



ESL Podcast 1058 – Preventing Binge Drinking

GLOSSARY

at it again – doing something again, especially when referring a behavior that one does not like

* This morning, the neighbors were at it again, using their loud lawn mower at 5:15 a.m. on a Saturday!

kegger – a party where a lot of beer is served from a keg (a large container holding five to 10 gallons), especially at a college party

* During his first year of college, Trent went to a kegger every weekend, and his grades began to suffer.

to binge drink – to drink a lot of alcohol in a short period of time, usually defined as four to five drinks at once, often every week or two

* Some people think that if it were legal for teenagers to drink alcohol, they wouldn't be tempted to binge drink whenever they have the opportunity.

rite of passage – an event or activity that marks one's transition from one stage to another

* Learning how to drive is a rite of passage for American teenagers.

menace – something that is threatening, scary, and dangerous

* That dog is a menace! We can't even walk by their house without it trying to bite one of us.

to get out of hand – to become too wild and out of control; to be uncontrollable

* Samantha's spending on electronics and clothes is getting out of control.

cop – a police officer; a policeman or policewoman

* Have you ever been pulled over by the cops while driving someone else's car?

to overreact – to react to something too strongly, acting as if something is bigger or more important than it actually is

* The newscaster announced that a small storm was coming, but Elmer really overreacted, buying all the bottled water, canned food, and flashlights that he could find.

sidewalk – the narrow, paved area along the side of a road where people walk and cars are not allowed to drive

* Is it legal to ride bicycles on the sidewalks downtown?



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to pass out – to distribute; to give things to other people when one has many of the same thing

* The student organizations sometimes pass out free candy to try to find new members.

flyer – a small piece of paper with information about something, usually an event, given to people one at a time

* The kids made flyers asking people to help them find their lost cat.

to moderate – to control the level or amount of something so that it is not too high or too low

* Parents are responsible for moderating how much television their children watch.

for (one's) own good – for one's benefit, especially when that person may not agree

* Paulina is really upset that her parents won't let her date until she's 17, but they say it's for her own good.

to give (someone) the time of day – to show enough respect or courtesy to another person to acknowledge or greet him or her

* Once Molly became the CEO, she became arrogant and wouldn't even give her old friends the time of day.

to pass – to move forward and around something that was in the way

* Slower cars should drive in one of the right lanes so that faster cars can pass in the left one.

to drink responsibly – to avoid drinking too much alcohol; to drink alcohol safely, staying in control of one's behavior and never driving while drunk

* Krzysztof says he drinks responsibly, but having six beers every night is too much.

to waylay – to stop someone; to interrupt someone and prevent him or her from doing something

* We planned to go to the beach for the afternoon, but we were waylaid by talkative neighbors.



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What are the students doing at the kegger?
 - a) They're playing their music too loudly.
 - b) They're being rude to the neighbors.
 - c) They're drinking a lot of alcohol.

2. What will they do if the party gets out of hand?
 - a) They'll ask the police to come.
 - b) They'll request an invitation.
 - c) They'll complain to the college.

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

rite of passage

The phrase “rite of passage,” in this podcast, means an event or activity that marks one’s transition from one stage to another: “Going to that training is a rite of passage for our employees. Once you finish it, you’re on track for a job in management.” Or, “Losing your teeth is a rite of passage for six- and seven-year-olds.” Normally “rites” are ceremonies that are always performed the same way: “His thesis is about the funeral rites of Native Americans in the Midwestern United States.” The phrase “last rites” refers to the ceremonies that are performed and prayers that are said immediately before someone dies, especially when talking about Catholics: “The hospital helped the family arrange for a priest to come and give Lev his last rights.”

to pass

In this podcast, the verb “to pass” means to move forward and around something that was in the way: “Walk faster so we can pass those slow hikers who are blocking our view.” The phrase “to pass (something) to (someone)” is used when eating to ask someone to move a dish closer so that one can reach it: “Please pass the macaroni salad to our guest.” The phrase “to let (something) pass” means to decide not to say anything in reaction when someone does or says something unpleasant or offensive: “If a co-worker tells an offensive joke, is it okay to let it pass, or should I tell him it’s inappropriate?” Finally, the phrase “to pass unnoticed” means for something to happen without getting much attention: “If they reduce teachers’ benefits again, it won’t pass unnoticed.”



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CULTURE NOTE

Combating Alcohol-Related Deaths on Campus

Many American college students “drink heavily” (drink a lot of alcohol), and in some cases, this can lead to “alcohol poisoning” (needing medical help because one has drunk too much alcohol) or even death. Universities try many different things to “combat” (fight against) these alcohol-related deaths and protect students.

