Dear Parents

Parents Matter!

As a parent, you have played many roles in your young adult’s life - from protector to teacher to guide. As they move out of your home and into our residence, it’s important to remember that you will continue to be an influential part of their lives. First year students are exposed to a number of different and new experiences in the classroom, on campus and in residence. Sometimes this includes alcohol and other substance use. Transitioning to college life is a key risk period where many students first experiment with alcohol and others move from experimenting/use to more frequent use.

We know it’s not always easy to talk to your college bound youth about the possibility that they may use alcohol or other substances, or to talk about ways they can keep themselves safer. We also know that when parents CAN talk about ways their youth can lower their risks when using alcohol and other substances AND encourage their youth to be involved in non-drinking college activities; youth tend to use less and are more involved in non-drinking activities. Honest communication can go a long way to be seen as a support should they have any problems with substance use in the future.

What You Need to Know

Currently half of Ontario college students who drank alcohol in the last 12 months reported experiencing one of the following: did something they later regretted, forgot where they were or what they did, got in trouble with the police, had sex with someone without their consent, someone had sex with them without their consent, had unprotected sex, physically injured themselves or another, seriously considered suicide.

Ontario college students also perceive that the use of alcohol and other substances on campus is much higher than actual use. Students believe that almost all students drink at least once a month when actually the number is closer to 68%. They also believe that 84% of students use marijuana at least once a month when the reality is 16%v. Sharing information like this with your student may decrease pressures they may feel to fit into what they believe is normal college life. It also can help guide them to healthier decisions and keep the lines of communication open.

What Keeps Young Adults Safer:

- Not too much-using smaller amounts or drinking fewer drinks
- Not too often-having several days of no use, not drinking EVERY Friday and Saturday
- Only in safe contexts-be around safe people and familiar places
- Stay safe when impaired-don’t drive while under the influence
- Think about the impact on others- roommates may not appreciate a smoke filled room
- Encourage them to do other things they enjoy-make sure there are many other ways to have fun, cope with stress, meet people

Bottom Line
Encourage your young adult to:
PLAN how many drinks they will have, what time they will stop drinking, how they will get home
AND PROTECT their drinks, their physical and mental health, friends, and their ability to continue to live in residence. The Residence Handbook can be found at www.algonquinrez.ca. Pages 18 – 33 have our Residence Community Living Standards.
Dear Parents

How will you know if alcohol and other substance use might be a problem?
- Missing or skipping classes (or classroom assignments) or a drop in academic performance.
- Frequent requests for more money to cover expenses, or taking a second job.
- Moodiness, defensiveness, or silence when you try to talk to them about school.
- Reported incidences on campus in residence and/or security.

Who Can Help?

Fortunately, we have a team of support services to partner with you and your young adult to help them thrive. We have a robust and dynamic Residence Life Team of 20 Resident Advisors located on the floors of Residence, 2 Community Advisors (events programmers), 3 Residence Life Coordinators (professional live in staff), a Residence Life Manager, and an Algonquin Residence Council (the voice of the students). These campus leaders work to provide support and academic and social growth opportunities throughout the residence experience.

The residence works in close collaboration with Algonquin College Student Support Services every step of the way. Partnerships include: Counselling, Health Services, the Mamidosewin Centre, the Centre for Students with Disabilities, the ASD Transition Centre and so many more! Please encourage your young adult to reach out to these services before you arrive.

For more information please click here: Student Support Services

Please remember to inform your young adult...

The Week of Move In and Orientation Day (Sept 5th to Sept 10th) at Algonquin College is a DRY EVENT. Therefore, no consumption or possession of alcohol on the residence premises will be permitted. This is to give your young adult the opportunity to experience all the first week has to offer to its fullest potential! It’s also a chance to make positive memories with new friends right from the beginning!😊

Was this resource helpful? Please fill out the following 3 question survey: CLICK HERE

Community Resources

Rideauwood Addiction and Family Services
www.rideauwood.org
613-724-4881

Drug and Alcohol Helpline
http://www.drugandalcoholhelpline.ca
1-800-565-8603

Tungasuvvingatinuit-Mamisarvik Healing Centre
www.tungasuvvingatinuit.ca
613-563-3546

Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health
http://www.wabano.com
613-748-0657

Ottawa Assessment and Access Referral Services
www.saato.ca/en
613-241-1523

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http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng

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