



Workshop: Drugs, Alcohol, and Masculinity

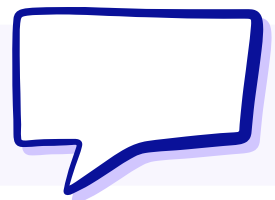
I SAMPLE LEARNING OBJECTIVES



LEARNERS WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Describe how expectations around manhood impact alcohol and drug use.
- Recognize when their substance use behaviors are being influenced by what they and others perceive as “cool,” socially required, and “manly.”
- Recognize when their own substance use behaviors are harmful both to themselves and others, including in sexual relationships.

II SAMPLE INTRODUCTION



“You might remember trainings or events on drug and alcohol campus orientation or in high school with programs like D.A.R.E. Today’s conversation on drugs and alcohol is going to be a little bit different because we’re going to talk about what being men has to do with the topic: For example, what trends and social dynamics amongst men impact things like drinking? This conversation isn’t to shame or blame, but rather to explore and understand.”



III SAMPLE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



- What messages do men get from movies, TV, music, and social media about what's normal for men around alcohol and drug usage? What are some examples?
- What is normal in your family around drinking or using drugs? Particularly male family members?
- Have you ever felt “egged on” or received praise for being able to drink a lot? How did that make you feel?
- Have you felt expectations from other guys to drink alcohol or do drugs? For example, drinking being necessary to feel socially connected or to have credibility?
- Do you ever feel like you need to drink or consume drugs when you're sad or upset to cope with emotions/pain? Can you share more about why?
- What might be some healthier ways to cope and process emotions? How can men support each other?
- When do you draw the line between when using alcohol and drugs is healthy versus unhealthy?



IV SAMPLE TALKING POINTS



- Today's conversation is not meant to single men out on the topic of drug and alcohol use, but rather to discuss more the role that gender and being a man can have on your relationship with drinking and drugs. Data shows that...
 - Men have higher rates of binge drinking, alcohol abuse, and drug use in most age groups.
 - Men are more likely to need emergency room care due to an overdose.

[[National Institute on Drug Abuse](#), 2020]
- Guys often feel pressure to drink a lot around other guys especially to prove themselves or feel respected. I understand that. Our culture often gives praise to those who drink the most.
- One study found that 68% of male college students equated being able to “handle” consuming dangerous amounts of alcohol as part of what it means to act in a characteristically ‘masculine’ way ([source](#)).
- Even though we know that drinking dangerous amounts of alcohol can hurt us, we still do it (and do it more than women). Today isn't about saying “don't drink.” Rather, we want to ask, “Why is that?”
- Movies and TV shows like Superbad Bad, Project X, Euphoria, Shameless can show the effects drugs and alcohol can have on those around you, but they can also “normalize” their use and overuse.



IV SAMPLE TALKING POINTS (CONT.)



- If you have family members– particularly men–that struggle with alcoholism or addiction, this can also impact how you might see alcohol and drugs as part and parcel of being a man or as a normal part of life.
- As men, you may feel like you always need to be self-reliant and that or leaning on others for support are considered weak. We understand that it can feel good to numb the pain with drinking or drugs.
- Excessive drinking or drugs can make us feel more alone or be less available to our loved ones. Let's all check in with ourselves, how we feel, and make as thoughtful choices for our wellbeing as possible.
- Together, we can work to support each other to deal with what's really going on. Needing to talk about being sad, angry, or anxious doesn't make us any less strong or capable.
- There are resources available on campus to support such as _____.
[Share campus resources]



V SAMPLE ACTIVITIES



FOUR CORNERS: DRINKING AMONG MEN

Label four corners of a room: Strongly Agree; Agree; Disagree; and Strongly Disagree. Read prompts one at a time, asking participants to move to the corner (or side) they align with. Discuss why participants chose their corner, then continue to the next prompts. Emphasize key talking points related to gender expectations, healthy and unhealthy drinking habits, emotional awareness, and support.

Sample Prompts:

- I often feel pressure to drink from friends.
- I have been called names when I declined a drink or offer of a hit of something.
- If a guy doesn't want to drink, it means he's not manly enough.
- I often do or say things when I'm drunk or high that I wouldn't say sober.
- I often regret the things I do when I'm drunk or high the next day.



MEDIA ANALYSIS: ALCOHOL ADVERTISING AND MASCULINITY

Play an advertisement or other video with themes on manhood. Discuss the themes as a group.

Sample Videos:

- [Miller Lite - MAN UP \(Superbowl\)](#)
- [Miller Lite - MAN UP \(2010\)](#)
- [Dos Equis - "Bromance"](#)

Sample Discussion Questions:

- What general messages do these ads send to the consumer? To men? To women?
- What do you consider to be a "masculine" drink? What about a "feminine" one? Where do you think these ideas came from?
- Do you think advertising has as much impact on how masculinity and alcohol are linked today? If not, what might be impacting it more?



VI WORKSHOP RESOURCE LIBRARY



- **Curriculum:** Gender Messages in Alcohol Advertising - Media Smarts
- **Video:** Jordan Poyer Opens Up About His Battle with Alcoholism - The Players' Tribune
- **Video:** Breaking the Silence: Darren McFadden Opens Up About His Battle with Alcohol and Mental Health - 4th and 5
- **Video:** Former Warrior Chris Mullin shares experience overcoming alcohol abuse | HEADSTRONG - NBC Sports BA
- **Article:** Excessive Alcohol Use is a Risk to Men's Health - CDC
- **Article:** How toxic masculinity is linked to excessive drinking - Green Hill Recovery
- **Article:** Masculinity, Trauma, and Addiction: Breaking the Cycle of Toxic Masculinity to Get Men the Help They Need - St. Joseph's Institute
- **Research:** Gender and Intoxication: From Masculinity to Intersectionality - Geoffrey Hunt and Tamar Antin
- **Research:** Alcohol use by Athletes: Hierarchy, status, and Reciprocity - Harris, Jones, and Brown