Many universities focus on educating students, making sure that all “incoming students” (new students) are taught the definition of binge drinking. They also give students access to many resources they can use if they or a friend have problems with alcohol, such as free “counseling” (speaking with a psychologist or another professional to search for a solution to a problem).

Other universities focus more on preventing access to alcohol “on campus” (in and around the university buildings). The universities might work with the police and local “liquor stores” (stores that sell alcohol) to ensure that laws are “enforced” (people are made to follow the law) and people under age 21 are not allowed to buy alcohol. University officials also limit students’ access to alcohol at university-sponsored events, such as sports games.

Finally, some universities focus on trying to change the “campus culture” (what people affiliated with a university believe and how they behave), especially by focusing on “fraternities and sororities” (organizations requiring membership that house many young college students, often with a lot of events with alcohol) and trying to provide “alternative activities” (things that students can do for fun instead of drinking).

Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – c; 2 – a



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 1,058 – Preventing Binge Drinking.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 1,058. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Visit our website at ESLPod.com. When you're there, you can look at our ESL Podcast Store, which has some additional courses in Business and Daily English I think you might enjoy.

This episode is a dialogue about people who drink too much – too much alcohol, that is. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Danielle: They're at it again. Those college kids next door are having another kegger.

Nabil: That's what we get for buying a house this close to a college. College students will have keggers and they'll binge drink. It's a rite of passage.

Danielle: It's dangerous to their health and a menace to the neighborhood, and I'm going to do something about it.

Nabil: There's nothing we can do. If it gets out of hand, we can call the cops, but let's not overreact.

Danielle: I'm not overreacting. They're college students, so I'm going to teach them about the dangers of binge drinking.

Nabil: What are you going to do?

Danielle: I'm going to wait on the sidewalk and pass out flyers as people arrive. This flyer lists the many health reasons they should moderate their drinking. It's for their own good.

Nabil: And you think college students are going to give you the time of day?

Danielle: I won't let them pass unless they agree to drink responsibly.



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Nabil: I have a feeling we'll see the cops tonight.

Danielle: You think the party will get out of hand?

Nabil: No, I think they'll be here to arrest the crazy lady waylaying people outside of their house!

[end of dialogue]

Our dialogue begins with Danielle saying to Nabil, "They're at it again." "To be at something again" means to be doing something again, especially when we are referring to something that we don't like. If you hear your neighbors arguing with each other, you might say, "They're at it again." They're arguing again. They're doing something you don't like again. In this case, the problem is not people arguing, but college students drinking.

Danielle says, "Those college students next door," meaning next to the house where we live, "are having another kegger." A "kegger" (kegger) is a party that has a lot of people and a lot of beer. The beer comes in a big barrel, a big container called a "keg" (keg). So, it's very popular, especially among college students, to have parties where someone brings a big keg – a big barrel, basically – of beer. These parties are called "keggers." Remember, in the U.S., the drinking age is 21 years old. However, this doesn't stop people under 21 from drinking, especially at parties such as keggers.

Nabil says, "That's what we get for buying a house this close to a college." "That's what we get" means that is the logical negative consequence of something. If someone says to you, "You put on twenty pounds" – you've gained twenty pounds – "That's what you get for eating all of that chocolate," the idea is that the logical consequence of eating all of that chocolate is that you gain weight. The logical consequence of moving into a house that is close to a college or university is that you get student parties.

"College students," Nabil continues, "will have keggers and they'll binge drink. It's a rite of passage." "To binge (binge) on" something means to consume a lot of it. "To binge drink" would be to drink a lot of alcohol in a short amount of time. "To binge watch" would be to watch a lot of television in a short amount of time. That expression "to binge watch" has become popular in the last few years to refer to people who like to watch all of the episodes of a certain television series in a short amount of time, say over a single weekend.



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“Rite (rite) of passage (passage)” refers to an event or an activity that marks or indicates your movement or transition from one stage to another. A rite of passage would be something that everyone goes through at a certain age that indicates that they are growing older or that they are changing. Nabil is saying that having keggers is a rite of passage for college students; it’s something that all college students do. Danielle says, however, “It’s dangerous to their health and a menace to the neighborhood, and I’m going to do something about it.”

