

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES FOR COLLEGE BINGE DRINKING PREVENTION

The Students'
Perspective

THE
CENTURY COUNCIL

DISTILLERS FIGHTING DRUNK DRIVING & UNDERAGE DRINKING

ACE
American
Council on
Education

**Ad
Council**

**The Students'
Perspective**

**Discovering the voice of
the students on the issue
of overconsumption**

IN 2009

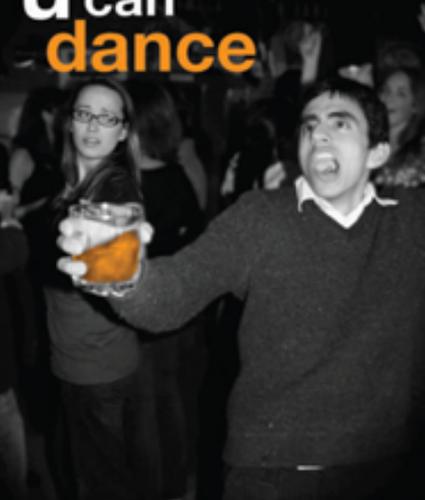
The Century Council partnered with the Ad Council and the American Council on Education to sponsor the American Advertising Federation's **2009 National Student Advertising Competition.**

MORE THAN 140

college and university teams submitted communication plans to address dangerous overconsumption of alcohol and design a campaign to promote behavioral change.



you think
U can
dance

A black and white photograph of a man in a dark sweater dancing enthusiastically in a crowd at a social event. He is holding a large beer with a thick head of foam. A woman with glasses is visible in the background.

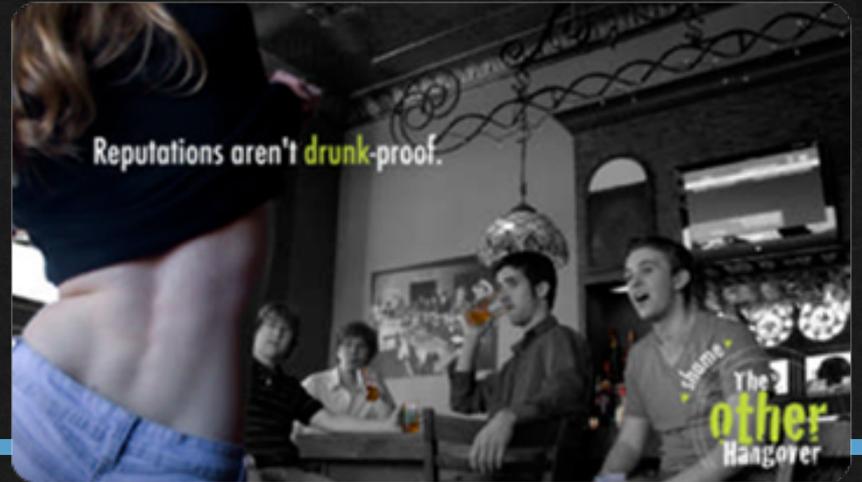
And you could. Three drinks ago.
It takes LessThanUThink.org

U think you
won't go
there ⁵ the
first
date

A black silhouette of a martini glass, with the text from the previous block overlaid on it.

And you wouldn't. Three drinks ago.
It takes LessThanUThink.org







THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON DC

**YOU KNOW YOUR
FRIEND WANTS
TO DRINK HER
SORROWS AWAY
AFTER BEING
DUMPED.
BE THERE.**

YOU KNOW. BE THERE.

TO LEARN WHAT YOU CAN DO TO **BE THERE**, VISIT US AT:
WWW.YOUKNOWBETHERE.COM

YOU KNOW. BE THERE.

SURVIVAL GUIDE

YOU KNOW. BE THERE.

Signs of Dangerous Drinking

- * Mental Fuzziness & Difficulty Making
- * Impaired Judgment & Perception
- * Feelings of Excitement, EUPHORIA, OR "HIGH" FEELINGS
- * Changes in Behavior
- * Slurred Speech, "Glass Slower" or "Dry Mouth"
- * Nausea or Vomiting

YOU KNOW. BE THERE. FOR YOUR FRIENDS WHEN THEY NEED YOU MOST. KNOW THESE CRITICAL SIGNS AND ACT!

YOU KNOW. BE THERE.

Signs of Dangerous Over-Consumption

- * Nausea
- * Vomiting
- * Slurred Speech, "Glass Slower" or "Dry Mouth"
- * Hypothermia (Low Body Temperature or Shivering, Slowed Heart Rate, Low Blood Pressure, and Loss of Consciousness)

YOU KNOW. BE THERE. FOR YOUR FRIENDS WHEN THEY NEED YOU MOST. KNOW THESE CRITICAL SIGNS AND ACT!

YOUR MESSAGE: "MY FRIEND IS ABOUT TO THROW BACK ANOTHER SHOT."

OUR RESPONSE: "SUGGEST GOING TO YOUR FAVORITE PIZZA JOINT TO GRAB SOME FOOD BEFORE HITTING THE NEXT BAR."

BE THERE.

