include drastic change in behavior or appearance, frequent accidents and minor injuries, reports from other students, change in interest or energy level during practice, missing practice or workouts, or deteriorating performance.

There is help available at the Wellness Center:

Confidential counseling is available on campus. The Wellness Center does not disclose information about students unless the student has given written authorization. The only exception is in situations involving risk of imminent harm to the student or specifically identified others. The Wellness Center will discuss confidentiality with each student in more depth. The appointment is an opportunity for them to discuss their use of drugs or alcohol and get recommendations for making healthy changes in a non-confrontational setting.

Please contact the Wellness Center at 724-805-2115 if you have questions or would like to consult with a counselor.

There are many services available for counseling, treatment or rehabilitation for students. Students concerned about their own or another person's alcohol or other drug use are encouraged to contact the College's Wellness Center in Carey Center for confidential advice and referral.

Local Drug and alcohol treatment is available through:

1. Gateway Outpatient Treatment 724-853-7300
2. Comprehensive Substance Abuse Services of SW PA 724-832-5880
3. Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) 724-836-1404
4. Greater Pittsburgh Al-Anon 800-628-8920
5. SPHS Behavioral Health 724-532-1700
6. Strive Health of Greensburg 412-513-9891
7. SpiritLife Recovery Center in Penn Run 724-465-2165

Further information on treatment programs and support groups is available from the Wellness Center and the Prevention Projects Program. Conscientious efforts to seek help for a drug or alcohol abuse problem will not jeopardize any student's record.

Reporting Alcohol and Drug Related\Other Emergencies

Students are to seek help for their peers' personal welfare in drug or alcohol or other emergencies. The Pennsylvania Legislature recently passed a law that gives an underage person a defense to prosecution for the summary offense of consumption or possession of alcohol if, 1) the person calls 911 or alerts campus safety, police or emergency services in the good faith belief that another individual needs immediate medical help to prevent death or serious injury; 2) they reasonably believe that they are the first person to make that emergency call; 3) they give their own name in making the call; 4) they stay with the person in need of medical attention until the help arrives; and, 5) the only way law enforcement becomes aware of their own possession or consumption of alcohol is because of their conduct in 1 – 4 above.

Similarly, under Act 139, limited immunity from charge and prosecution for certain drug offenses is provided if an individual calls 911 in the event of an overdose. To be protected under the law, individuals who report an overdose must give their names, stay with the person who overdosed until help arrives, and cooperate with law enforcement personnel. Drug offenses that are covered under this law are those related to possession of drug paraphernalia and small amounts of drugs. Individuals in possession of a quantity of drugs that constitutes as "intent to sell" are not protected under the Good Samaritan statute. The person who overdosed is also protected under the law where the person who made the call is protected.

The conduct of a student meeting the criteria of this statute will also be considered a mitigating factor in any disciplinary proceedings Saint Vincent conducts that arise out of the incident.

How to spot an overdose (call 724-805-2911 on campus or 911 off campus)

Watch for signs of:

- Confusion
- Loss of coordination
- Vomiting
- Seizures

- Irregular breathing (a gap of more than 10 seconds between breaths)
- Slow breathing (less than eight breaths per minute)
- Pale or blue-tinged skin
- Low body temperature
- Unconsciousness or passed out

How to respond

- Check for danger
- Call 724-805-2911 on campus or 911 off campus and stay on the line
- Stay with the person
- Keep the person warm
- If the person is unconscious, move them to their side, rest their head on their arm and tilt their head up to maintain airway; check that they are breathing (don't leave them on their back)
- If they are awake, try to keep them in a sitting position and awake
- Give CPR if they stop breathing before an ambulance arrives