



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**TOLEDO**  
1872

***The Effects of a Medical  
Amnesty Policy  
on a College Campus***

Presented for the:  
Illinois Higher Education Coalition  
by  
Tavis Glassman, PhD, MPH, MCHES



# Overview

- Scope of the Problem
- Medical Amnesty
- Program Goals
- Intervention
- Evaluation
- References





# Scope of the Problem

Alcohol is involved nationally in ...

- 1,825 student deaths annually
- 75% sexual assaults
- 66% of suicides
- 50% of all driving fatalities





# High-Risk Drinking/Binge Drinking

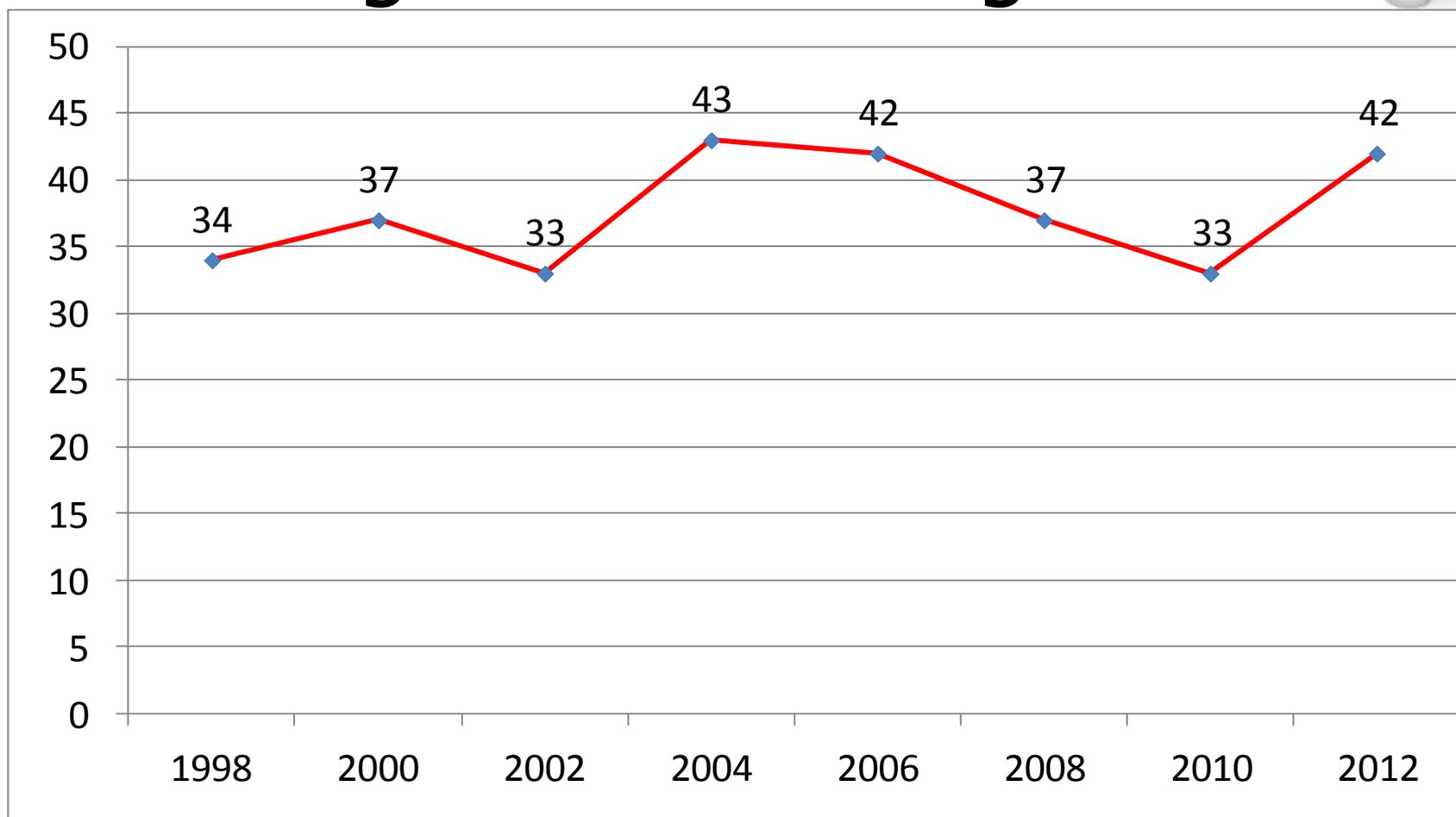
## What is binge drinking?

- 5 or more drinks in one sitting for men
- 4 or more drinks in one sitting for women



