



For Immediate Release  
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## **During Alcohol Awareness Week, Statewide Prevention Leader Texans for Safe and Drug Free Youth Partners with UTEP for Third Annual Preventative Alcohol Screening**

### ***Weeklong event anticipates reaching hundreds of students***

(El Paso – March 10, 2020) – University of Texas El Paso (UTEP) and Texans for Safe and Drug-Free Youth (TxSDY) this week kicked off a weeklong alcohol awareness and prevention event, designed to provide information and resources for addressing potentially risky or harmful college drinking practices.

This year marked a unique experience, with the event hosted virtually online and extended several days longer than in past years. Over the course of the week, organizers expect to reach hundreds of students on the portal.

The event is part of Texans for Safe and Drug Free Youth's Screening and Brief Intervention (SBI) program, which works statewide to reduce risky drinking behaviors and related consequences among college-aged youth. Unique in its evidence-based approach, TXSDY's program tackles the issue with preventative, rather than reactionary, tactics. SBI has proven to be a key resource for prevention of underage and dangerous drinking on college campuses.

"We're committed to doing everything possible to reduce the life-threatening risks of underage and dangerous drinking by college youth, said **Tammy Horton, Higher Education Prevention Specialist at TxSDY.** "Our events result in real, lasting impact because they empower students so they have both information and agency to make the best possible decisions."

Underage drinking and excessive is a leading contributing factor to students not finishing school. Transition points such as the move to college create increased risk for alcohol use and abuse, and students experience of being away from home and increased exposure to drinking can create significant challenges, particularly during the first and second years of college. The SBI program proves particularly important at smaller schools, which may not have other resources that larger institutions have.

The intervention and counseling approach leverages and strengthens individual motivation to change behavior. It has been studied and proven as a highly effective approach for stopping or preventing unhealthy behaviors such as binge drinking, as well as reducing the quantity and frequency of drinking, smoking and substance abuse. More information about TxSDY can be found at <https://txsdy.org/>

### **About Texans for Safe and Drug Free Youth**

Texans for Safe and Drug-Free Youth is the state's leading organization working to end underage alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use. Founded in 1997, with funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation administered by the American Medical Association, the statewide coalition builds on the strengths and successes of its longtime identity, Texans Standing Tall, while bringing new focus and energy to its mission of creating healthier and safer communities.

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