IN 2010

The Century Council and Ad Council partnered to conduct follow-up qualitative and quantitative research to further investigate students' perceptions focusing on;

- ▶ **Student attitudes and behavior**
- ▶ **Audience segmentation**
- ▶ **Message evaluation**

OBJECTIVES & METHODOLOGY

NO. 1

Gain a deeper understanding of
binge drinking behavior among
college students

NO.2

Understand the “type and tone”
of messages that would cause a
re-consideration of behavior

NO. 3

Create a nationally relevant strategic framework that engages students and can be adapted to different local markets

DATA DIVE & EXPERT PANEL*

We reviewed current research, programs and campaigns dealing with overconsumption of alcohol, and established panel of experts to provide guidance and feedback



University of Illinois
Urbana Champaign



University of Arizona
Student/Member of Greek System



National Collegiate
Athletic Association



University of Wisconsin, Madison
Student/Alcohol Task Force



Division of Epidemiology &
Prevention Research



University of Arizona
Inter-Association Task Force on
Collegiate Alcohol & Other Drug
Abuse

PENNSSTATE.



Penn State University
Marketing/Alcohol Policy Board



Pacific Institute for Research &
Evaluation

* While expert panelists provided extensive feedback through the project, please note that not every panelist or organization endorses every finding and recommendation included in this report.

QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY



BOSTON, MA

3 DISCUSSION GROUPS

(6-8 respondents per group):

Moderate Drinkers:

Males 18-20

Infrequent Drinkers:

Females 21-25

Bingers:

Females 21-25

1 TAG ALONG/RED-EYE RECAP

(4 respondents):

Bingers:

Females 21-25

24 DISCOVERY JOURNALS

24 BLOG RESPONDENTS



BLOOMINGTON, IN

3 DISCUSSION GROUPS

(6-8 respondents per group):

Infrequent Drinkers:

Males 21-25

Bingers:

Females 18-20

Bingers:

Males 21-25

1 TAG ALONG/RED-EYE RECAP

(4 respondents):

Bingers:

Males 21-25

24 DISCOVERY JOURNALS

24 BLOG RESPONDENTS



BOULDER, CO

3 DISCUSSION GROUPS

(6-8 respondents per group):

Moderate Drinkers:

Females 18-20

Infrequent Drinkers:

Males 21-25

Bingers:

Males 21-25

1 TAG ALONG/RED-EYE RECAP

(4 respondents):

Bingers:

Males 21-25

24 DISCOVERY JOURNALS

24 BLOG RESPONDENTS

QUANTITATIVE METHODOLOGY

Online survey of 1500 college students who drink and go out socially

Screening requirements:

- ▶ Full time college students at 2-year or 4-year undergraduate institutions
- ▶ Mix of ages 18-24
- ▶ Mix of private and public institutions
- ▶ Nationally representative (gender, ethnicity, and geography)
- ▶ In a typical week – goes out socially at least twice
- ▶ In a typical week – drinks alcohol at least once

20 minute survey covering:

- ▶ Demographics, psychographics, media habits
- ▶ Drinking-related attitudes and behaviors
- ▶ Responses to a variety of binge drinking reduction message platforms

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

HOW STUDENTS DEFINE BINGE DRINKING:

- ▶ The term binge drinking is not relevant to college students, nor is the “5/4” government definition
- ▶ Drinking too many nights per week and too much on one occasion

- ▶ **WHAT WE HEARD**

Get hammered

Trashed

Tanked

Buzz Killington

Drinking till you pass out

Blitzed

Crazy

Shammered



**5 drinks in 2 hours?
Then I would say that
100% of college kids
binge drink.**

21+ FEMALE, BOSTON

**I'd say a typical
night out for me
is about 15
drinks or so.**

21+ MALE, BOULDER



THE “GOLDEN ZONE”

Maximum night out ≠ drinking to the maximum.



6

KEY MESSAGING INSIGHTS

were uncovered from the qualitative work

THE 6 KEY MESSAGES WERE:

1. Speak to universal truths that don't require the support of statistics/facts or scare tactics
2. Highlight the feelings of overconsumption not the math
3. Peer based messaging works only if it's really about a student's own peers
4. Peers have a great deal of influence on drinking behaviors
5. Embarrassing behavior is indicative of a great night out
6. Messages that influence the situational factors surrounding a night are more readily accepted

