Brains are still “under construction” until age 25.
The earlier in life alcohol use begins, the greater the likelihood of problems. The teenage years are a critical window when the brain is more sensitive to alcohol and drugs. Researchers believe that early exposure to alcohol during this critical window of brain construction sets the stage for changes in the brain that might result in problems with memory and learning, and also make a young person more vulnerable to the addictive properties of drugs and alcohol later in life.

The Numbers

2 in 5
Number of college students in the U.S. who drink excessively

1 in 4
Number of college students who say that alcohol interferes with their academic performance

Excessive drinking makes it harder for students to take advantage of all that college has to offer, and can impede their progress toward reaching their goals.

Alcohol harms brain structures that carry out learning, memory, and information processing tasks.

Getting drunk early in life “hijacks” the process of brain development. One possible result? A lifelong vulnerability to addiction.

Hangovers cloud a student’s ability to think and concentrate, so performance suffers both in and out of class.

How much is too much?
All underage drinking should be discouraged. “Binge” drinking is defined as 4 drinks for women or 5 drinks for men in about 2 hours.

Learn what you can do to reduce excessive drinking on your college campus by visiting www.marylandcollaborative.org


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