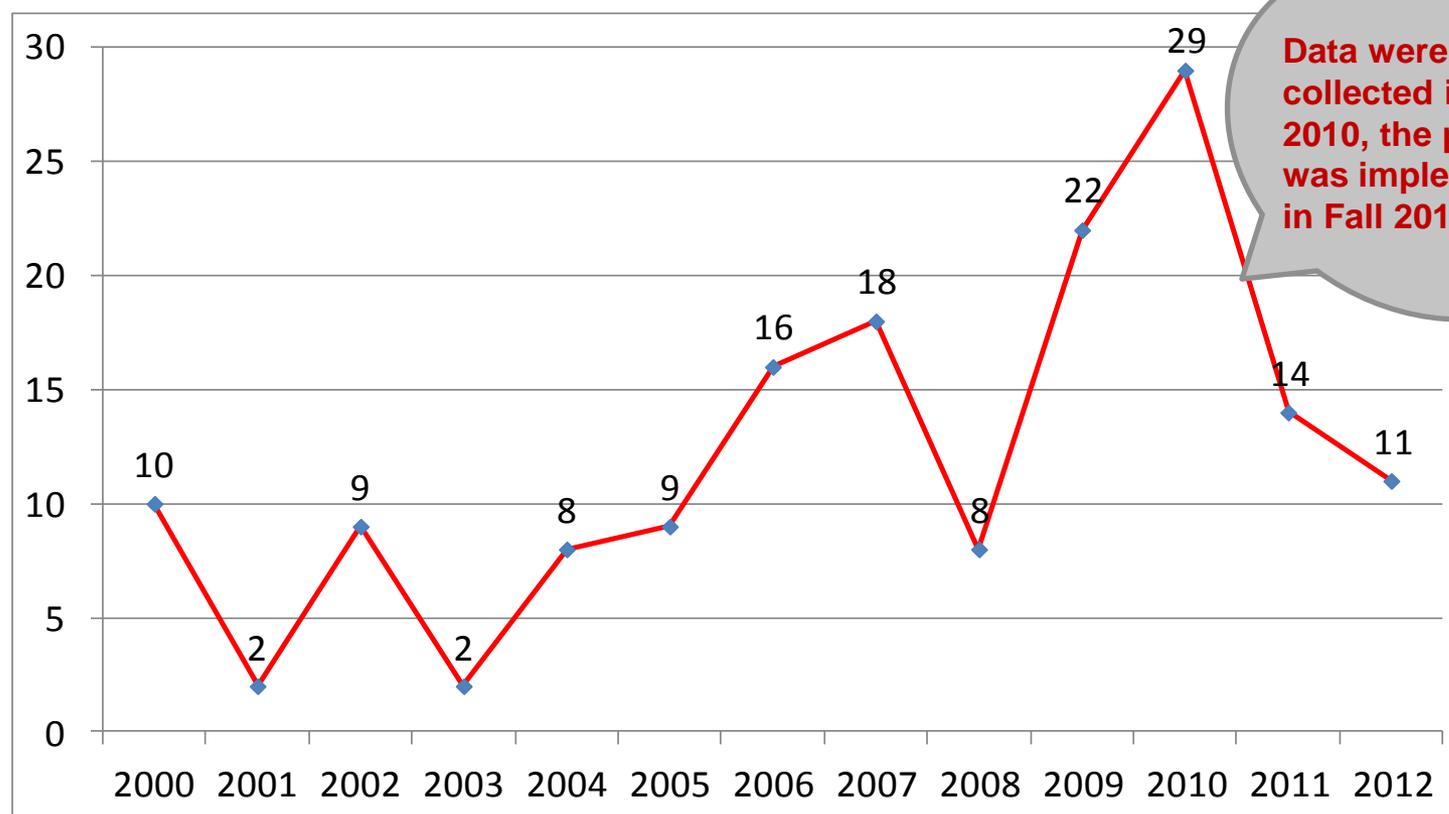


# UT High-Risk Drinking Rate



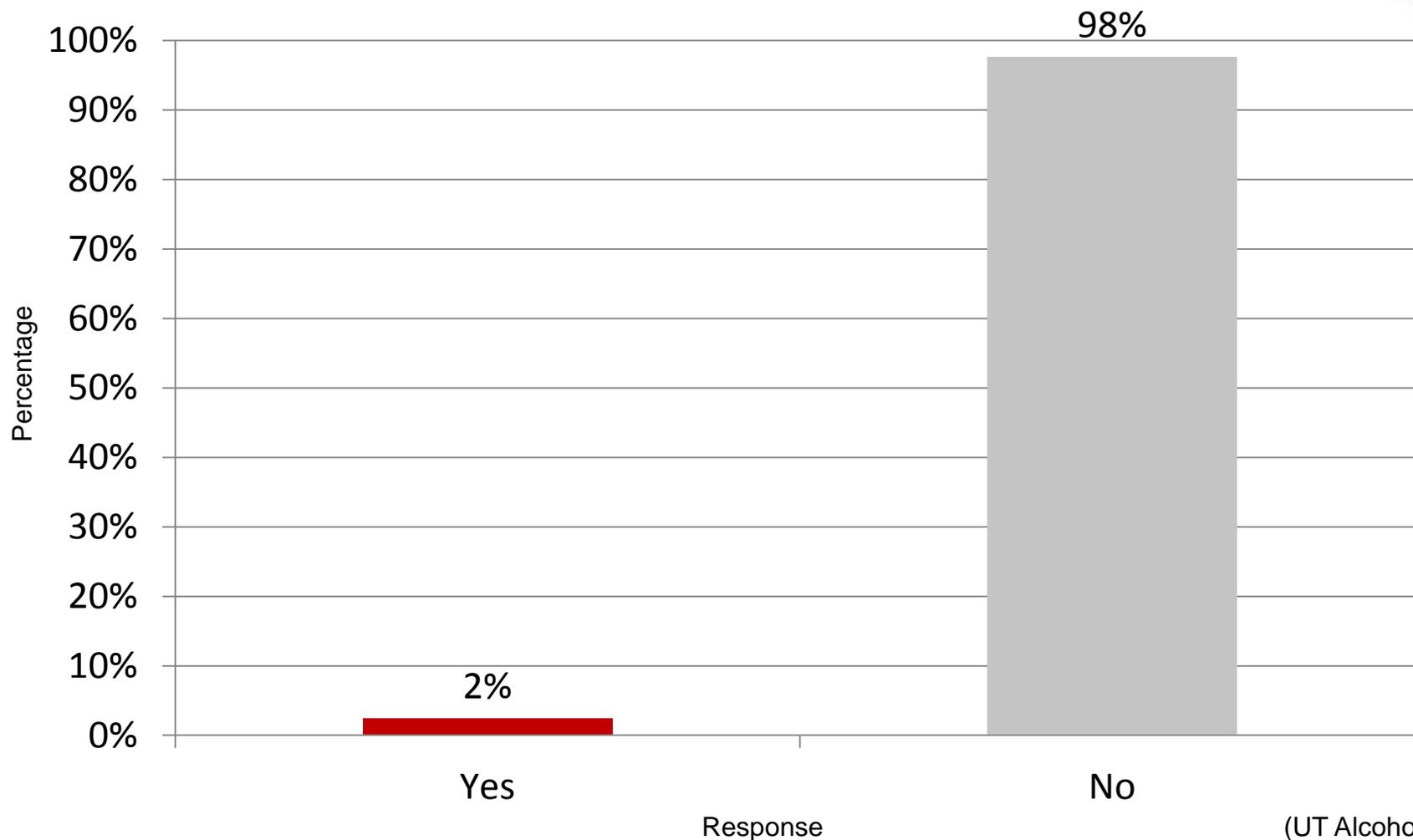


# UT Medical Transports by Year





## I have had alcohol poisoning at least once since attending college





# Why Don't Students Call for Help?

- Don't know how to respond appropriately
- Unaware of signs and symptoms
- Afraid of getting in trouble with the university
- Fearful of law enforcement
- "Someone else will call"



# Medical Amnesty

- What is Medical Amnesty?
  - Health Protection Strategy
  - Policy that allows students' to seek help during alcohol related emergencies
- What does Medical Amnesty do?
  - Protects students from judicial sanctions at their university if they call for help (or are the victim) during an alcohol related incident
  - Student academic and judicial records stay incident free



What concerns has your administration expressed regarding medical amnesty?



# Administrative Concerns

- If an institution implements a medical amnesty policy, will students drink more excessively?
  - This is not the case, two different studies indicate that medical amnesty policies do not increase drinking, just *help seeking behavior* with students. <sup>1,2</sup>
- Medical Amnesty is not a *Get out of Jail Free Card*.
  - Mandatory counseling sessions
  - Educational programs
  - Restorative justice



# Methods

- A medical amnesty policy was implemented during the 2011/2012 year.
  - Aggressively promoted!
- UT Alcohol & Drug Survey was implemented to help evaluate the policy.
- Classrooms were randomly selected by the registrar.
- Survey was implemented in the spring.
- A total of 369 out of a possible 380 students completed the survey generating a participant response rate of 97%.



