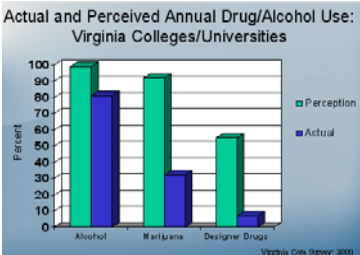


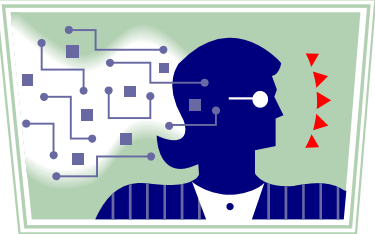













The Issue or Concern	Our Response	Resident Advisor's Role												
<p>A range of problems or areas of concern result from alcohol abuse. These can detract from the quality of life faced by students, and include violent behavior, vandalism, detractions from academics, and other consequences.</p>	<p>The strategies undertaken by the Healthy Expectations project are designed to complement existing services, programs, policies and related efforts. These build upon and often go in different directions from typical efforts.</p>	<p>You have a vital role to play in the lives of new students, as well as their parents. Each of your residents will seek your guidance and opinions regarding life at George Mason University. This is particularly true of first year students who are trying to learn to fit in at George Mason. New students will watch your behaviors, sense your attitudes, and listen carefully to your words</p>												
<p>Students typically overestimate the level of drug and alcohol use by their peers; they think “everyone is doing it.” This tends to result in higher use patterns to keep up with the “imaginary peer.”</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Actual and Perceived Annual Drug/Alcohol Use: Virginia Colleges/Universities</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Substance</th> <th>Perception (%)</th> <th>Actual (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Alcohol</td> <td>~95</td> <td>~80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Marijuana</td> <td>~90</td> <td>~35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Designer Drugs</td> <td>~60</td> <td>~10</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Substance	Perception (%)	Actual (%)	Alcohol	~95	~80	Marijuana	~90	~35	Designer Drugs	~60	~10	<p>We incorporate social norms marketing strategies to educate the campus community about the reality of students' alcohol use. Posters, bulletin boards, media campaigns, and email messages help provide accurate and current facts. Information comes from GMU data collection, updated annually, as well as from state and national sources.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be accurate with alcohol messages</li> <li>• Emphasize that “NOT everyone is doing it”</li> <li>• Correct misinformation as you hear it</li> <li>• Promote the wide range of activities available at GMU and in the surrounding community</li> <li>• When in doubt, say so and then try to obtain the information</li> </ul> 
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<p>Most traditional drug/alcohol prevention programs nationally deal with the symptoms and behavioral consequences associated with substance use.</p> 	 <p>Our approach addresses factors that underlie substance abuse, which, if addressed, will reduce the demand for alcohol and other drugs. These seven life health themes, emerging from a national conference, offer positive ways to have vibrant health and a more meaningful life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be positive and upbeat about life at GMU</li> <li>• Promote the various cultural, social, recreational, academic, personal support, and other activities and services available</li> <li>• Talk about the quality experiences and good relationships you have had here</li> <li>• Describe ways in which you have maintained a healthy balance of life during your first year and later</li> </ul> 												

The Issue or Concern	Our Response	Resident Advisor's Role
<p>All too often, prevention programs emphasize a top-down approach that results in “telling students what to do.”</p> 	<p>Our efforts empower students to deal with the range of challenges faced at college. We promote strategies to help students decide how they will care for their bodies, minds and spirits. We engage students in program design and implementation, including the use of peer theater, a “student voices” videotape, and a dynamic web page.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend carefully to what others say</li> <li>• Respond to what students (or parents) are saying, as well as to what they are inferring or implying</li> <li>• Discuss the variety of ways in which students can get involved in campus activities, whether as an observer or as an active participant</li> <li>• Promote self-responsibility among your residents</li> </ul> 
 <p>Historically, substance abuse prevention efforts have focused on individuals, with attempts to promote behavioral change through increasing knowledge and influencing attitudes.</p>	<p>Our innovative approach expands upon individual-based strategies and emphasizes changes to the overall culture and campus environment. Strategies include group discussions, message dissemination, and regular emails to new students.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the quality of life at GMU and in the surrounding community</li> <li>• Encourage students to take advantage of personal growth opportunities</li> <li>• Emphasize that students can help make GMU their campus</li> </ul> 
 <p>The vast majority of drug/alcohol abuse prevention efforts rely on the expertise of a single office or individual to guide and shape their strategies.</p>	<p>Healthy Expectations promotes the use of “intermediaries” and “gatekeepers” in promoting quality, positive messages to students. These include RAs, Orientation Leaders, parents, and faculty and staff.</p> 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage your residents to ask for help when questions arise</li> <li>• Suggest that those in positions of authority genuinely DO want to be of assistance</li> <li>• Promote the importance of being responsible for creating personal success</li> <li>• Encourage students to pursue leadership positions on campus.</li> </ul>