



Take the “Alco” out of Alcoholidays

St. Patrick’s Day is quickly approaching and many look forward to celebrating the holiday by wearing something green and getting together with friends. Unfortunately, in some cases many choose to drink large quantities of alcohol.

St. Patrick’s Day traditionally ranks as one of the most popular days to drink in excess, with many drinking from early morning to late in the evening. March 17th, traditionally a day the Irish honor their patron saint, Patrick, by attending religious services and having community and family gatherings, has recently been referred to as an “alcohol holiday.”

Halloween and Cinco de Mayo are just two of many holidays that are joining the ranks of being better known for the consumption of alcohol than their original customary religious or cultural celebrations. Cinco de Mayo, The 5th of May, which commemorates the victory of the Mexican militia over the French army at The Battle of Puebla in 1862, has been promoted in the United States as a day to celebrate with large quantities of alcohol. Few non-Mexicans even know what they are celebrating.

This disturbing trend is being promoted on several fronts. Recently, Guinness & Company took out a full page advertisement in major newspapers featuring a letter to members of the U.S. Congress urging them to recognize St. Patrick’s Day as an official holiday by giving everyone the day off work to celebrate. Their goal is to obtain enough signatures on official petitions found wherever Guinness is sold to present to Congress on St. Patrick’s Day. Their objective is clear.

Exuberant alcohol holiday celebrations are dangerous. Last year on Ohio’s roads six people died in alcohol-related crashes over St. Patrick’s weekend, however, car crashes are just one of many problems created by excessive holiday celebrations. Violence, sexual assaults, vandalism and alcohol poisoning are just a few more devastating consequences associated with high-risk alcohol consumption.

We are currently evolving into a culture where alcohol is becoming the reason for the celebration and not something that simply complements the holiday. It is important for all of the community to look carefully at the messages bombarding us and our youth and pay attention to who the messages are targeted to.

As underage drinking and other dangerous alcohol consumption becomes more prevalent and threatens our health and safety, it behooves us to send the strong message to not put “alco” in holidays.

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Red Ribbon Celebration

College Initiative to Reduce
High Risk Drinking

Ohio Resource Network
Clearinghouse

Statewide Prevention
Coalition Association

Parents Who Host, Lose The Most:
Don't be a party to teenage drinking

Ohio Center for
Coalition Excellence

Know!

Youth Philanthropy
Council

www.DrugFreeActionAlliance.org