

[< Back](#) | [Home](#)

# Campus program seeks to educate students about effects of alcohol

by Jayna Boyle

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Beer companies make \$5 billion from college students each year, which is more than what students spend on books, soda, coffee and juice combined, according to Choices, a program at New Mexico State University designed to educate students on the effects of alcohol.

An estimated 4 billion cans of beer are consumed annually by college students.

In the CORE Alcohol survey of NMSU students, 60 percent of those surveyed reported they do not binge drink. Binge drinking is defined as consuming five or more drinks in one sitting for men and four or more drinks in one sitting for women.

Thirty-five percent of NMSU students reported in the survey that they refrain from drinking alcohol and 63 percent said they have three or fewer drinks per week.

Peer Educator Lisa Enriquez said Choices is an on-campus program funded and organized through the counseling center to increase awareness about alcohol. The program has also been funded by outside grants in the past.

Instead of telling students what to do, Choices provides students with information to assist them in decision-making situations, Enriquez said.

Kate Cunningham, coordinator of Choices, said the program is also designed to focus on harm reduction. Choices has general statistics for sexual assault issues and can help students contact La Piñon Sexual Assault Recovery Services of Southern New Mexico for further assistance.

Choices presents information to most University 150 classes, as well as any organization requesting assistance.

Choices served non-alcoholic cocktail drinks called "mocktails" to residents in the Rhodes-Garrett-Hamiel Residence Hall on Tuesday evening. A PowerPoint presentation displayed information as students mingled with each other, dressed for a cocktail party.

Resident Assistant Katina Corder planned the event.

"Its purpose is to show students that you can be smart about alcohol," she said. "You can't stop students from drinking, but at least this way they might drink responsibly in the future."

For more information on Choices, contact Kate Cunningham or Jeanette Cash at the Choices office at 646-2813, send an e-mail to [choices@nmsu.edu](mailto:choices@nmsu.edu) or visit their Web site at [www.nmsu.edu/~choices](http://www.nmsu.edu/~choices).

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