

# the **RED CUP** Q&A



**separating alcohol fact from fiction**  
EVERY TUESDAY IN THE DAILY WILDCAT

**Q** How can I convince my best friend to stop drinking during the weekends? It's a serious problem that is getting in the way of our friendship.

**A.** Trying to get someone to do something they don't want to do can be a challenge. But here are some tips to help you approach the subject and increase your success. Be a friend, show your concern and don't worry about being too polite to bring up the subject. By not speaking up you can appear to condone your friend's behaviors. Peer interventions can influence behavior change so you already have the "friend" advantage. Choose your favorite approach (or both):

#### **Direct:**

- Choose a time when you both can talk and when you're calm (not when you're angry or upset with him/her).
- Be factual. Tell your friend exactly how you feel and how his/her drinking is interfering with your friendship and how you care about them. Give specific instances of their behavior that you observed. When someone is intoxicated, it's likely they won't remember how their behavior impacted others.
- Hold your friend accountable. Don't cover up, clean up or protect them from the consequences of their drinking. Your friend may believe that their drinking is under control and may minimize the problems. That's where you come in... don't make excuses for their behavior or say "that's ok."

#### **Indirect/Moderation Approach:**

- Suggest non-alcohol related activities that you both enjoy. Then don't take no for an answer. Offer to drive there or make the arrangements. Invite others along.
- Hang out with friends who drink less, a lot less.
- If you end up going to a drinking event, go later. This decreases the amount of time to drink. Go out to eat first. Set limits.

Your friend is lucky to have a concerned friend. If you need additional coaching, consider calling Counseling & Psychological Services for assistance: 520-621-3334. Good luck.



#### **wildfact**

Of those UA students who drink, 65% said they stop drinking 1-2 hours before going home. (2009 Health & Wellness Survey, N=1,720)

#### **Got a question about alcohol?**

Email it to [redcup@email.arizona.edu](mailto:redcup@email.arizona.edu) and have a chance to win a \$100 Best Buy gift card during the Spring 2010 semester.



The Red Cup Q&A is written by Lynn Reyes, LCSW, LSAC, David Salafsky, MPH, Lee Ann Hamilton, MA, CHES, and Spencer Gorin, RN, in the Health Promotion and Preventive Services (HPPS) department of the UA Campus Health Service.