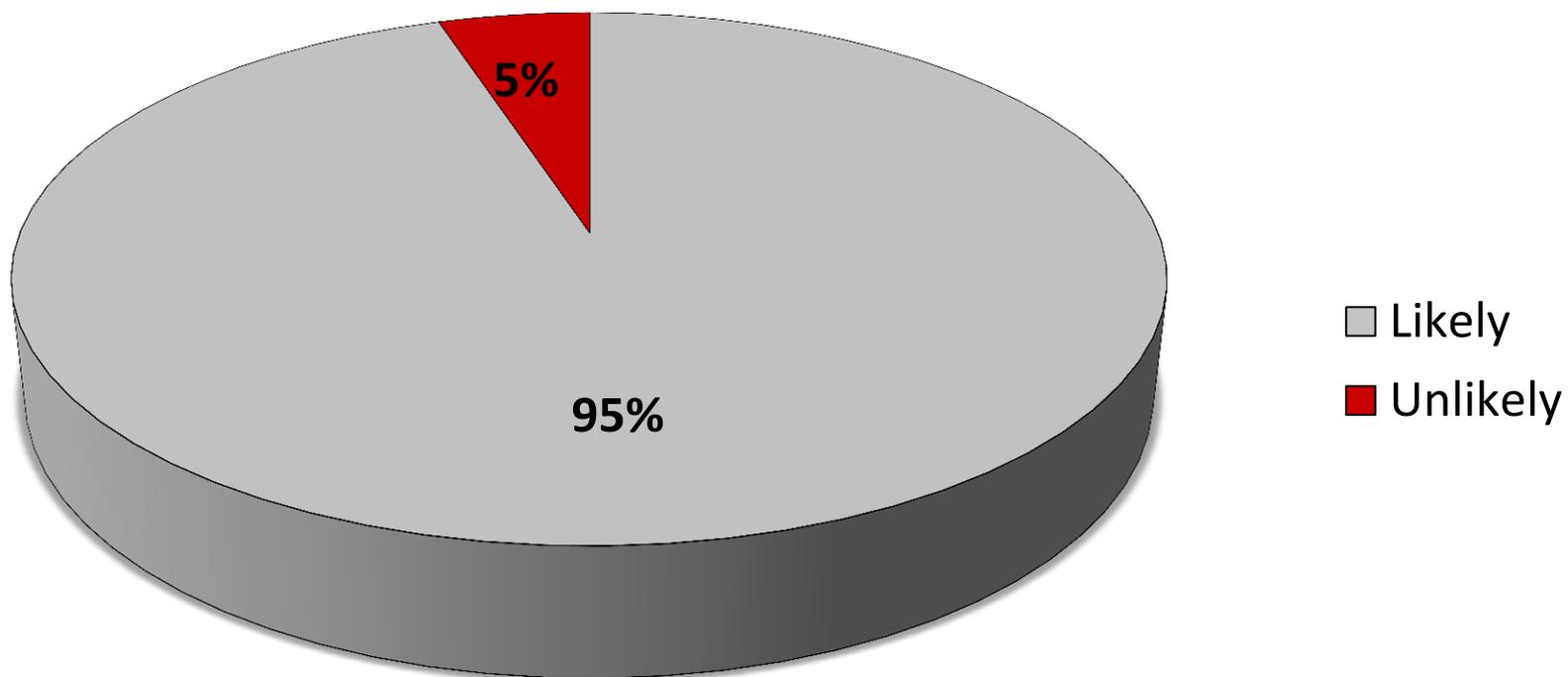
# Medical Amnesty at UT

Program Goal 1: To increase the likelihood that UT students will call 911 for help during an alcohol related emergency.





## Would Students Call for Help for Their Friends?





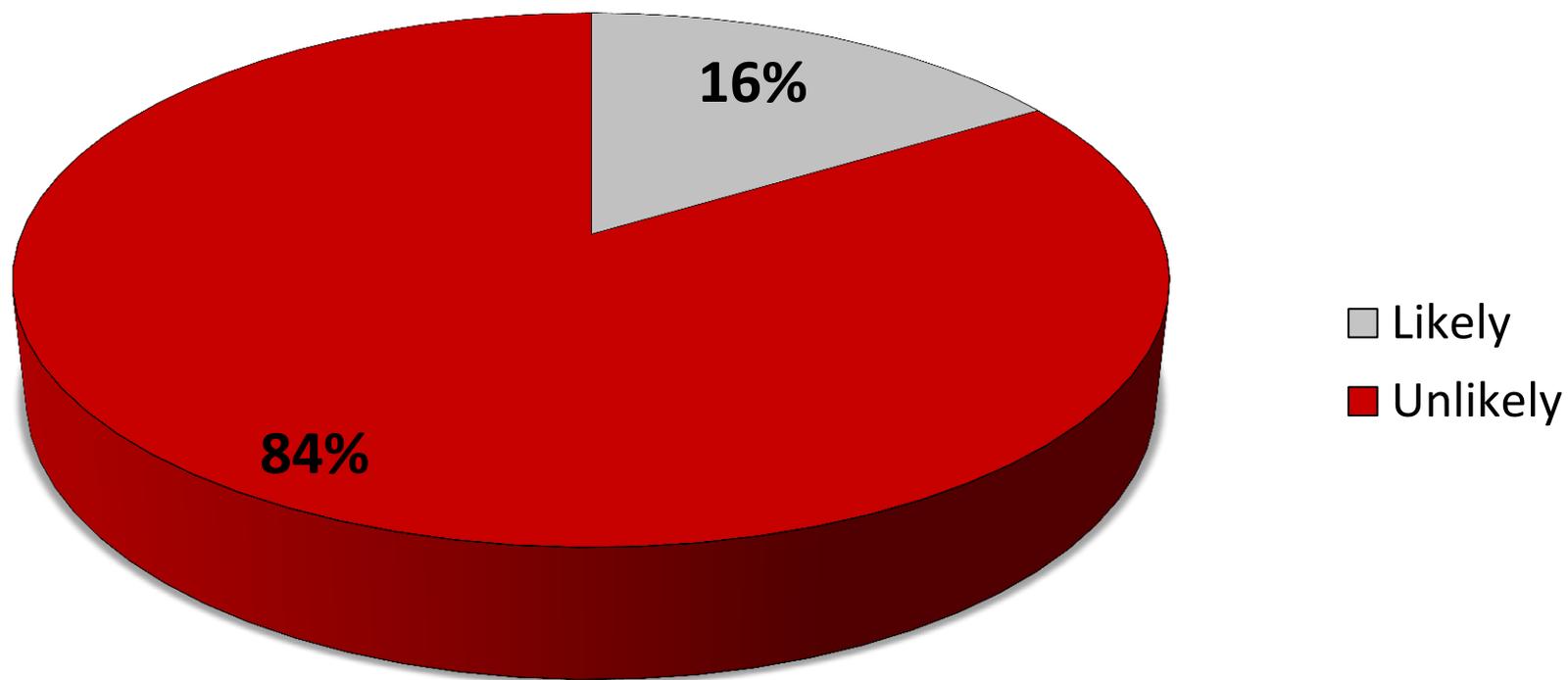
# Medical Amnesty at UT Cont.



Program Goal 2: Decrease students' perceived susceptibility that they will receive sanctions from the university if they call for help during an alcohol poisoning incident.



## Perceived Likelihood of Receiving Sanctions





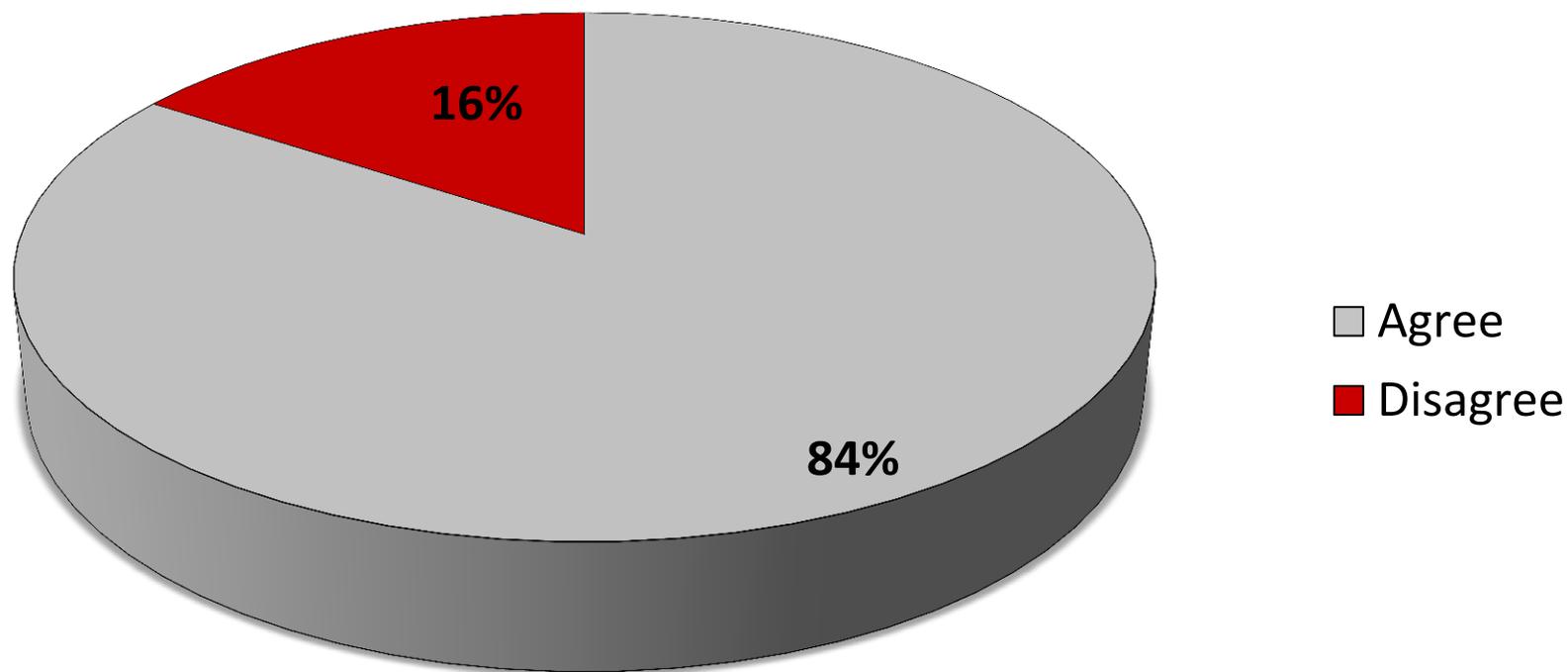
# Medical Amnesty at UT Cont.