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

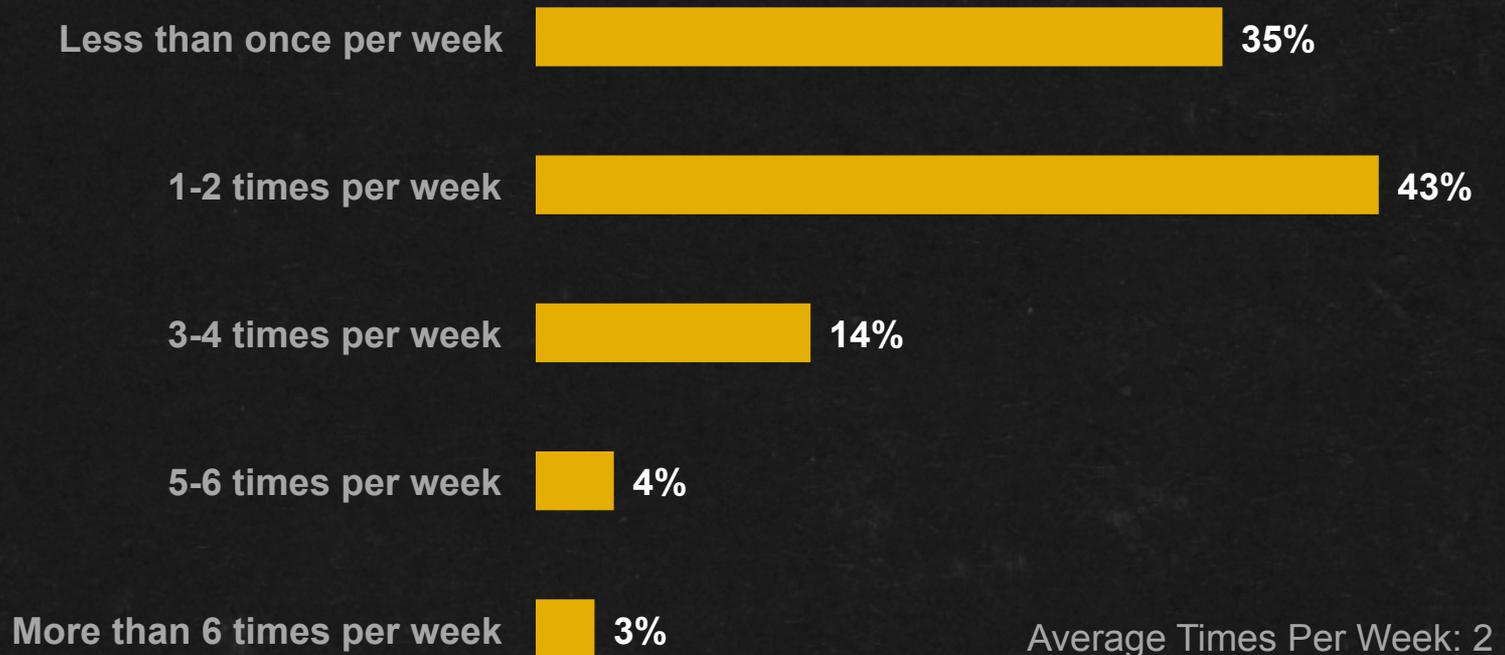
Attitudes and Behaviors

OF THOSE WHO DRINK AND GO OUT SOCIALLY

2/3

**OF RESPONDENTS
SELF-REPORT
BINGE DRINK ON A
WEEKLY BASIS**

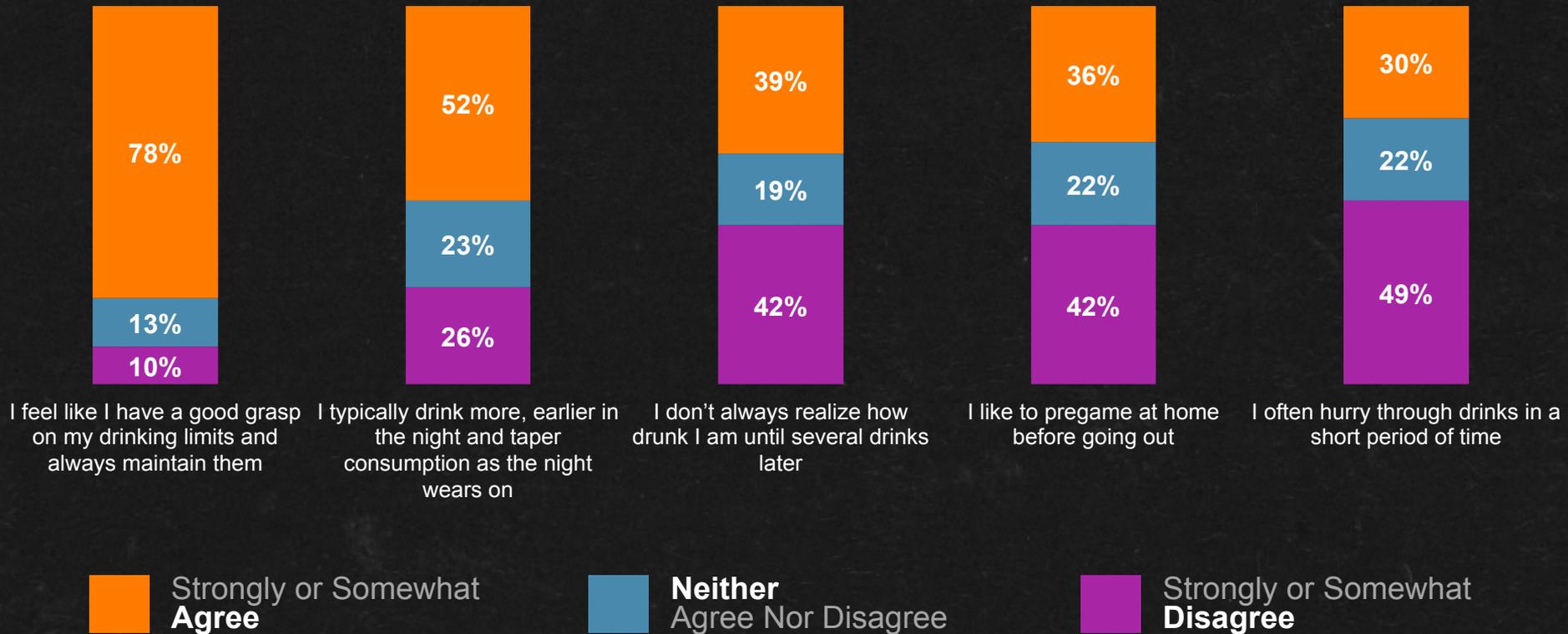
ON AVERAGE, college students reported drinking more than 4-5 drinks in a two hour period about 2 times per week



