

Topic: Alcohol use among Inbounds & Outbounds

Discussion session 13

Moderator: Ivan Lamos – Many of persons in the room have had students returned to Ivan, or he returned students to them...for alcohol related reasons.

Recorder: Ronda Werner

11:20 am Friday Feb. 27

23 Rotarians present

Enforcement of Rules about drinking much more liberal in some countries than others

Canada has challenges: different age limits in different parts of same district.(18-19) Birthday parties might be held in a bar, exchange students are warned against this

Host families and counselors are sometimes biggest hurdle, some allow drinking so YEO has to be the 'hard line' with the rules

John Stockwell from Washington State/B.C.: Students told drinking is illegal. With Outbounds, students are told the "D" in drinking really means not getting "Drunk." When students get in trouble for drinking, decision to send home depends on student's reaction – apologetic/contrite vs. unremorseful.

American teens go out to get drunk, not accustomed to social drinking. Student has to stay in control when drinking.

15 Districts in SCRYE: teach "no Drunkenness" for Outbounds. For IB's, danger that if given 1 chance then it can send wrong message to other inbounds. Student put on probation." Second offense sent home.

District 5550: also have multiple age limits 18, 19 in some areas. Don't have underage clubs. Some Rotarians own bars and they are asked not to serve Rotary Exchange students unless there are with host family. Being caught drunk results in sending home.

District 7120: Amended their directions to no drinking period. This has been a challenge. Previously, students are told not to drink in public.

In Czech/Slovak Republics drinking is not illegal for children. SERVING or SELLING alcohol to a minor is illegal. Tried to forbid under 18 not to drink while allowing 18+ to drink. Didn't work since students are of the same group. Had to disallow drinking for whole group. Czech Republic has a popular local drink with high alcohol content. Even good students make bad decisions – but sending home a student that broke the rules sets example to ALL the Inbounds that the rules are taken seriously. Students communicate instantly Face Book and other networking sites. Word gets out quickly. If there is drinking, prefer that an adult supervises to limit over drinking.

So. Wisconsin: Student was given a bottle of Vodka overseas. Discussion by District 6970: Advised against exchanging with that District again.

Mexico: Image is drinking tequila and other spirits – part of culture. Families have different rules. **They sometimes tape the 4-D's rules to the refrigerator so student remembers them and is reminded regularly.** Have to remind host clubs of the rules too. Rotarians have to set an example

Taiwan D4480: Taipei, Inbounds are able to meet each other conveniently due to close distance and public transportation. Easy for groups of Inbounds to party together, with alcohol taken. Alcohol is readily available from 7-11 type stores. **Have students sign guarantee that they won't drink. Difficult to enforce.**

D6310 Dave Smith asked – would you remove a prospective OB from the program if you knew they had drunk alcohol before? Response by Jeff: they had this situation happen. Dealt with by student doing community service and promising to abstain on exchange. Students can be dropped from program for any reason – placement is tentative on student's behavior before departure. Be consistent with punishment but punishment should also fit the 'crime.'

If student does not get sent home, sends message to other students that it's o.k.

Brazil: Had experience with boy that was drunk in the morning, had been drinking all night. His mother in the U.S. thought the boy learned to drink in Brazil – parents sometimes in denial. Student admitted that he had actually been drinking in U.S. for a long time, unknown to his mother.

If student writes on application that they have drunk alcohol before, they think they will not be accepted for exchange. Can we agree that telling truth on application is o.k.? Can't thoroughly investigate every student – have to trust them. May need additional options on application rather than Yes/No to alcohol question. How about "rarely" or "occasionally" options?

D3550 Thailand: student drinking on bus trip – mixed alcohol in coke can. Student sent home. Also discussed students kissing 'aggressively' in public.

Alcohol changes behavior so can lead to breaking other "D's."

RECORDER'S SYNOPSIS:

Rules about drinking varies from country to country, family to family, District to District
Punishment for alcohol use or abuse is a case-by-case situation

Be flexible when situation is warranted but be consistent with applying the rules

Drinking changes behavior and can lead to breaking other Ds

Sending student home sends message to other Inbounds that rules are taken seriously

Different rule enforcement depending on whether early or later in exchange. If student is seriously violating rule, then more likely to send home as example.

Outbound applicant's exchange has "TENTATIVE" status and can be withdrawn from program
BEFORE departure if behavior warrants this action

Make sure Outbounds and Inbounds know that they have signed an agreement NOT to drink
while on exchange and what the consequences are

Applications & Interviews don't give whole story, just have to trust the student

Social drinking is allowed in some countries where it is legal but must have adult supervision. In others it is illegal to offer any minor alcohol, even in your own home.

Recommendation to student: Let them know that there is NO DUTY TO DRINK EVER, no matter who offers to you.