

# Protective Behaviors and High-Risk Drinking Among Entering College Freshmen

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**Objectives:** To explore the use of protective behaviors to reduce risks associated with alcohol consumption among adolescents during the summer preceding college enrollment. **Methods:** Survey data were collected in fall 2006 and 2007 that assessed demographic characteristics, drinking behaviors, and use of protective behaviors in the 3 months preceding the survey. **Results:** Female participants reported using 4 out of 10

protective behaviors more often than did males, and using protective behaviors was significantly related to fewer negative drinking-related consequences. **Conclusions:** Findings highlight potential benefits of using protective behaviors and the need to promote effective behaviors.

**Key words:** protective behaviors; harm reduction; college drinking

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