Q2B. Approximately how many occasions, in a typical week, do you have more than 4-5 drinks in a two-hour period?
Base: Total Respondents (n=1,500)

APPROACH TO ALCOHOL

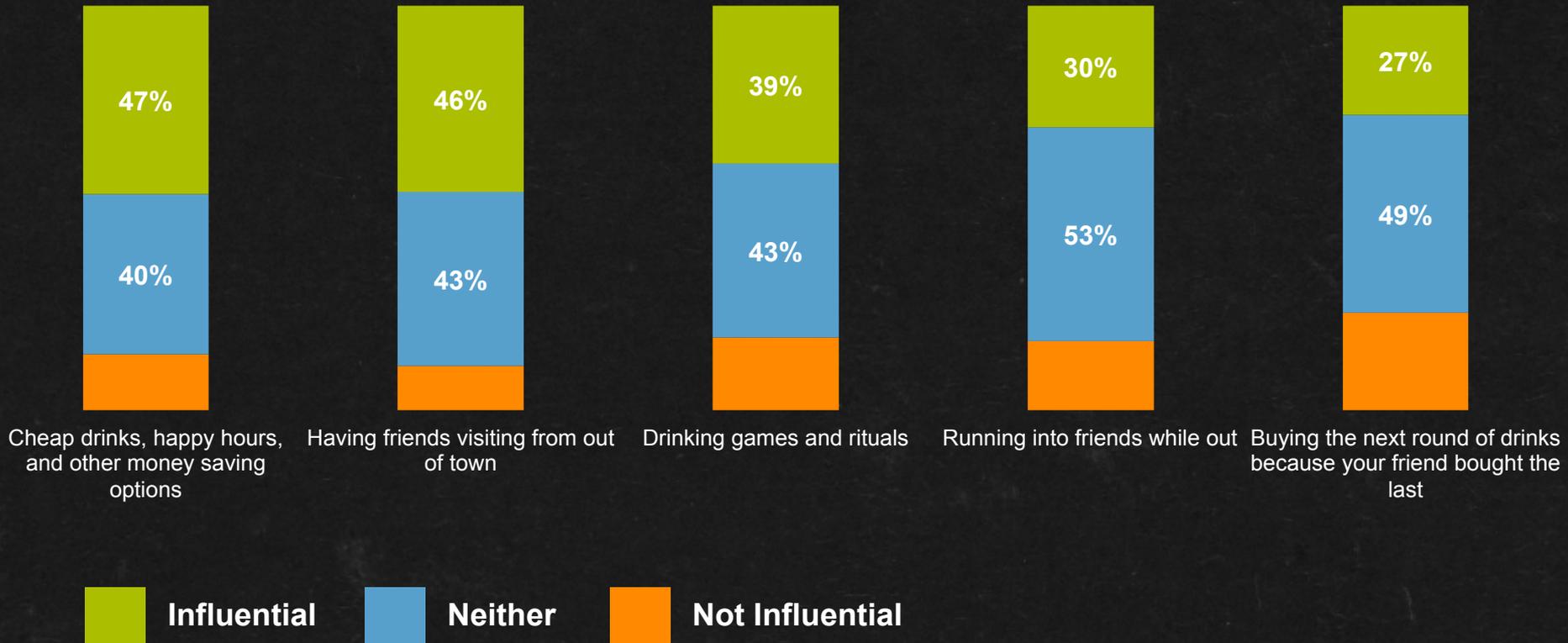
Despite the fact that a majority are bingeing on a weekly basis, 78% of students felt they have “a good grasp on their drinking limits and always maintain them”



Q5. Using a scale from agree strongly to disagree strongly, please rate each of the drinking styles in terms of how well it describes how you consume alcohol.
Base: Total Respondents (n=1,500)

TOP CHOICES & DECISIONS

that influence overconsumption



Q16A. Below is a list of factors that may possibly influence you to drink more than you otherwise might have on a specific occasion..
Base: Total Respondents (n=1,500)

A VARIETY OF EXPERIENCES occur when students drink too much – top outcomes tend to have short-term consequences



Q14. Which of the following have you experienced when you feel like you drink too much?
Base: Ever Feel Like Drink Too Much (n=598)

