

The American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse >
Encompassing All Addictive Disorders

Volume 40, 2014 - [Issue 5: College Drinking Games \(Guest Editor: Byron Zamboanga, Cara Tomaso\)](#)

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Drinking games, tailgating, and pregaming: Precollege predictors of risky college drinking

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Pages 367-373 | Received 01 Nov 2013, Accepted 10 Jun 2014, Published online: 05 Sep 2014

🗨️ Cite this article 🔗 <https://doi.org/10.3109/00952990.2014.936443>



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Abstract

Background: The transition from high school to college is a critical period for developing college drinking habits. Hazardous alcohol consumption increases during this period, as well as participation in drinking games, pregaming, and tailgating. All of these risky drinking practices are associated with higher levels of intoxication as well as an increased risk of alcohol-related problems. **Objective:** The current study aimed to evaluate pre-college predictors (personality, social norms, and beliefs reflecting the internalization of the college drinking culture [ICDC]) of estimated peak BAC (pBAC) reached during drinking games, pregaming, and tailgating, as well as pBAC and alcohol-related problems during the first 30 days of college. **Methods:** Participants (n =

936) were incoming freshmen at a large university who completed a baseline assessment prior to college matriculation and a follow-up assessment after they had been on campus for 30 days. Results: Using path analysis, ICDC was significantly associated with pBAC reached during the three risky drinking practices. ICDC had an indirect effect on both pBAC and alcohol-related problems via pBAC from drinking games, pregaming, and tailgating. Hopelessness and sensation seeking were significantly related to alcohol use outcomes. Conclusion: Precollege perceptions of the college drinking culture are a stronger predictor of subsequent alcohol use than social norms. Interventions that target these beliefs may reduce peak intoxication and associated harms experienced during the first 30 days of college.

Alcohol beliefs

alcohol use

college student

drinking games

social norms

tailgating

personality

pregaming

Acknowledgements

Matthew Pearson's contribution was supported by a National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) training grant T32-AA018108. John Hustad's contribution to this paper was supported by the National Center for Research Resources and the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences, National Institutes of Health (NIH), through Grant UL1RR033184 and KL2RR033180. Brian Borsari's contribution to this paper was supported by National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Grants R01-AA015518 and R01-AA017874. The contents of this paper do not represent the views of the NIH, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, the Department of Veterans Affairs or the United States Government.

Related Research Data

[Biases in the perception of drinking norms among college students.](#)

Source: Journal of Studies on Alcohol

[Normative Misperceptions of Drinking Among College Students: A Look at the Specific Contexts of Prepartying and Drinking Games](#)

Source: Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs

Mental Health of College Students and Their Non-College-Attending Peers

Source: Archives of General Psychiatry

From Animal House to Old School: A multiple mediation analysis of the association between college drinking movie exposure and freshman drinking and its consequences

Source: Addictive Behaviors

Self-Reported Drinking-game Participation of Incoming College Students

Source: Journal of American College Health

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