

Understanding Alcohol, Preventative Risks and Safe Practice: A Recovery Resource Submitted By: KTHC Behavioral Health's Grant Staff

Alcohol use has come to be a part of celebrations and social gatherings. Think for a moment pizza or a hot summer day, alcohol use for others can be connected with enjoying certain types of food or activities. When thinking about alcohol in these ways, it seems harmless, but drinking can quickly become too much if not moderated. Our staff want you to know the whole story.

What is too much alcohol use? Let us look at what is considered as a single drink; 1 bottle of beer is 12 oz., 1 glass of wine is 5 oz., 1 shot of distilled spirits (examples: gin, rum, vodka, whiskey) is 1.5 oz. Heavy drinking for women is listed as 8 or more drinks per week and for men, 15 or more drinks per week. Binge drinking is defined as 4 or more drinks consumed at one setting. Drinking in moderation is, for women, 1 drink a day and for men, 2 drinks a day.

What harm can come from drinking? Persons under the age of 21 and pregnant women fall in the category of those persons who shouldn't drink at all. Drinking before 21 has been shown to increase the risk for addiction later in life and also increase the risk for serious harm or even in some cases, death. Drinking while pregnant can increase the risk of developmental problems for the baby and problems with labor for the mother. Persons being treated for health problems are at risk for serious or fatal interactions if mixing alcohol with medications and increasing problems associated with things like diabetes, high cholesterol, or heart disease. Mental health problems can also be effected by drinking in excess. Once again medication interactions with alcohol can increase risk for side effects and can be overall dangerous. Drinking in excess with diagnosed mental health issues can also increase the risk for major depression and in some cases, even suicide.

Why is alcohol use education so important to our staff? Research shows that alcoholism significantly effects Indigenous persons and families at higher death rates than any other nationality in the United States at a rate of 510%. Alcohol and other drug use can also run in families. Children of alcoholic parents are four times more likely to become adult alcoholics. Alcohol addiction can cause the brain to form physical and emotional connections between the substance and the user's sense of pleasure. These connections can make it challenging for those addicted to alcohol to resist the urge to drink. In the science of recovery, it has been shown that the brain will need at least one year to "reset" itself from those connections. This can make the recovery process seem even more difficult.

Our staff want you to know there is hope and help for recovery from addiction. With a trained department that specialize in substance use disorders to assist in recovery, we can provide a culturally significant, holistic treatment approach that promotes the healing process for individuals and families struggling with addiction and addiction related behaviors. Our team can help start you, your family, or someone you know on the path to recovery. Recovery can be a lifelong road, but it does not have to be traveled alone. The Kickapoo Behavioral Health team along with the following grants; State Youth Treatment Implementation Grant, The Opioid Response Grant, Native Connections, and the Methamphetamine and Suicide Prevention Initiative Grant, are here to help.

If you or someone you know needs assistance with addiction recovery and addiction related behaviors, call us at 405.964.2618. Our outstanding administrative staff will be able to get you where you need to be.

References

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