Program Goal 3: To increase student self-efficacy in responding appropriately during an alcohol poisoning incident.



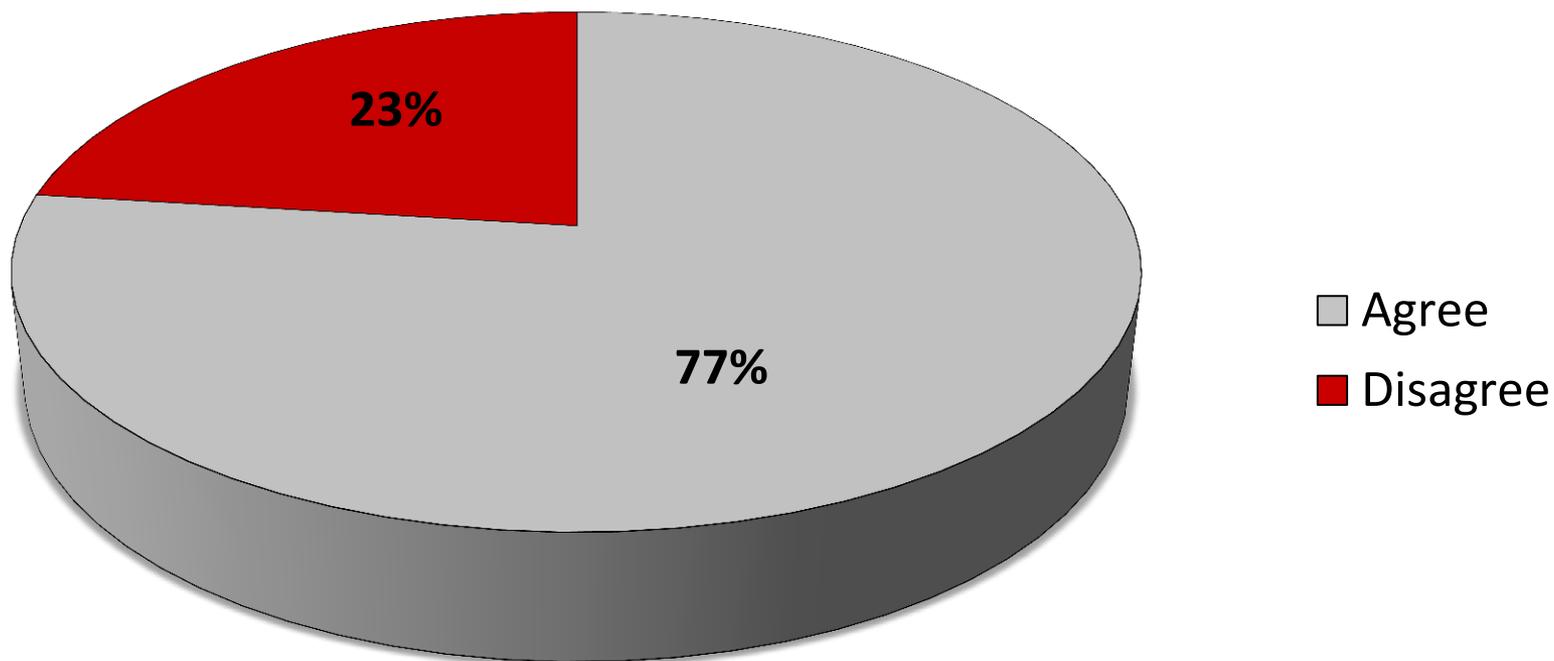


## Know What to Do in Case of an Alcohol Emergency





## Confident in Ability to Respond to Alcohol Poisoning





# Educational Marketing Campaign

- Series of messages and posters designed to educate students
- Poster creation timeline
  - Initial poster creation, October 2011
  - Message testing, November 2011
  - Printing, December 2011
  - Implementation, January 2012

# First Draft

(prototype)

CALLING FOR HELP ISN'T A CRIME



Signs of alcohol poisoning:

- pale skin
- irregular breathing
- mental confusion
- vomiting



# First Draft

(prototype)

**ROCKETS TAKE CHARGE!**  
**CALL 911 OR x2600**



Signs of alcohol poisoning:

- pale skin
- irregular breathing
- mental confusion
- vomiting



# First Draft

(prototype)

## WHAT'S THIS MEDICAL AMNESTY THING?



- A policy that lets you all and get help for yourself or your friend in case of an alcohol emergency.

- Nothing ever goes on your academic or judicial record.



# First Draft

(prototype)

## HOW DO YOU GET MEDICAL AMNESTY?



1. Make the call.
2. The next day your conduct officer will schedule a meeting with you.
3. Ask for Medical Amnesty at your conduct meeting.
4. Nothing goes on your academic or judicial record.



# Final Draft with Marketing



**Live Well!** 

## When is it one too many?

If a friend or fellow student has an emergency related to drugs or alcohol:

- 1:**  
Call 911 and  
419-530-2600 (UTPD)
- 2:**  
Stay with the person
- 3:**  
Ask for Medical Amnesty

**Where can I find out more?**  
Get a copy of the Medical Amnesty policy in the Student Union, room 1511.

**Why Medical Amnesty?**  
We want you to be confident you can make the right decisions if there is an alcohol or drug related emergency without fear of getting in trouble with UT.

**For even more, contact:**  
Alexis Blavos, MED, CHES  
Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Prevention Specialist  
alexis.blavos@utoledo.edu



# Medical Amnesty Policy

## The University of Toledo



In case of an Alcohol or Other Drug Related emergency this policy encourages you to:

- Get help for you or your friends
- Call UTPD at 419.530.2600 or 9-1-1

**What happens after I make the call?**

- You meet with a conduct officer who can provide you with Medical Amnesty, they will likely refer you to other UT staff for further discussion of your situation
- Your parents will be notified but *nothing will go on your academic record*

**Does this impact the role of the police?**

- UT and other police still have the ability to cite or arrest you for violations of the law
- The incident **WILL NOT** go on your academic record

**Why is UT doing this?**

- UT wants every student to feel confident that they can make the right decision if there is an alcohol or other drug related emergency without fear of getting in trouble with the University
- This is not entrapment; you will not get in trouble as the University simply wants to encourage students to make the call if there is an alcohol or other drug related emergency

**Where can I read the policy?**

- The policy is available for viewing at the following website:
  - [http://www.utoledo.edu/studentaffairs/reslife/ATODPC/pdfs/Medical\\_Amnesty\\_Policy\\_Signed.PDF](http://www.utoledo.edu/studentaffairs/reslife/ATODPC/pdfs/Medical_Amnesty_Policy_Signed.PDF)

**Who do I contact if I have more questions?**

- Alexis Blavos, M.Ed, MCHES  
Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Prevention Specialist  
419.530.8436  
alexis.blavos@utoledo.edu

Live Well!



## Signs of Alcohol Poisoning

### Critical Signs for Alcohol Poisoning

- Mental confusion, stupor, coma, or person cannot be roused
- Vomiting
- Seizures
- Slow breathing (fewer than eight breaths per minute)
- Irregular breathing (10 seconds or more between breaths)
- Hypothermia (low body temperature), bluish skin color, paleness

### What Should I Do If I Suspect Someone Has Alcohol Poisoning?

- Call UTPD (419.530.2600) or 9-1-1 **immediately**, do not wait for all symptoms to be present.
- Stay with the person until help arrives.

Office of Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Prevention  
Alexis Blavos, M.Ed., MCHES  
Student Union 1511-A  
[Alexis.blavos@utoledo.edu](mailto:Alexis.blavos@utoledo.edu)  
419.530.8436

Live Well!