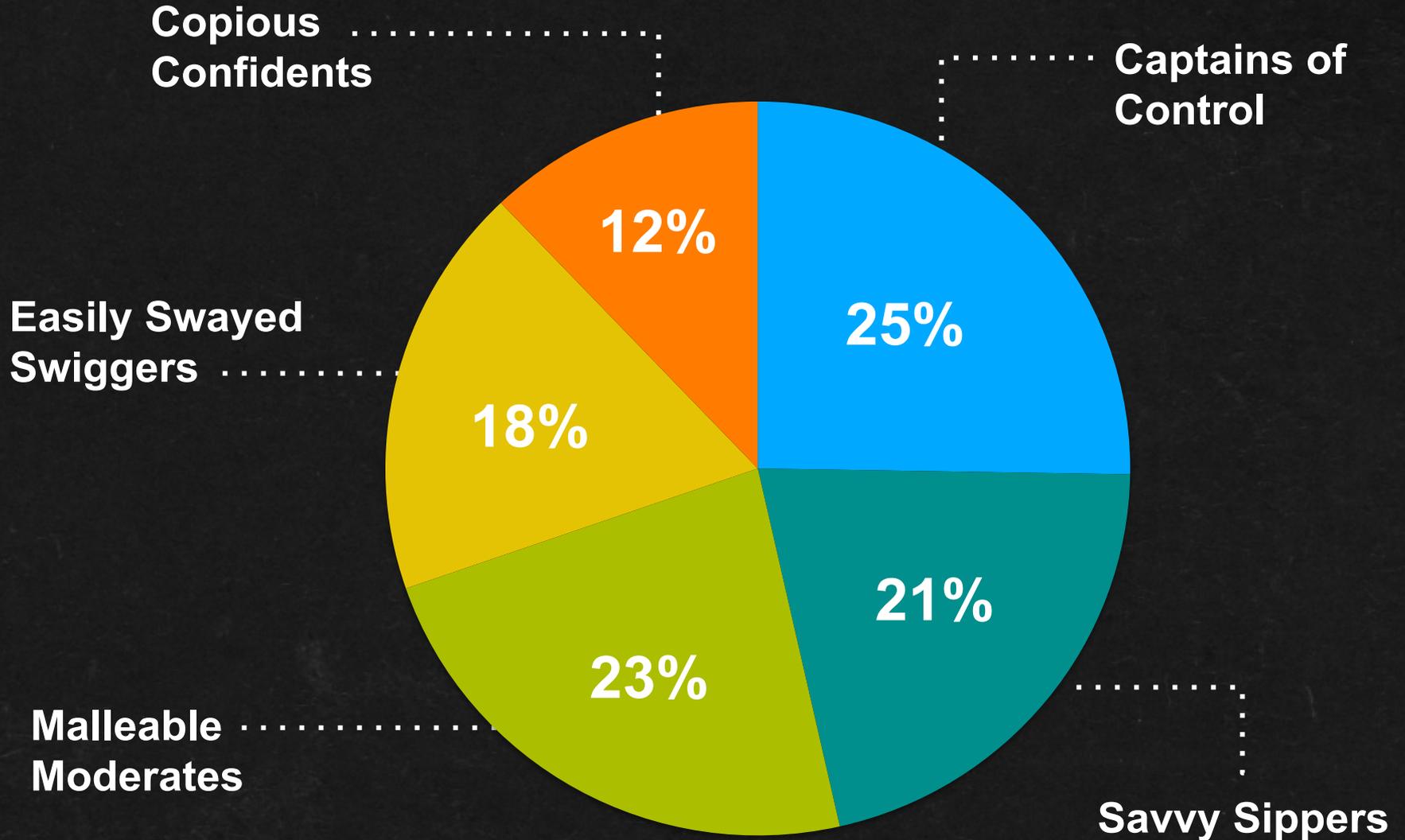
QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

Drinker Type Segmentation

DEFINING DRINKER TYPES helps
develop communications strategies
for targeted messaging

- ▶ All college drinkers are not the same
- ▶ All nights out are not created equal
- ▶ Drinking behaviors vary

STUDENT DRINKER TYPES



DRINKER TYPE 1

CAPTAINS OF CONTROL

COMMON TRAITS OF

CAPTAINS OF CONTROL

FUTURE FOCUSED

RESPONSIBLE

IN CONTROL



COMMON TRAITS OF

CAPTAINS OF CONTROL

MY MANTRA

“I am a casual drinker and I’d much rather have a good time socializing with friends than focus on getting drunk. I have no problem controlling how much I drink and rarely have regrettable experiences. I am in college to learn, not to party.”



CAPTAINS OF CONTROL

- ▶ Skews toward females
- ▶ Less likely to go out socially
- ▶ Fewest drinks consumed in an occasion and in a typical week
- ▶ Least likely to end up drunk when drinking – have limits and try to maintain them
- ▶ Not easily influenced to drink when they don't want to
- ▶ Tend to stick to their pace regardless of how others are drinking around them
- ▶ Firm grasp on level of drunkenness throughout the night

DRINKER TYPE 2

SAVVY SIPPERS

COMMON TRAITS OF

SAVVY SIPPERS

STEADY

CAUTIOUS

SENSIBLE



COMMON TRAITS OF

SAVVY SIPPERS

MY MANTRA

“I am a moderate drinker. Drinking is not the main objective of the night and I am typically cautious about how much I drink by doing smart things like drinking water now and then. However, on occasion I may drink too much.”



