

**THE "RISKY BUSINESS" OF BINGE DRINKING AMONG  
COLLEGE STUDENTS: USING RISK MODELS FOR PSAS AND  
ANTI-DRINKING CAMPAIGNS**

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**ABSTRACT:** To assist creators of public service announcements and anti-drinking campaigns, this study provides an in-depth examination of the risks of binge drinking from the perspective of college students. Using current risk models for guidance, key elements from the qualitative data in the study are addressed, including perceived risks and their severity, vulnerability to risks, self-efficacy, response efficacy, benefits from ritual functions, and other costs or benefits based on students' attitudes and beliefs. An integrated risk perception model is introduced. Student participants enumerated extensive risks; however, they generally felt invulnerable to the consequences. Most adopted a management style of "taking chances" when binge drinking because they perceived a built-in safety net in the college environment. Three ritual functions and various attitudes and beliefs help explain why a cost and benefit analysis favors binge drinking. Recommendations are given.

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