The Independent Collegian

## Medical Amnesty now in effect

By - in Your opinion -

Published: Monday, September 27, 2010

Updated: Monday, September 27, 2010 07:09



To the Editor,

The University of Toledo has implemented a new policy called Medical Amnesty because they encourage a living and learning environment that promotes the health and safety of all members of the UT community.

As such, students are encouraged to make responsible decisions and to seek medical attention in life-threatening situations that result from alcohol and/or other drug abuse.

If medical attention is required, students should immediately contact professional medical personnel (9-1-1), followed by the UT Police Department (419-530-2600) and University officials.

A student who seeks emergency assistance on behalf of themselves, another student or a friend experiencing an alcohol and/or other drug related emergency (as well as the individual in distress) will not be subject to disciplinary action nor mandatory alcohol and other drug sanctions under the UT Student Codes of Conduct, Residence Life or Greek Life. However they may be subject for referral for assessment, counseling, and possible treatment.

With all of that being said, many students will still have questions and I would like to take a moment to answer some of the more common questions I have heard over the past few weeks.

Q. What happens after I call for help?

A. After making a call for help each student in the situation will have to meet with a conduct officer to ask for medical amnesty for their particular situation. Once Medical Amnesty is granted to the student they may be referred to another University staff member for further assistance.

Q. Will I get in trouble?

A. No, if you call for help for you or a friend you will not get in trouble with the UT Office of Student Conduct, Residence Life or Greek Life and the incident WILL NOT go on your academic record. We do however still have to notify your parents.

Q. Does this impact the role of the Police?

A. UT and other police still have the ability to cite or arrest you for violations of the law.

Q. Where can I read the policy?

A. You can read the policy by going to this website:  
[http://www.utoledo.edu/studentaffairs/reslife/ATODPC/pdfs/Medical\\_Amnesty\\_Policy\\_Signed.PDF](http://www.utoledo.edu/studentaffairs/reslife/ATODPC/pdfs/Medical_Amnesty_Policy_Signed.PDF)

Q. What if I have more questions?

A. If you have any questions please contact Alexis Blavos at 419.530.8436 or [alexis.blavos@utoledo.edu](mailto:alexis.blavos@utoledo.edu)



**Recommended:** Articles that may interest you

Selected for you by our sponsor:



## New medical amnesty policy

By Sura Khuder

Published: Monday, October 18, 2010

Updated: Monday, October 18, 2010 06:10



Last year, 984 student conduct cases involved alcohol or drugs at the University of Toledo.

Twenty-nine of the students involved in these cases were transported to the emergency room for alcohol poisoning.

Those sorts of incidents are the basis of new measures taken by the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Prevention committee to reduce high-risk drinking at UT, including the introduction of the Medical Amnesty Policy,

The policy allows students to call the campus police for themselves or other students who are in need of medical attention after a night of heavy binge drinking.

Under the policy, the student will not have the incident recorded on their academic record.

"Assuming you didn't do anything else — murder, rape, steal, burglary — nothing will happen, outside someone would talk to you if they [thought] you were depressed or had underlying issues; they might recommend you see a counselor," said assistant professor of health education and public health Tavis Glassman.

UT Chief of Police Jeff Newton said although the UTPD has a lot of discretion with these issues, they do not trump underage drinking laws.

"The scope of this policy only applies to the student code of conduct. They could still get criminally charged," Newton said. "However, when the police arrive there, we have discretion. We can cite this person criminally or we could do nothing, just like in any situation."

According to the medical amnesty policy, the student's parents will be notified and each subsequent occurrence will be evaluated to determine whether the student qualifies for medical amnesty again.

"Even though their parents will get notified, if they were to get in trouble with the law anyway they would have all these other huge consequences and their parents to deal with," said Zach Reaver, a junior double majoring in bioengineering and chemistry. "This way, students can feel assured that their friend will get treated and they won't get in that much trouble for it."

Coordinator of the ATODPC Alexis Blavos said so far this year no one has asked for medical amnesty more than once.

As part of a research study, the ATODPC is embarking on a new social marketing campaign this year which aims to de-glamorize alcohol consumption with ad logos such as "don't be that girl" featuring images such as a male holding a female's hair as she vomits into a toilet.

Some students do not have faith in the campaign's efforts.

"I don't think these sorts of things will work because a lot of girls have firm beliefs on their views of alcohol," said Summer Jiang, a junior majoring in accounting. "Some girls will go to a party and they will not drink, but other girls have this belief that you need to drink alcohol to be social no matter what [is said by the ad] campaign. This won't convince them, unless something bad happens to them."

Another initiative the ATODPC is exploring involves getting UT to have more classes on Fridays and Saturdays to defer students from beginning their drinking early in the week, although Glassman said this has been a hard project since some professors do not want to teach on the weekend.

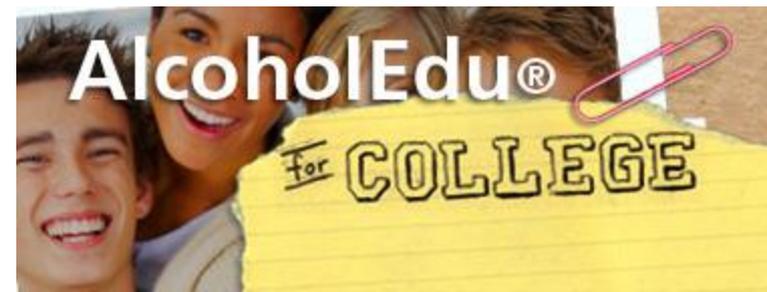
While only a third of students on campus are excessive alcohol drinkers, many are under the impression this number is nearly three times higher, according to a survey conducted by the ATODPC.

In recognition of Alcohol Awareness Week, several events including a mock DUI crash with a Life Flight rescue are scheduled to educate students on the effects of alcohol.



# AlcoholEdu<sup>®</sup> for College

- The purpose of AlcoholEdu<sup>®</sup> is to help students make healthy and safe decisions about alcohol while at college.
- The program is customizable and includes UT specific information about medical amnesty, signs and symptoms of alcohol poisoning and who to contact on our campus in case of an emergency.





# Red Watch Band Training

- Alcohol Bystander Training
- Three components:
  1. Informational presentation
  2. Practice responding during an emergency
  3. We ask for a commitment from students to respond to alcohol poisoning incidents in the future
- Targeted Student Groups:
  - Housing Staff
  - Greek Organizations
  - ROTC Students
  - First Aid Classes



# Other Marketing



- 64 Rocket Launch Presentations
- 2 International Student Orientations
- Paraprofessional Training for Residence Life
- New Greeks: Meet and Greet
- ATOD Website
- PartySmartUT Facebook page
- Student Organizations
- First Aid Classes
- Residence Halls
- 11 Dying for a Drink Series
- Red Watch Band Trainings
- Greek Council Meetings
- UT TV 10 Interviews
- Interviews with president
- UT Closed Circuit TVs
- UT Screen Savers
- Bulletin Boards
- Health Fairs
- Tower Views Interview



# Evaluation

- University of Toledo Alcohol and Drug Survey
- Red Watch Band  
Training Evaluation Form
- University of Toledo  
Office of Student  
Conduct Report





# Office of Student Conduct

- Reports were requested at the end of each semester for:
  - Alcohol transports
    - **Did not increase**
  - Students **requesting** medical amnesty
    - 2010/2011 = 14
    - 2011/2012 = 7
  - Students **receiving** medical amnesty
    - 2010/2011 = 14
    - 2011/2012 = 6