Danielle says that the binge drinking of her college neighbors is a “menace” (menace) to the neighborhood. A menace is something that is dangerous, scary, or threatening. There was an old television show called “Dennis the Menace.” Dennis was a young child who was always getting into trouble. Usually, however, “menace” has a little more negative meaning than just the trouble that a young boy would get into. When you say something is “menacing,” you mean that it is threatening you in a very dangerous way.

Danielle thinks that the binge drinking of her college neighbors is a menace to the neighborhood, and she’s going to “do something about it,” meaning she’s going to somehow try to stop it or change it. Nabil says, “There is nothing we can do. If it gets out of hand, we can call the cops, but let’s not overreact.” When something “gets out of hand” (hand), it gets out of control. It becomes too wild for anyone to control it and to limit the damage it might cause.

If the party gets out of control, Nabil says they can call the cops. The “cops” (cops) are the police. The word “cop” is used informally to refer to a police officer. “Let’s not overreact,” Nabil says, however. “To overreact” (overreact) means to react to something too strongly – to act as if something is more important than it really is, especially when you are reacting in a negative way.

If your wife tells you that you need to wash the dishes tonight after dinner, and you start yelling and screaming about how you’re too busy, that would be overreacting. That would be reacting in a negative way that the situation doesn’t require or doesn’t seem appropriate for. Danielle says, “I’m not overreacting. They’re college students, so I’m going to teach them about the dangers of binge drinking.” Nabil says, “What are you going to do?” Danielle says, “I’m going to wait on the sidewalk and pass out flyers as people arrive.”

The “sidewalk” is a narrow area along the side of the road or the street where people walk up and down instead of walking in the street. Danielle is going to stand on the sidewalk near the house and pass out flyers. “To pass out” is a two-word phrasal verb that here means to give to people, especially people who are walking by – to give them pieces of paper. A “flyer” (flyer) is a piece of paper that



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has information on it, usually about some political cause, but sometimes just about information that the person passing it out thinks you should know.

Danielle’s flyer is going to list many health reasons, because of which students should moderate their drinking. “To moderate” (moderate) here means to control the amount of something so that it isn’t too high. It isn’t too much or it isn’t too little or too low. Danielle wants the students to moderate their drinking, meaning she doesn’t want them to stop drinking. She wants them to stop drinking too much. She says, “It’s for their own good.” The expression “for your own good” means it’s for your own benefit.

We often use this expression when you are telling someone to do something or to not do something when the person doesn’t agree with you that it’s a good thing or a bad thing to do. You think it’s good for them; the person doesn’t agree with you. That would be a case where we would use this expression “It’s for your own good.” Parents, for example, use this expression with their children when the children, say, don’t want to brush their teeth or eat their vegetables. They may say to the child, “It’s for your own good” – you will benefit from this. It is a good thing for you even if you don’t understand that.

Nabil says, “And you think college students are going to give you the time of day?” The expression “to give someone the time of day” doesn’t mean to tell someone the time right now. It means to pay attention to someone, to give someone the respect or courtesy that you might expect. If you don’t give someone the time of day, you’re not interested in talking to that person. You’re not even interested in listening to that person. Nabil thinks that these college students will just ignore Danielle standing on the sidewalk passing out her flyers.

Danielle says, “I won’t let them pass until they agree to drink responsibly.” The verb “to pass” (pass) here means to move forward and to go around something that is in your way. If you are walking down the street, and I stand right in front of you and I hold my arms out so that you cannot go by me, I would not be allowing you to pass. If I allow you to pass, I move out of the way so you can continue moving forward, you can continue walking.

Danielle says she’s not going to let these students pass, meaning she’s not going to let them go into the house, “until they agree to drink responsibly.” “To drink responsibly” is to avoid drinking too much alcohol – to avoid drinking too much. Nabil says, “I have a feeling we’ll see the cops tonight.” “I have a feeling” here means I predict, I expect. Danielle says, “Do you think the party will get out of hand?”



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Nabil says, “No. I think they’ll be here to arrest the crazy lady waylaying people outside of their house.” Nabil is referring of course to Danielle herself. He’s saying the cops, the police, will show up because Danielle is trying to stop people from getting into the house. “To waylay” (waylay) – one word – is to prevent someone from doing something – to stop someone, to interrupt someone. That’s what Danielle is thinking about doing with these binge-drinking college students.

Now let’s listen to the dialogue, this time at a normal speed.

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[end of dialogue]

Our scripts are not a menace to your English – they are, we hope, a great benefit to it. Thanks to our scriptwriter, Dr. Lucy Tse, for her work.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to us again right here on ESL Podcast.

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