

Executive Summary



Stonehill College

The information below was gleaned from multiple sources: Health and Behavior Assessment (2009), Core Survey (2009), CIRP The Freshman Survey (2008), and Your First College Year Survey (2009). From these sources a common story emerges about the perception and reality of alcohol use at Stonehill.

Alcohol Use at Stonehill: Perception and Reality

Student and Community Perceptions

While most members of our community believe alcohol use and binge drinking among Stonehill students are in line with national averages, we are, in fact, overachievers in this area, compared to peer institutions and by national standards.

- According to the Health and Behavior Assessment (2009), when asked if they were concerned about their own alcohol use, most Stonehill students replied, “No” (97%). They also did not believe that alcohol use diminishes their academic performance (89%) or negatively impacts their health (76%). When asked if they would like to cut down on their alcohol use, the majority of Stonehill students responded in the negative (85%).
- According to the Core Survey (2009), most students think that alcohol use at Stonehill is less than or about the same as other colleges (90%). A relatively small number of students (10%) think that alcohol use at Stonehill is greater compared to other colleges.

The Real Story

- The Core Survey (2009) reveals that 25% of students reported missing a class during the past year due to drinking or drug use, while 19% reported poor test or homework performance. 77% of students reported having a hangover during past year, and 19% admitted to driving under the influence. 49% of Stonehill students had a memory loss as a result of their drinking and drug use. 51% did something they regretted while under the influence, and 12% reported being taken advantage of sexually while intoxicated.
- On average, the majority of first year students at Stonehill spend about the same number of hours partying as they do studying (3-10 per week), according to the CIRP Freshman Survey (2008) and Your First College Year Survey (2009).

2009 Health and Behavior Assessment: Variable base size: Q1 –concerned, n=357; Q2 –negatively impacts health, n=353; Q3 –negatively impacts academics, n=349; Q4 –cut down, n=349. **2009 Core Survey Total Respondents:** n=392. **2008 CIRP TFS Total Respondents:** Stonehill, n=320; Peer 1,271. **2009 YFCY Total Respondents:** Stonehill, n=320; Peer n=1,271. 2009 YFCY and 2008 TFS base numbers are taken from a longitudinal report based on matched pairs, using only students who responded to both the CIRP Freshman Survey and the YFCY. The actual base numbers are slightly higher. For example, **2008 CIRP TFS Total Respondents:** Stonehill, n=522; **2009 YFCY Total Respondents:** Stonehill, n=401.

Prepared by Todd Gernes, Ph.D., on behalf of the Office of Planning and Institutional Research, March 2010.

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The College Effect

It is well known that the frequency high risk drinking or binge drinking increases during the first few weeks of college as students experience the freedom of living away from home for the first time. This is often referred to as the “college effect.” Stonehill students demonstrate this phenomenon all too clearly. When asked about the frequency of beer and wine/liquor consumption during the past year, Stonehill freshmen responded as follows (note the increase in frequency from September 2008 to April 2009, especially with wine/liquor consumption):

How often did you drink beer during past year?

DRANK BEER	Stonehill			Peer Group*		
	<u>Sept.</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>Sept.</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>Change</u>
Frequently	6.4%	15.4%	9.0%	9.1%	16.7%	7.6%
Occasionally	41.8%	43.1%	1.3%	37.9%	37%	<-1%
Not at all	51.8%	41.5%	-10.3%	53.1%	45.9%	-7.2%

How often did you drink wine/liquor during past year?

DRANK WINE/LIQUOR	Stonehill			Peer Group*		
	<u>Sept.</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>Sept.</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>Change</u>
Frequently	5.5%	23.8%	18.3%	7.9%	16.1%	8.2%
Occasionally	46.3%	45.0%	-1.3%	43.4%	42.2%	-1.2%
Not at all	48.2%	31.2%	-17.0%	48.7%	41.7%	-7.2%

Binge Drinking

- 65% of Stonehill students surveyed reported engaging in high risk drinking or binge drinking in the past two weeks, compared to a national average of 43%, according to the Core Survey (2009).
- Stonehill students enter the College binge drinking at a rate of 34%. The national rate is roughly 20%. The percentage of first year students who binge drank increased from 34% to 54% (20%) during the first six months of college, according to the CIRP Freshman Survey (2008) and Your First College Year Survey (2009). Overall, Stonehill students binge drink at significantly higher rates than the national average.

**Peers selected from participating institutions: St. John’s University (NY), Fordham University, Elon University, Denison University, and Juniata College.*

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