

### High-risk college drinking happens in student groups.

Our interventions should focus there as well.

Research has told us for years that high-risk student drinkers “cluster” together, and that this phenomenon often creates student groups, organizations, and fraternity or sorority chapters that have integrated high-risk drinking into their practices, rituals, and traditions. Yet we often apply evidence-based strategies to individuals or whole populations rather than to these high-risk communities.

FailSafe is an effort to fill this gap in college drinking prevention. It is a web-based toolkit that engages and empowers student leaders to assess, manage, and reduce high risk drinking behaviors among members of their student organization. The toolkit is made up of evidence-based interventions that have been designed or redeveloped for application to student organizations, and uses known student leaders and senior peers who are in the best position to influence the group’s culture and the behavior of individual members. It can be used by student leaders of fraternity and sorority chapters, sports clubs, and recognized student organizations of any kind, enabling the group to take on the issue of risky alcohol use at organization activities and adapt the strategies to best meet the needs of their group’s unique make-up and culture.

The nine tools of the FailSafe toolkit guide student leaders to become better aware of their organization’s problems related to unmanaged risk-taking with alcohol, and to engage their membership to be a part of the solution. The goal of the tools isn’t to make students of legal age become alcohol-free, but to empower them to make conscious changes with their members that result in better outcomes – the fun of socializing together without the problems caused by high-risk and dangerous consumption.

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The data collected in FailSafe is kept private. Only the individual sees their own feedback, and only the group sees the combined feedback for the group. The web-based system can operate on any computer or mobile device, and is protected by a password that each student leader and member sets for themselves.

*The FailSafe toolkit was funded through a generous grant from the Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility and created by the American Institutes for Research, with input from student leaders and college prevention experts.*

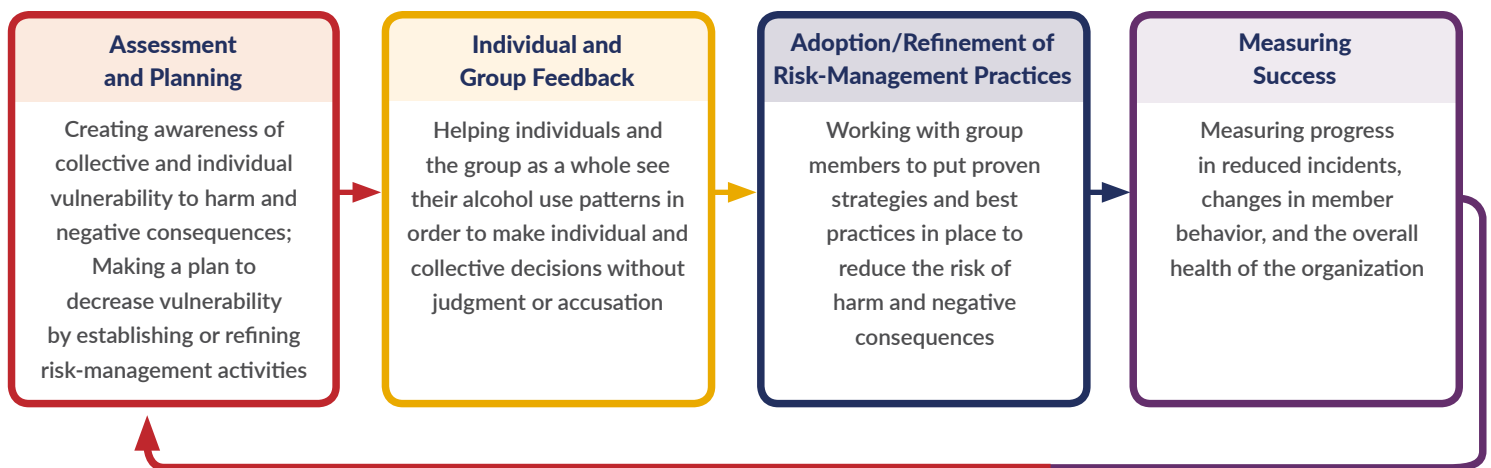
## What Is the failsafe Process?

The toolkit takes student leaders through four stages of the FailSafe process so they can:

1. **Assess** their organization's collective risk and the individual risk level of group members
2. **Interpret** feedback from the assessment and identify their organization's alcohol-use patterns
3. **Implement** risk-management practices
4. **Measure** progress in reducing alcohol-related incidents, changing unsafe behavior, and improving the overall health and well-being of their organization

Student organization commitment is to completing the first tool, which provides a complete assessment that can guide decisions about what other tools to use.

