

Keeping students safe during Spring Break

As students relax and celebrate this Spring Break, we are faced with concerns about keeping them safe.

The fact is, despite social distancing and stay-at-home orders, youth drinking never really subsided during the pandemic. Evidence actually indicates that alcohol intake increased over the past year, including among younger drinkers. Spring Break presents an even more likelihood of underage drinking, along with its many associated consequences.

About half of college students will binge drink during this time, many to the point of passing out at least once.

One initiative helping encourage smart, healthy decisions among students is being hosted in El Paso by TxSDY and UTEP.

Unique in its evidence-based approach, the program tackles underage drinking with preventative rather than reactionary tactics. SBI has proven to be a key resource on campuses, teaching educators how to engage with students in new, proactive ways.

The program has continued throughout the pandemic and has reached hundreds of students over the past year. With new skillsets in motivational decision making and behavioral change, students are employed with valuable tools for promoting positive behavior in many aspects of their lives.

The past year has been a year of seemingly endless rules and restrictions. However, arming students with the tools to help them navigate situations where drinking becomes problematic can help change decisions and save lives.

Tammy Horton