Hello LIVE REAL Mentors!

This semester has just flown by, and the holiday season is upon us. As we celebrate this holiday season, it is important to keep in mind the facts listed below and share these with our friends, family, colleagues, students and other members of our community.

- **Alcohol-related accidents increase over the holiday season**: significantly more alcohol-related traffic crashes occur on New Year’s Eve than on other mid-week winter evenings. Planning ahead and knowing the facts about alcohol can help make sure it truly is a Happy New Year.

- **Alcohol impacts driving ability, even before the physical signs of intoxication are present.** Critical driving-related skills, such as fine motor skills and response time, and decision-making abilities are impacted long before a person may show obvious signs of being intoxicated.

- **The effects of alcohol do not stop when drinking does.** Even after a person stops drinking, alcohol can continue to enter the bloodstream from the stomach and intestine. A person’s BAC (and subsequent level of intoxication) can continue rising even after consumption has stopped, and the effects of alcohol will continue long after as well.

- **Drinking coffee or another caffeinated beverage after drinking will not sober a person up – only time can do that.** Caffeine will not counteract the effects alcohol has on decision-making or coordination – even if a person feels less intoxicated! Sleep isn’t magical either – a person’s BAC may still be over the limit and driving ability may still be impaired even the morning after a night of heavy drinking.

What can you do as a LIVE REAL Mentor this holiday season?

- **Speak openly and honestly with those around you about alcohol and its effects.** As strange as it sounds, talking about standard drink sizes (how many drinks are really in a martini?) or what mixing alcohol and caffeine does to the body can be interesting conversation topics at those awkward holiday parties.

- **Share tips for stress reduction that don’t involve alcohol consumption.** Yes, this time of year is often considered to be the most wonderful, but for many it can also be very stressful. This can lead to increased drinking around the holiday season. Suggest some alternate stress-reduction activities instead, like getting some exercise (take a walk, go sledding, grab a pair of skis, go bowling, etc.) or taking some quiet time away from everything to relax and unwind.

- **Help your friends and family make a plan to consume safely** – use the BAC calculator at [http://www.ndsu.edu/alcoholinfo/measure_your_drinking/](http://www.ndsu.edu/alcoholinfo/measure_your_drinking/) to help your loved ones determine how to maintain a BAC of .05 or lower. This “point of diminishing returns” is the point at which one more drink will no longer increase the desirable effects of drinking. Beyond this point, the likelihood of injury and other undesirable effects occurring is magnified. Here are some other tips to share:
  - If you plan to drink, choose the number of drinks you will have ahead of time.
  - Alternate alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks throughout the evening.
o Select a designated driver who won’t be drinking at all that night.
o If you are worried about someone who has possibly consumed too much, watch for the signs of alcohol poisoning (person is nonresponsive, slow or irregular breathing, vomiting, seizures) and **take action immediately** by calling 911 if signs are present (they do not all need to be present for alcohol poisoning to occur).

Announcements:

- Congratulations to the following LIVE REAL Mentors who have completed the Train the Trainer program in Fall 2010: Kelly Larson (Registration & Records), Stephanie Hedge (Residence Life), Rachel Benz (graduate student), Ivan Lima (Electrical & Computer Engineering), Sarah Dodd (Student Life), Nona Wood (Student Life), Emily Frazier (Student Life), Brittnée Steckler (Human Resources), Shelly Lura (Human Resources), Sherri Stastny (Health, Nutrition & Exercise Science), Shalin Rathnasinghe (graduate student), and Vince Garcia (NDSU Libraries). These mentors are now able to present the LIVE REAL Mentor Training program to members of our campus community.
- Additional Train the Trainer sessions will be available during the Spring 2011 semester. Watch for dates in an upcoming LRM listserv message.
- As of December 1, 2010, over 1,050 NDSU students, faculty and staff have completed the LIVE REAL Mentor Training program!
- The final LRM session for Fall will be held next Wednesday, December 8th at 4:00 p.m. in the Hidatsa Room, Memorial Union. Please help spread the word to all NDSU students, staff and faculty.

Thank you for all you do as LIVE REAL Mentors for our community! Have a safe and happy holiday season!

Best,

Erika