

# New app might help prevent binge drinking in students

By ACSH Staff — June 30, 2015



Thanks to movies like *Animal House*, *American Pie*, and

*Old School*, binge drinking in college has been tightly woven into the fabric of our society.

Unfortunately, binge drinking is not as glamorous as *Van Wilder* makes it seem. Instead it is a [major problem for public health](#) <sup>[1]</sup>. Each year 2,000 college aged kids die from alcohol related deaths. Another 600,000 are seriously injured. According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 4 out of 5 college students consume alcohol and half of all college students are binge drinkers, which is defined as 4 drinks for a female and 5 for a male in a 2 hour span.

These statistics make curtailing binge drinking in college a priority for college administrators and public health officials. One new method that is getting some attention is [electronic interventions](#). <sup>[2]</sup> These mini-personal interventions are provided to college students through an app on their smartphone and send reminders to the student about their drinking habits. Examples of the reminders include data on how much they have spent on alcohol, how much their classmates are drinking, and reminders about the health consequences of binge drinking.

Thus far the electronic interventions appear to be doing some good. A meta-analysis done by researchers at University of Washington Seattle and another 2013 study of students in Australia both found that electronic interventions reduced binge drinking by as much as 13 percent.

Jessica Cronce, an assistant professor of psychiatry and a co-author of the study from the University of Washington said, Most students overestimate the amount and frequency that other students are actually drinking, and research has shown that if you can correct this misperception, students drinking tends to decrease to be more in line with the true norm.

American Council on Science and Health's Nicholas Staropoli added, The idea that binge drinking needs to be apart of the college experience is one that needs to change. We need to find ways to help students develop safe relationships with alcohol. These apps appear to help, and efforts should be made to increase their prevalence on campuses.

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**Source URL:** <https://www.acsh.org/news/2015/06/30/new-app-might-help-prevent-binge-drinking-in-students>

**Links**

[1] <http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/alcohol-health/special-populations-co-occurring-disorders/college-drinking>

[2] <http://www.wsj.com/articles/how-to-cut-student-drinking-1435249267>