COMMON TRAITS OF

SAVVY SIPPERS

- ▶ Experimental
- ▶ Enjoys being part of the group rather than the one in charge
- ▶ Sometimes feel they drink too much, but overall maintain their level of drunkenness
- ▶ Rarely ends up too drunk too quickly or blacks out
- ▶ Less likely to be influenced to drink more
- ▶ Enjoy pacing their drinks and don't feel the need to hurry through drinks

DRINKER TYPE 3

MALLEABLE MODERATES

COMMON TRAITS OF

MALLEABLE MODERATES

ADAPTABLE

PERSUADABLE

LAID BACK

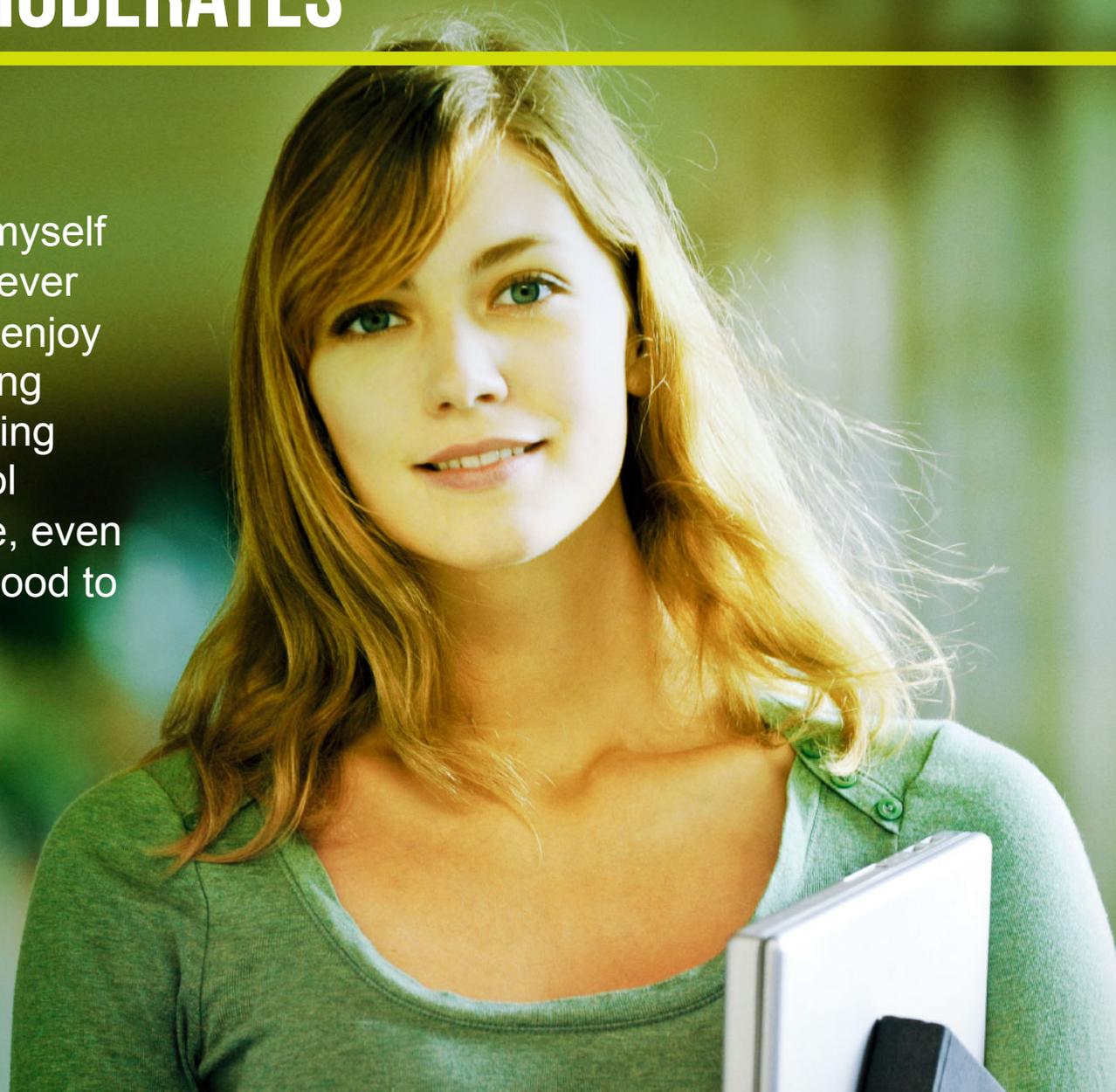


COMMON TRAITS OF

MALLEABLE MODERATES

MY MANTRA

“Although I’d consider myself a moderate drinker, I never feel I drink too much. I enjoy pregaming and like using different tactics like taking shots to feel the alcohol quicker. Once in awhile, even if I may not be in the mood to drink, I can usually be persuaded to do so.”