# Research



# Instrument

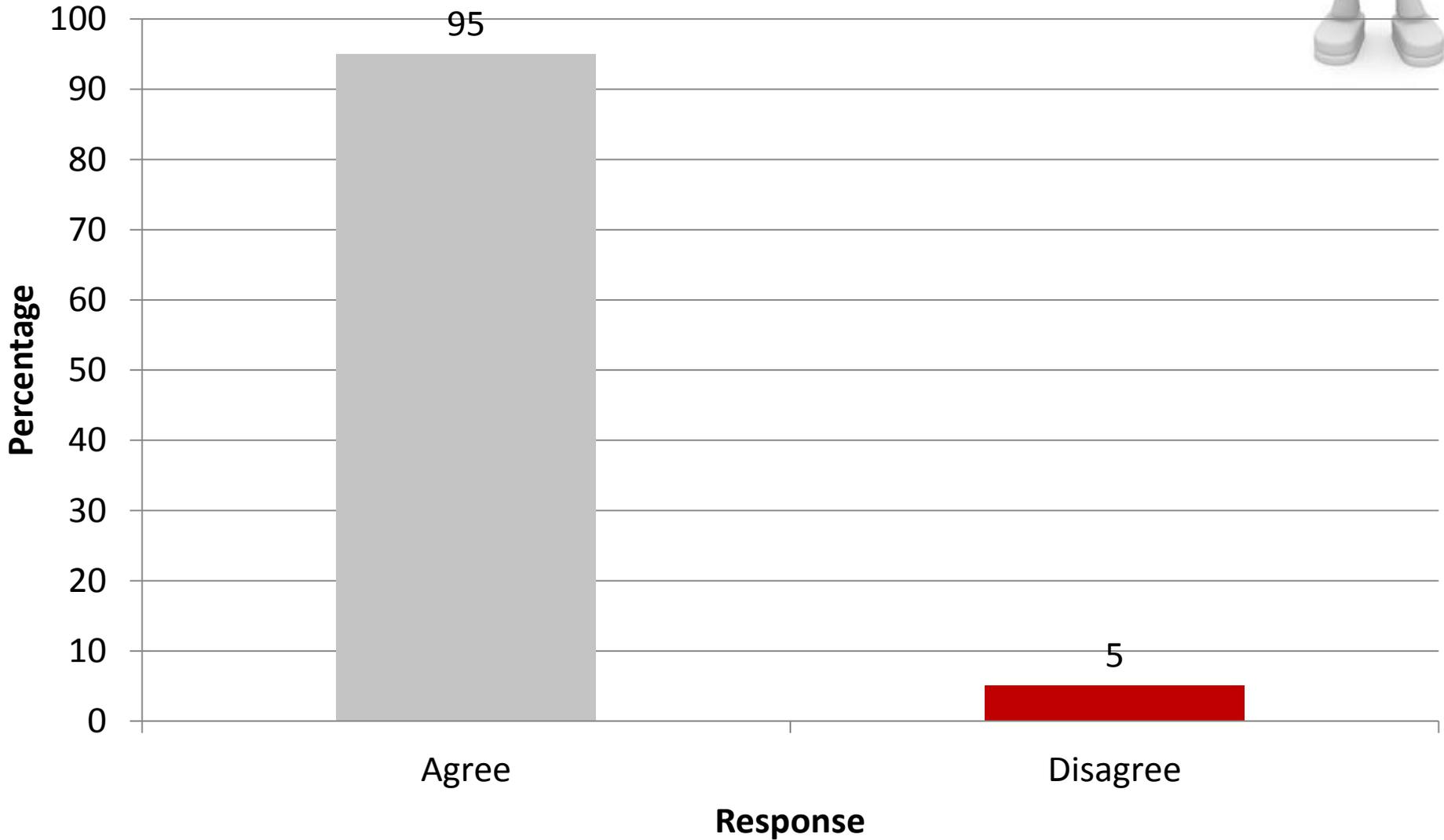
- Modified off the Core Alcohol and Drug Survey short form and National College Health Assessment II.
- Expert review by 2 content experts for face validity in October 2011, 1 in theoretical and 1 psychometric expert.
- Test/Retest in November 2011 with 50 undergraduate students to test for reliability and internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha).
  - Values indicated a reliable instrument.



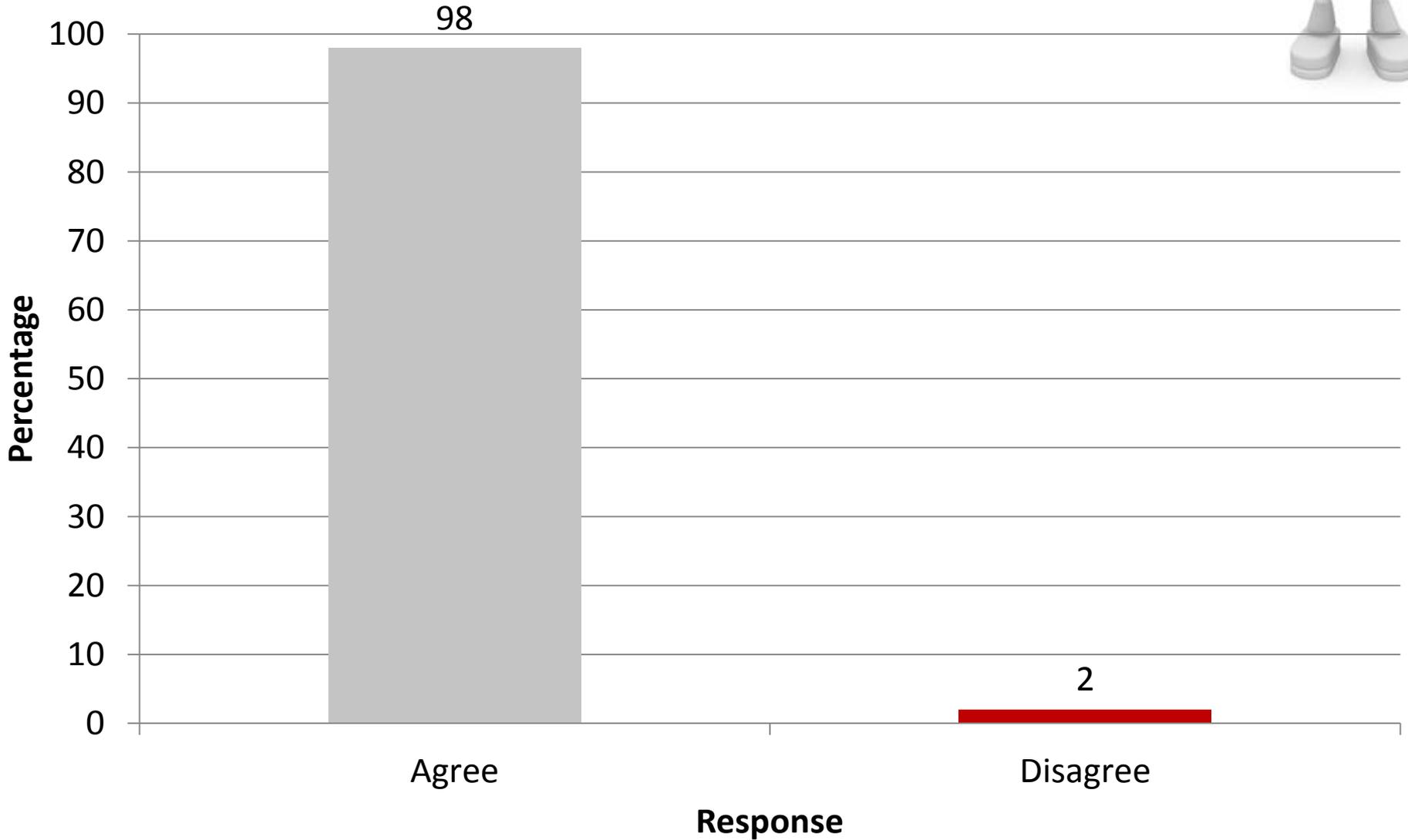
# UTADS

- Informational Questions
  - Do you know what Medical Amnesty is?
  - Does The University of Toledo have a Medical Amnesty policy?
  - If a stranger suffered from alcohol poisoning, would you call for help?
  - If a friend suffered from alcohol poisoning, would you call for help?

If a stranger suffered from alcohol poisoning, would you call for help?



If a friend suffered from alcohol poisoning, would you call for help?