## Stages of the failsafe Process



## How Does failsafe Benefit Your Institution?

FailSafe benefits include the following:

- Enhances and supports institutional efforts to address high-risk drinking on campus and in the community, and is aligned with best practices and evidence-based strategies.
- Enables students, especially those in groups known to engage in high-risk drinking, to actively participate in addressing these issues autonomously.
- Provides your institution with a way to engage and leverage high-risk student groups in addressing the harm and consequences related to their alcohol use.
- Encourages student leaders to work collaboratively with others on campus and in the community to address high-risk drinking and related harm.
- Serves as an opportunity for leadership development and can serve as a co-curricular opportunity for students involved in formal leadership programs on campus.
- Encourages students to access campus resources such as peer education, health promotion, judicial affairs, student leadership development, and counseling services.

## The Institution's Role: Creating A Supportive Environment For failsafe

Research and evaluation of high-risk drinking prevention efforts in college communities suggests that interventions like FailSafe work best when they are part of a comprehensive environmental strategy.

Comprehensive environmental strategies focus on creating clear community standards related to alcohol use and intoxicated behavior—standards that are consistently enforced and adjudicated across the campus and the surrounding community.

While all student organizations can benefit from participating in FailSafe, institutions where administrators are able to answer “yes” to the following questions are more likely to be able to support the program, thereby increasing the chances for success.

- Does your institution use environmental management strategies (policy, education, enforcement) to address alcohol use on campus?
- Is there active enforcement and adjudication of alcohol policies on campus and in the surrounding community?
- Do your student leaders know that their organizations are vulnerable to campus and community actions in response to high-risk or illegal behaviors?
- Is there campus-wide awareness of efforts to address high-risk drinking on campus and in the surrounding community?
- Does your institution apply judicial sanctions for student organization violations of the campus drug and alcohol policy? Does your policy include jurisdiction for student organization activities off campus?
- Are there on-campus resources for students who want to change their drinking behavior, including dependency assessment and treatment or referral to treatment resources?
- Are there leadership development resources and supports for leaders of student organizations?

Even if some of these elements are missing on your campus, we do want your institution to participate in the FailSafe pilot! What's most important is a willingness to support student leaders who want to try out FailSafe and see how it benefits their student organization.

For more information about participating in FailSafe,  
contact [failsafe@air.org](mailto:failsafe@air.org) or 301.592.2215.

## Be Part of the failsafe Pilot

A national pilot test of the FailSafe student leader toolkit is underway to measure its effectiveness at reducing high-risk drinking rates and harm within student organizations.

We are actively seeking student organizations at all types of campuses—four-year, two-year, public, private, large and small campuses—to participate in the pilot. All student groups and organizations can participate, including:

- Fraternity and sorority chapters
- Sports clubs
- Recognized student organizations
- Residence halls/floors of residence halls

Being a part of the pilot test is easy and requires little additional involvement by student leaders or campus administrators. The evaluation is being conducted by the Nebraska Prevention Center for Alcohol and Drug Abuse, led by Dr. Ian Newman. Data from FailSafe's individualized feedback tool will be used to measure changes in drinking behaviors, harm, and attitudes about alcohol use in the student organization. Additional information collected from participating student organizations and the institution includes police/emergency medical calls for service, number of incidents requiring judicial intervention, general health of the organization, and other identified markers of change.

During the pilot-test period, FailSafe is being offered to participating student organizations and institutions at no cost in exchange for the use of the collected data for this pilot evaluation. Privacy of the individual student, organization, and institution is assured. All data collected by the FailSafe program is kept secure and protected by a password that the individual student and student leader create. Data used for the evaluation is only provided in aggregate, with all participating organizations de-identified. Only the individual student member has access to their survey results and feedback, and only the student organization leader has access to the data from the chapter, group, club, or organization. For

more information about our data privacy assurances, please see the About tab at <http://failsafetools.org>. All student organizations enrolling in the FailSafe program in 2017 will be invited to participate in the pilot test. A protocol is available for your institution's IRB if needed; the pilot has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of the American Institutes for Research.

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To begin the process, student leaders should email [failsafe@air.org](mailto:failsafe@air.org). As always, we are happy to speak by phone and answer any questions. Additional information for student leaders is also available.

We are also exploring alternative models for FailSafe, such as the use of the tools by peer educators and student affairs staff. If you are interested in using FailSafe in a unique way, please contact us at [failsafe@air.org](mailto:failsafe@air.org).

### How to encourage your student organizations to make the most of FailSafe:

- Shoulder tap those student groups you know could benefit from the toolkit.
- Direct them to the website: <http://failsafetools.org>.
- Encourage them to read the "About" page on the website.
- Let them know that the college/university supports their efforts to manage the risk of alcohol-related harm and problems.
- Let them know that even though you won't have access to their data, you will be there to see and note their success.
- Let us help! We can arrange a call with you or any student leader to provide more information and explain the benefits of the program.