MALLEABLE MODERATES

- ▶ College is a time to let loose and have fun
- ▶ Tend to drink more when they go out
- ▶ Generally feel they do not drink too much
- ▶ Can be influenced to drink when they don't want to
- ▶ More strongly influenced to drink more by outside factors like cost of drinks, friends, pregaming
- ▶ Don't enjoy the act of drinking and rely on shots as a way to quickly get the "work" over and done with

DRINKER TYPE 4

EASILY-SWAYED SWIGGERS

COMMON TRAITS OF

EASILY-SWAYED SWIGGERS

EXTROVERTED

AGREEABLE

EASILY INFLUENCED

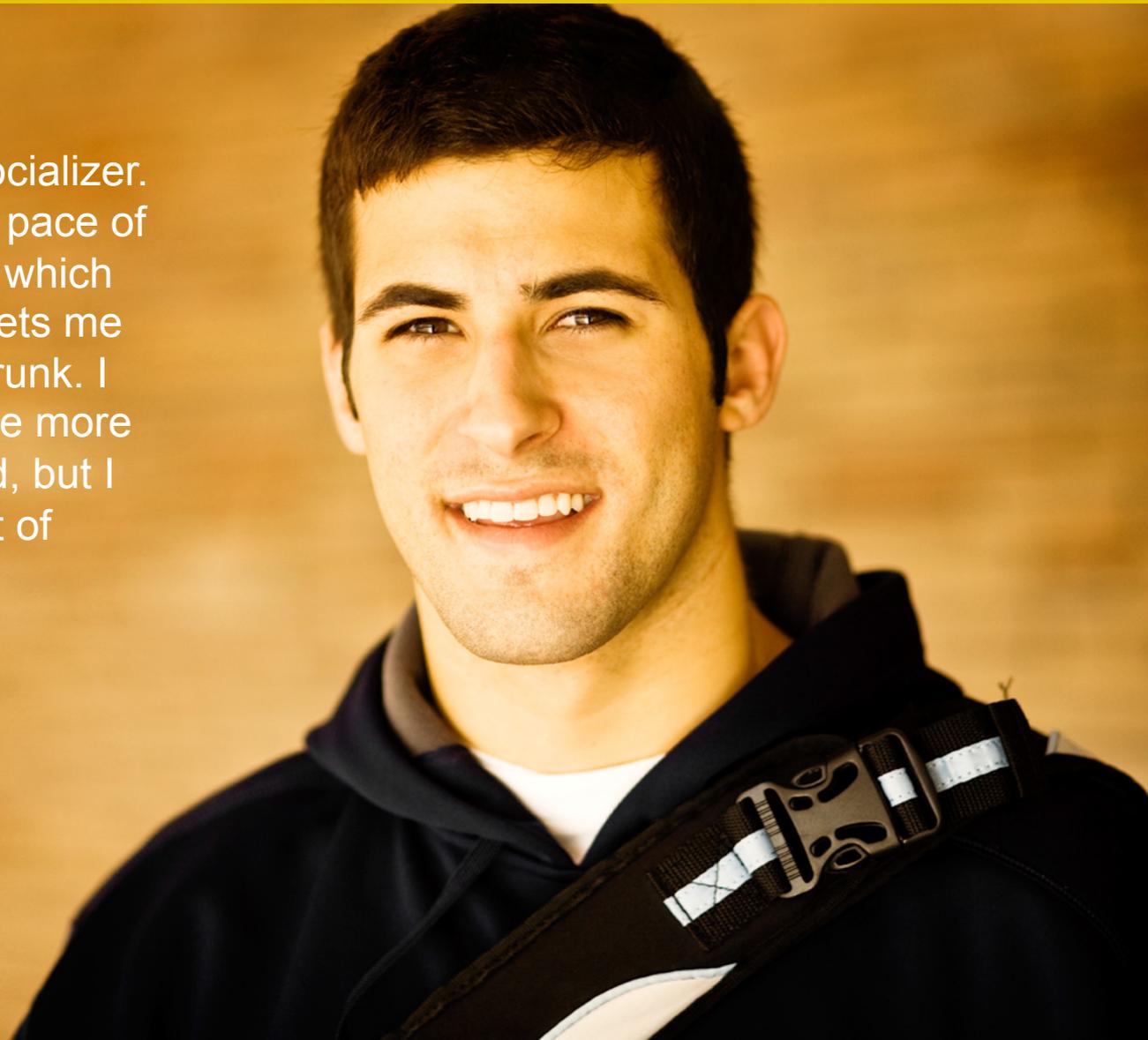


COMMON TRAITS OF

EASILY-SWAYED SWIGGERS

MY MANTRA

“I consider myself a socializer. I enjoy drinking at the pace of everyone around me, which more often than not gets me into trouble and too drunk. I give into peer pressure more than I probably should, but I look at it as just a part of college life.”



EASILY-SWAYED SWIGGERS

- ▶ Skews toward younger males
- ▶ Frequently go out socially
- ▶ Extremely important to feel part of a social group and fit in with peers
- ▶ Greatly affected by the way their friends drink and try to keep up with those around them
- ▶ Often feel like they drink too much, and usually end up drunk
- ▶ Often drink even when they don't want to
- ▶ Pregaming and drinking games/rituals frequently lead them to over-consume
- ▶ Dislike the act of drinking – try to hurry through the “work” as quickly as possible

DRINKER TYPE 5

COPIOUS CONFIDENTS

COMMON TRAITS OF

COPIOUS CONFIDENTS

DIRECTIVE

EXPERIENCED

SELF-ASSURED



COMMON TRAITS OF

COPIOUS CONFIDENTS

MY MANTRA

“Drinking is a big part of my college experience. I would consider myself drunk on most drinking occasions, but never to the point where I would say I drink too much. I enjoy drinking thoroughly, but only drink when I want to.”