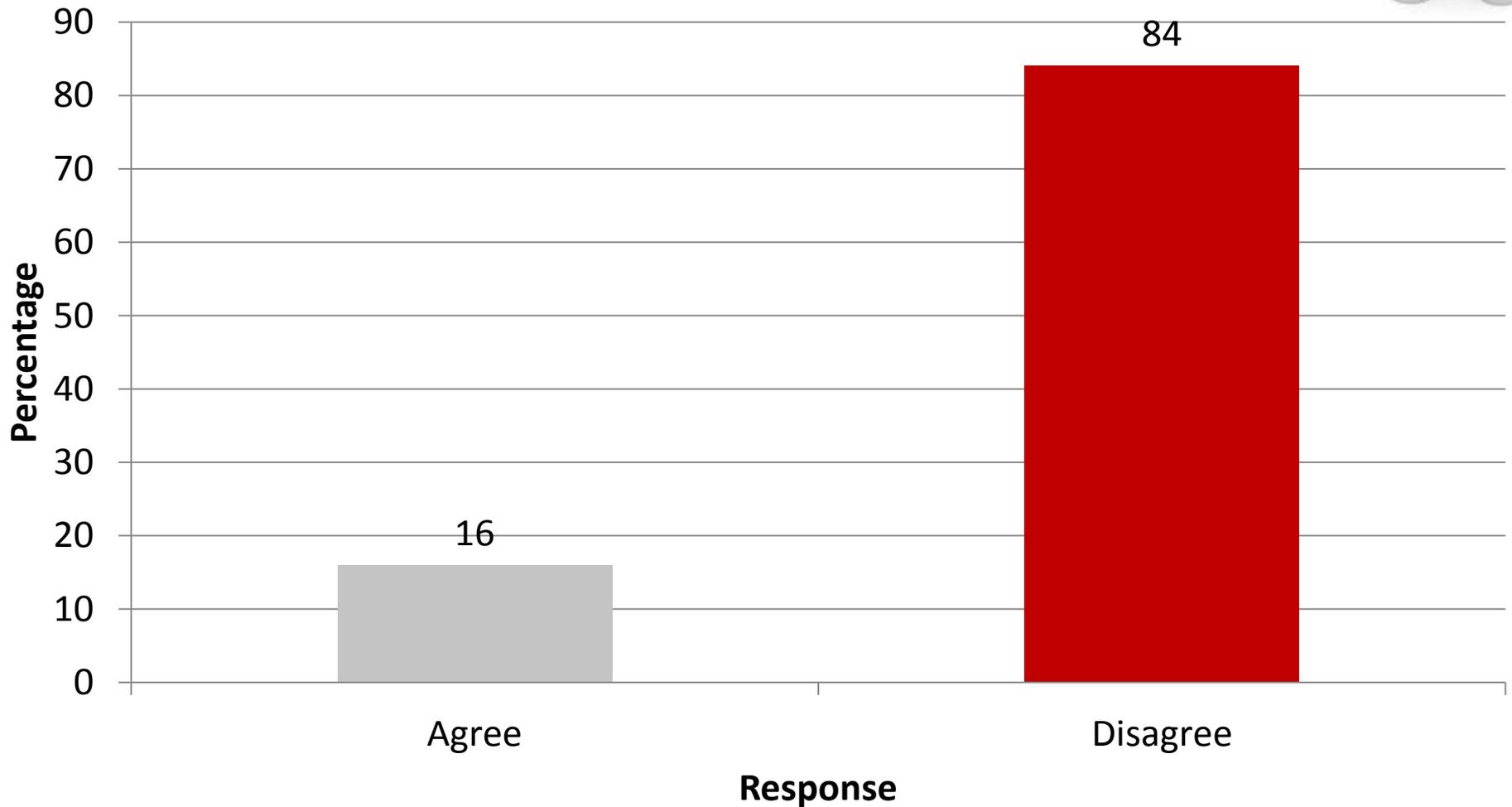
# Health Belief Model

- Used to predict intentions to help during an alcohol overdose.
- 6 Constructs (four items per scale)
  - Perceived Susceptibility
  - Perceived Severity
  - Perceived Benefits
  - Perceived Barriers
  - Self-Efficacy
  - Cues to action

# Perceived Susceptibility



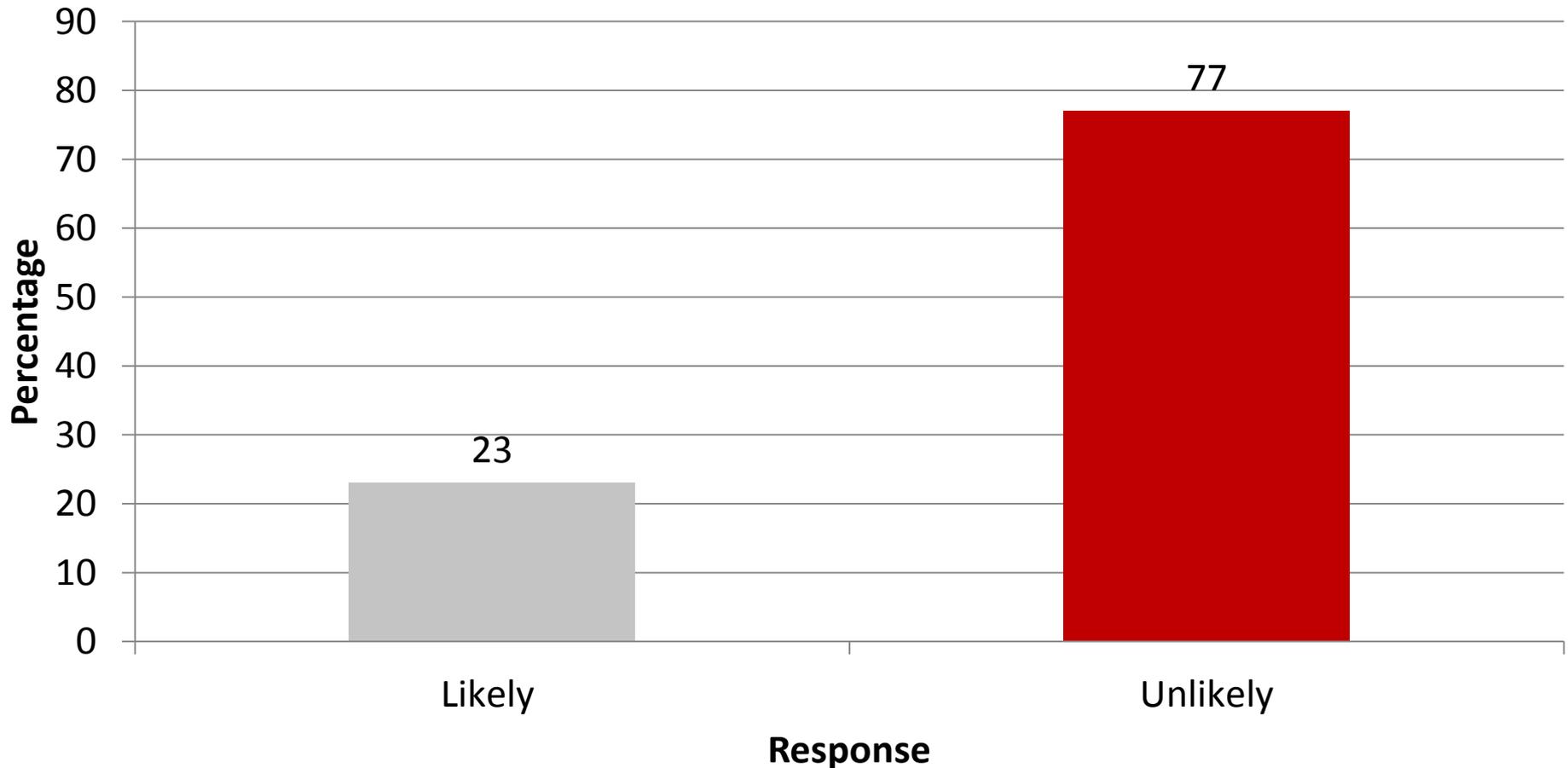
How likely are you to get in trouble with the University if you call for help during an alcohol emergency?



