

Health Behaviors of Missouri Student-Athletes

Partners in Prevention (PIP) is a statewide coalition of 21 public and private colleges in Missouri with the mission of building safe and healthy campuses. PIP gathers data from the Missouri Assessment of College Health Behaviors (MACHB) in order to assess risk among college students. Data from the MACHB can be utilized to gain a better understanding of student choices and assist in program development to best address student environments. The survey inquires if students participate in collegiate athletics. In this brief, student-athletes are defined as students who are members of a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) or National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) sports team on their campus.

The Student-Athlete Experience

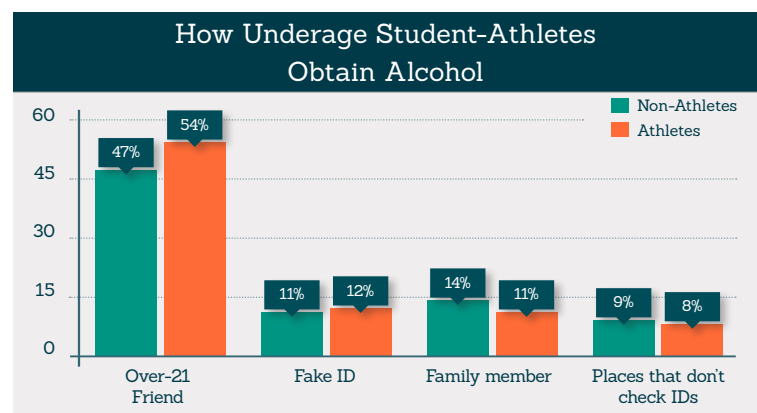
For students who earn the opportunity to compete in the NCAA or NAIA, the college experience is dedicated to both academic and athletic activities. While balancing the physical and mental demands of sport, student-athletes must navigate through similar social and academic journeys that many of their peers experience. Sport-related stressors such as the time commitment to sport, the expectation to perform, and the desire to earn or to maintain an athletic scholarship can also contribute to the student-athlete experience¹. Despite these additional pressures, student-athletes across Missouri report to have similar health behaviors as their non-student-athlete peers.

Student-Athlete Alcohol Use

Both seventy-six percent (76%) of student-athletes and non-student-athletes self-reported that they have consumed alcohol in the past year. Thirty-one percent (31%) of student-athletes reported “binge” drinking, defined as having five or more drinks in a two-hour period at least once in the past two weeks, compared to twenty-six percent (26%) of non-student-athletes. Thirty-two percent (32%) of student-athletes and twenty-six percent (26%) of non-student-athletes reported to have experienced a “blackout” or memory loss at least one time in the past year due to drinking.

	Non-Athletes	Athletes
Consumed alcohol in the past year	76%	76%
Binge drinking rate	26%	31%

The most common ways for students under the age of 21 to obtain alcohol is from a friend who is over 21 years old (54% vs. 47% non-student-athletes), a fake ID (12% vs. 11% non-student-athletes), going where IDs do not get checked (7.8% vs. 9.2% non-student-athletes) or having a family member purchase it for them (11% vs. 14% non-student-athletes). For student-athletes who have consumed alcohol in the past year, seventy-seven percent (77%) typically consume alcohol at a social gathering or friend's house. Student-athletes also reported other common places to consume alcohol include bars and restaurants, where they live, and at fraternity or sorority houses.



For more information, visit pip.missouri.edu

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Student-Athlete Well-Being

Student-athletes and non-student athletes report to have a similar sense of belonging on campus. Fifty percent (50%) of student-athletes and forty-seven percent (47%) of non-student-athletes agree when asked if they feel that they are member of their campus community. Most student-athletes report seeking assistance for their well-being at a university counseling center or from friends and family.

Prevention Strategies and Resources

Both the NCAA and NAIA participate in drug education and testing programs and are required to educate student-athletes on the dangers of alcohol, drug, and substance misuse to encourage safe and positive involvement in both school and sport.

The NCAA has a number of programs that engage campuses and their student-athletes in alcohol and substance use prevention. Additional information on the NCAA CHOICES program, the APPLE Institute,

and more NCAA education and prevention programs can be found at www.ncaa.org/sport-science-institute/alcohol-and-other-recreational-drug-prevention. The NAIA also offers student-athletes courses on alcohol and substance misuse and provides them with resources on mental health and safety. More information on these resources can be found at the NAIA Student-Athlete Wellness Center (www.naia.org/fls/27900/wellness-center/academy.html).



Campuses around the state and across the nation are working to change campus environments to reduce the prevalence of college drinking. Campuses can learn more about changing the culture of college drinking at www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov.

Contact Partners in Prevention at (573) 884-7551.
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References
¹<http://www.ncaa.org/sport-science-institute/mind-body-and-sport-risk-factors-sport-environment>