The Holiday Season is typically a time of celebration...family, friends, parties, sweet treats, delicious food, and often alcohol. It’s important to plan in advance if you drink alcohol when celebrating. How will you get home? How much will you drink? Are you comfortable saying no if someone insists you drink? No one should pressure you into drinking.

Having 4 or more drinks during a single occasion (i.e. holiday celebration) actually has a name, it’s called “Binge Drinking”. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism defines binge drinking as a pattern of drinking that brings a person’s blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to 0.08% or above. This usually means about 5 drinks for men and 4 for women.

**Quick Facts**
- Most people who binge drink are not alcohol dependent.
- Approx. 92% of U.S. adults who drink excessively report binge drinking in the past 30 days.
- The prevalence of binge drinking among men is higher than among women.
- Binge drinkers are 14 times more likely to drive impaired by alcohol than non-binge drinkers.
- About 90% of the alcohol consumed by under-age youth in the U.S. is when binge drinking.
- Ethnicity and gender may also increase your susceptibility to intoxication.

**Binge drinking by age, US, 2009**

The rate of binge drinking among adults in the U.S. (chart on left) is similar in Arizona across most age ranges, except for adults ages 65 and over, which report a higher percentage than their U.S. counterparts.

**Costs**
In the United States alone, accidents where alcohol was involved cost the public approximately $114.3 billion (2000 figures). This figure is further broken down as follows:

- $51.1 billion in monetary costs
- $63.2 billion for loss of quality of life
- $71.6 billion for damages, paid out by someone other than the impaired driver.