

# Have A Plan

## CONVERSATION STARTER

Like many other substances, alcohol can inhibit a person's physical and mental abilities, which means negative consequences can result from choices you make under the influence of alcohol. In this conversation starter, questions to ask and points to make verbatim are in **bold**. Notes for facilitators are in *italics*.

### **Why is it important to have a plan when drinking?**

- You are taking steps to increase your safety in situations involving alcohol.
- Planning reduces the risk of experiencing the negative effects of high-risk drinking.
- Having a plan may reduce the amount of alcohol you consume.

## KNOW THE STRENGTH, AMOUNT AND TIME

Studies have shown drinks college students pour are typically stronger than standard drinks. When you drink these beverages, you are consuming more alcohol than you think, and your BAC rises quickly.

### **Can you name factors that affect how quickly your body absorbs alcohol?**

- The higher the concentration of alcohol in the beverage (ABV = Alcohol By Volume), the faster it is absorbed into your bloodstream.
  - Shots (40% ABV) are absorbed more quickly than hard seltzer (5% ABV).
  - Wine (12% ABV) is absorbed more quickly than beer (5% ABV).
- The faster you drink, the faster your body absorbs the alcohol.
- The more carbonated a drink is, the faster your body absorbs the alcohol.
- Any amount of food in your stomach can slow absorption.

### **When drinking, how does length of time factor into intoxication level?**

- Blood alcohol content (BAC) is the legal measurement of the amount of alcohol in a person's bloodstream.
- Your BAC drops at a steady rate of 0.016% per hour\*.
- Generally, the human body fully processes the alcohol in one standard drink in 1 hour\*. When you drink quickly, the effect of each drink accumulates, causing your BAC to rise exponentially.
- Depending on various intoxication rate factors, your BAC level can be different each time you drink.

*\*These rates apply when you are drinking measured drinks. The above figures will not be accurate when you are drinking unmeasured drinks.*

## TIPS FOR CREATING A PLAN

### What can you do to make drinking a fun and safe experience?

- Set your drinking limit before you start drinking.
- Keep track of how much you drink.
- Space out your drinks.
- Only drink mixed drinks made by a bartender.
- Do not take shots.
- Alternate alcoholic drinks with nonalcoholic beverages.
- Drink for quality, not quantity.
- Avoid drinking games.
- Learn drink refusal skills.
- Find other things to do.
- Don't accept a drink if you don't know what is in it.

Any steps you take toward reducing risk are steps in the right direction.

**Remember:** *If you are under 21 years old, it is illegal to drink. If you are of legal age and do make the choice to drink, developing a personal plan to do so in a less risky way is important. Help each other create these plans to keep everyone safe.*

BE SAFE. BE RESPONSIBLE. BE LEGAL.