COPIOUS CONFIDENTS

- ▶ Skews toward older males (22-23 year olds)
- ▶ Frequently go out socially and enjoy being the leader of the group
- ▶ Heaviest consumption of all drinker types (by occasion and frequency)
- ▶ Rarely feel like they drink too much
- ▶ Most likely to end up drunk when drinking
- ▶ Rarely influenced to drink when they don't want to
- ▶ Tend to drink quickly, but able to adjust pace to those around them

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

Message Evaluation

6

MESSAGES WERE PRESENTED TO STUDENTS

all with a unique way of tackling the issue at hand

1. Remember these **SIMPLE TIPS** for a better night
2. **TAKE CONTROL** of your night and enjoy it your own way
3. **DON'T FORCE IT**, some nights aren't meant to be
4. If you **STICK TO YOUR LIMITS**, the potential of the night is limitless
5. You **KNOW WHERE YOUR LINE IS**... try not to cross it.
6. College students across the country are having awesome nights out **WITHOUT DRINKING TO EXTREME**... so can you

TAKE CONTROL

You should always drink at your own pace not at the pace of others. Sometimes that means having the control to pass on that extra round or two at the end of the night.

Take control of your night and enjoy it your own way.

KNOW WHERE YOUR LINE IS

Those extra couple of drinks can mean crossing a line from fun person to idiot, saying something to ruin a friendship or texting something desperate to an ex.

You know where your line is... try not to cross it.

2 MESSAGES

were the most impactful among students

TAKE CONTROL

“It tells me not to let other people’s behavior affect my own.”

KNOW WHERE YOUR LINE IS

“This statement stands out because it says its okay to drink, just know your limit and take control of it.”

2 MESSAGES

were the most impactful among students

WHY DID THESE MESSAGES RESONATE?

- ▶ Motivating
- ▶ Uniqueness
- ▶ Clarity
- ▶ Relevance

The messages never try to preach and they always respect the individual

CAMPAIGN & MESSAGE EVOLUTION

BE REALISTIC

Students continue to **GET DRUNK**

Students continue to **PLAY DRINKING GAMES & PREGAME**

Communications are **UNLIKELY TO WORK** if they tell students to stop drinking

INSTEAD

Communications need to have **2 KEY STEPS**
prior to achieving our goal:

COMMUNICATIONS STEPS

STEP 1

Create More
Self Awareness

STEP 2

Build Resilience
to Peer Influence

These steps help
students understand
their own capacity,
limits & consequences
and recognize the
influences on *their*
behavior

GOAL

**RETHINKING
BEHAVIOR**

SO WHAT IS THE BEST **TONE** TO USE?

RESPECT

You're not kids anymore and
we're not your parents

AUTHENTICITY

We want to be real, truthful
and honest about this subject

UNDERSTANDING

We get it that college is about having fun, being spontaneous and testing your boundaries

CARE / CONCERN

We want you to make
smarter drinking decisions

ENCOURAGEMENT

We want to help you gain the confidence to find your own safer “drinking rhythm” that you feel comfortable about

HOW DO WE REACH COLLEGE STUDENTS

MOST EFFECTIVELY?

DELIVERING THE MESSAGES WHEN NOT DRINKING

TRADITIONAL MEDIA

- ▶ **Magazines**
(4+ times per week)
- ▶ **College newspaper**
(1 time per week)

ONLINE MEDIA

- ▶ All targets are online
- ▶ Heavy YouTube users
- ▶ Use social media
20+ hours per week



DELIVERING THE MESSAGES

WHEN NOT DRINKING

AND

WHEN DRINKING

DECISIONS ARE MADE

WHEN DRINKING

DECISIONS ARE MADE

MOBILE MEDIA

- ▶ Targets are heavy mobile users
- ▶ Use “real time” media to reach them

AMBIENT MESSAGES

- ▶ Where students are out and about:
 - ▶ On campus
 - ▶ Dorms
 - ▶ Bars
- ▶ Voice of a friend or student peer



NOW WHAT?

2010 research validated key concepts identified by student teams and dug deeper

- ▶ Posted and available online at www.centurycouncil.org/fightbingedinking

TCC-supported campus demonstration projects to test student communications in practice

- ▶ University of Alabama
- ▶ University of Minnesota
- ▶ Ohio University
- ▶ George Washington University
- ▶ Other schools implementing their own campaigns

WHAT'S NEXT?

2011 provides continued support for campus campaigns and start up funds for additional schools:

- ▶ Texas Christian University
- ▶ Syracuse University
- ▶ University of Oregon

Other 2011 Projects include:

- ▶ Emergency Medicine Foundation
- ▶ National Judicial College
- ▶ Fisher College & International Association of Chiefs of Police

2011 probe drinker types to test specific messages and delivery channels

For more information visit

www.centurycouncil.org/binge-drinking