What is safe partying and why do we think this is useful to students?

We recognize that part of the college experience is exploring new social situations and meeting new people in a variety of ways. This sheet comes with the recognition that many students, although certainly not all, like to go out to bars, parties, or other locations where they may be drinking and drug use. This sheet is intended to provide students with methods to decrease their risk while still having fun. Although the Gender Equity Resource Center and the University do not endorse or encourage alcohol or drug consumption, this sheet’s main focus is the safety and well being of the students, not moralistic mandates. So with that in mind, read on for some tips on how to party and have fun while maintaining your and others’ safety.

Alcohol

- Drink water while you’re drinking and afterwards, and also eat before drinking—it will help keep you from feeling nauseated and help to prevent a hangover.
- Whether you’re at a bar or a party, always watch your drink being poured to make sure that you know what is being put in it.
- Never let your drink out of your sight—don’t leave it alone and don’t accept drinks from people you don’t know or drinks you haven’t seen poured. Get a new drink rather than drink from one you’re not sure about.
- Maintain a buddy system in which you or one of your friends stays sober to help people if necessary.
- Watch how much and what you drink—not all types of drinks have the same amount of alcohol and will get you drunk much faster than others. Know and stick to your limits.
- NEVER DRINK AND DRIVE!!! Assign a designated driver beforehand.
- If someone has passed out, has slow breathing, or has cold or bluish skin, they probably have alcohol poisoning and are in danger of dying. Call 911 immediately. While waiting for the ambulance, prop the person on their side, which will keep them from choking if they vomit.
- Before you start drinking, know your sexual and relationship boundaries, communicate them clearly, and stick to them.
- Respect other people’s boundaries—remember that having sex with someone when one or more of you is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and is thus unable to give consent, is defined by law as rape. The best way to avoid this is to educate yourself about rape and sexual assault laws both in the state and on campus. See the resources below for info (also see our Rape and Sexual Assault Info Sheet).

Dating/Sexuality

- Before engaging in sexual activity or starting a relationship, figure out your sexual and relationship boundaries—know what you want, what you don’t want, and how to communicate these things to other people.
- Educate yourself about sexuality, safe sex, contraception, STDs, pregnancy, relationships, etc. (Note: if you are taking oral contraceptives and throwing up from alcohol or anything else, your birth control is coming up along with everything else—therefore you are rendering it non-effective and should use another form of birth control if you plan on having sex).
- If you are planing on or interested in hooking up with anyone, always bring safer sex supplies, such as condoms, dental dams, latex gloves, and lube.
• Get tested for HIV every 6 months and other STDs every year if you are sexually active.
• Never take someone’s word about when they were last tested for STDs (especially if you just met them)—use safer sex supplies anyway.
• When going out with someone new, go to a public place and let a friend know where you are going.
• Be extremely careful with people you don’t know—be careful about going home with strangers and have a plan if something were to go wrong (ie: carry a cell phone and money for a cab so you always have a way home, take self defense classes and know how to get away from someone, etc.).
• If you’re going to hook up with someone, talk about what each of you want out of the situation to avoid unnecessary broken hearts or other bad outcomes.
• If you call 911 from a cell phone (or an emergency key 9 on some), you will get the California Highway Patrol in Sacramento. If this is far away from where you spend most of your time, save the local police department’s number into your phone and set this number as a one-touch dialing number. This way you can get immediate help in an emergency rather than waiting to be patched through by Sacramento. However, if you call 911 or hit the emergency button from a campus phone, it will connect directly to the UCPD.

Drugs
• Always know what you’re taking and be careful not to mix substances.
• Educate yourself about drug laws.
• Maintain a buddy system in which at least one of you or your friends stay sober to look out for the rest. This person should also be the designated driver (remember, driving under the influence of drugs is just as dangerous and illegal as driving drunk).
• Drink water often—it can help prevent dehydration, which can be a dangerous side effect of some drugs.
• Go easy—don’t take too much or too often. The idea is to enjoy yourself, not to get sick or die.
• If someone appears to have overdosed or you’re not sure, call 911 immediately. Save whatever they took to give to medical professionals (this can help them know how to help the person).

Resources:

University Health Services (UHS)
510/642-2000
2222 Bancroft Way
http://uhs.berkeley.edu

UC Berkeley Police Department
http://police.berkeley.edu
Non-emergency: 510/642-6760
Emergency: 911 or 510/642-3333 from a cell phone

Highland Hospital
Sexual Assault Response Team
1411 E 31st Street
Oakland, CA 94602
510/437-4800

Gender Equity Resource Center
Sexual Harassment/Assault Resource Specialist
510/643-5727
http://geneq.berkeley.edu

Campus Climate & Compliance
Title IX/VI
510/643-7985
http://ccac.berkeley.edu

Dance Safe
Promoting health and safety in the rave and nightclub community
www.dancesafe.org

California Legislative Information
www.leginfo.ca.gov

Campus Night Escort Service
510/642-WALK (9255)