# Perceived Susceptibility



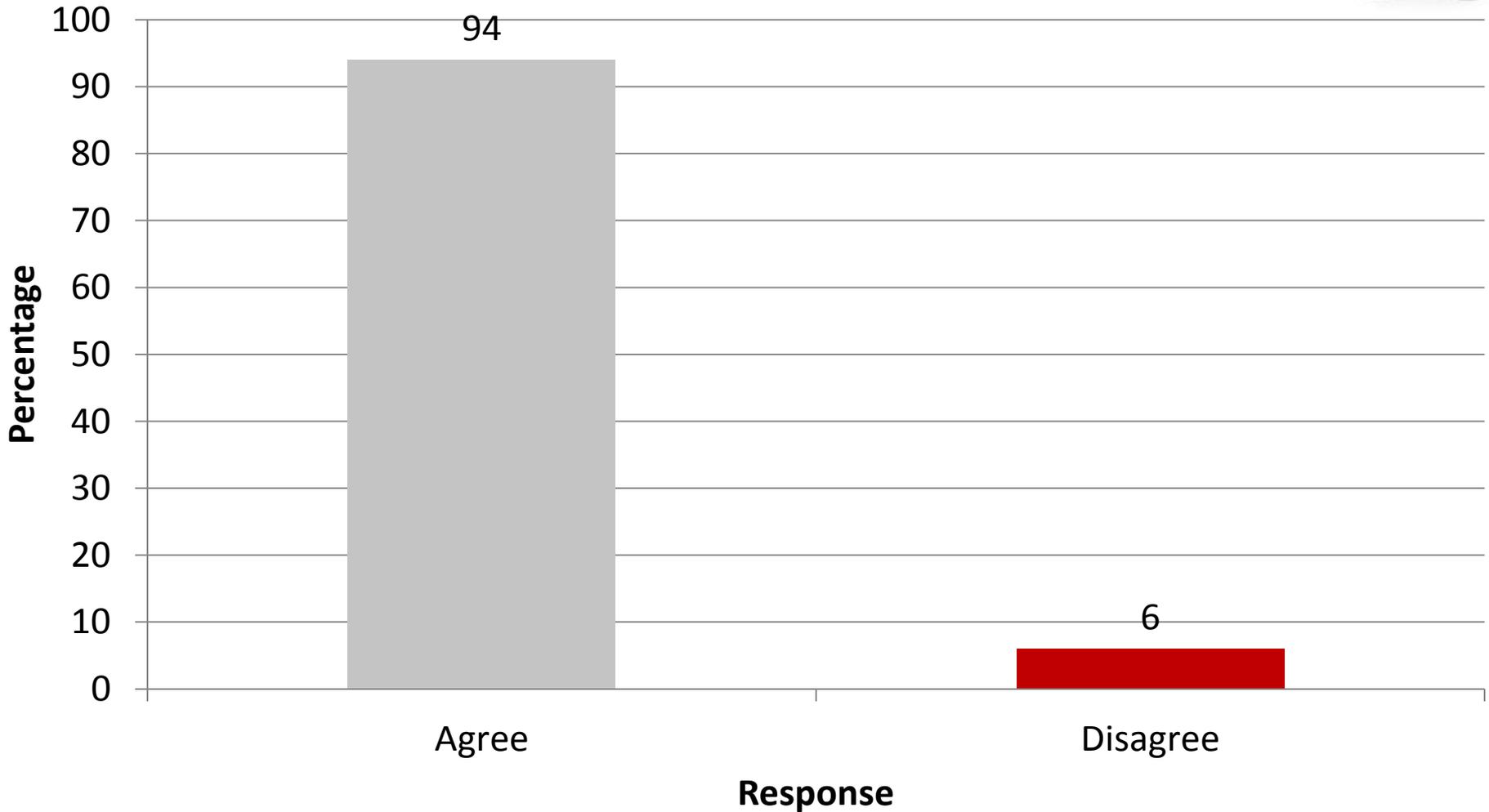
How likely are you to go to a party where someone drinks too much, experiences alcohol poisoning, and needs someone to call 911 for help?



# Perceived Severity



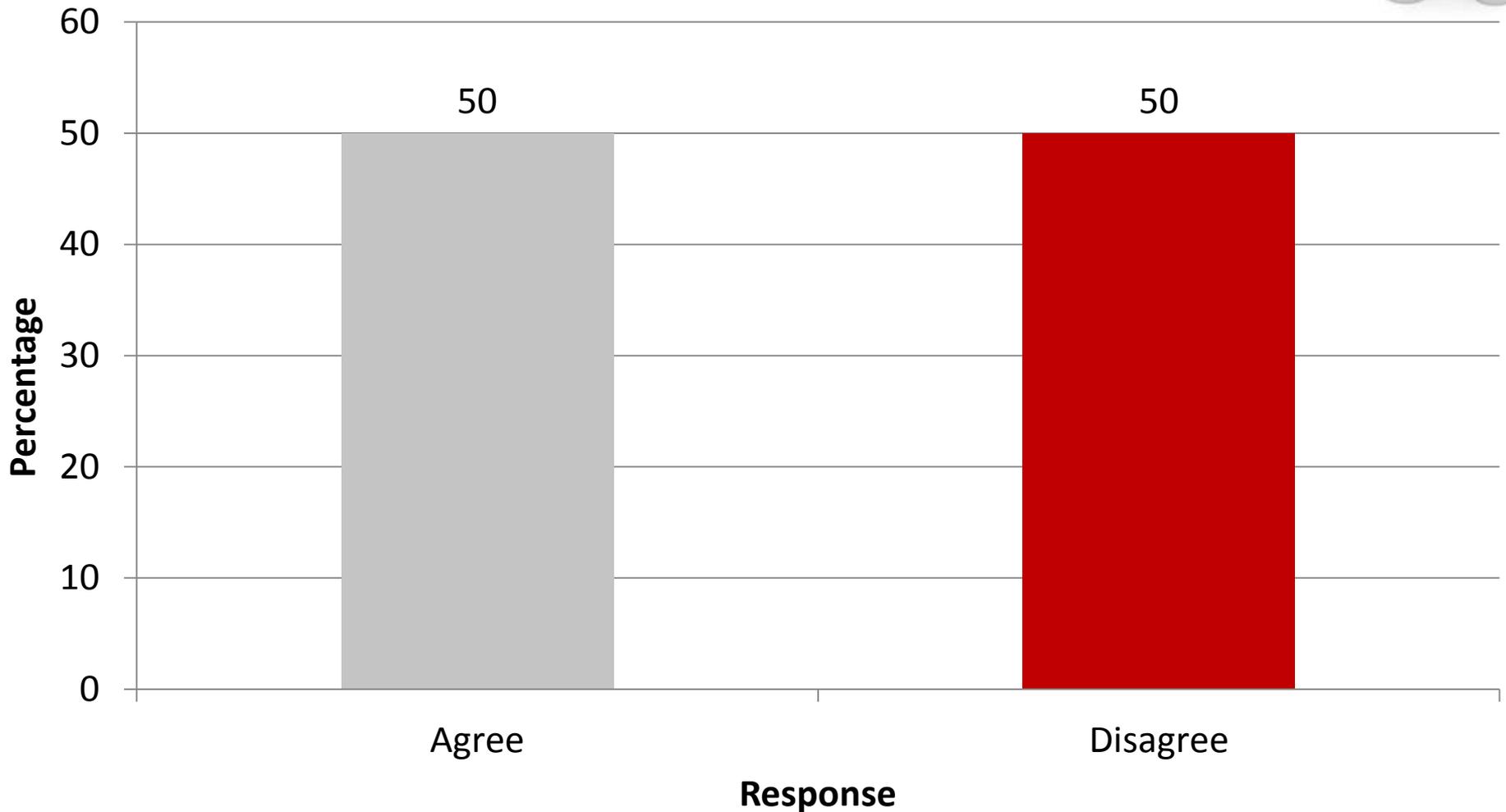
If someone is suffering from alcohol poisoning and I do not call for 911, he or she could die.



# Perceived Severity



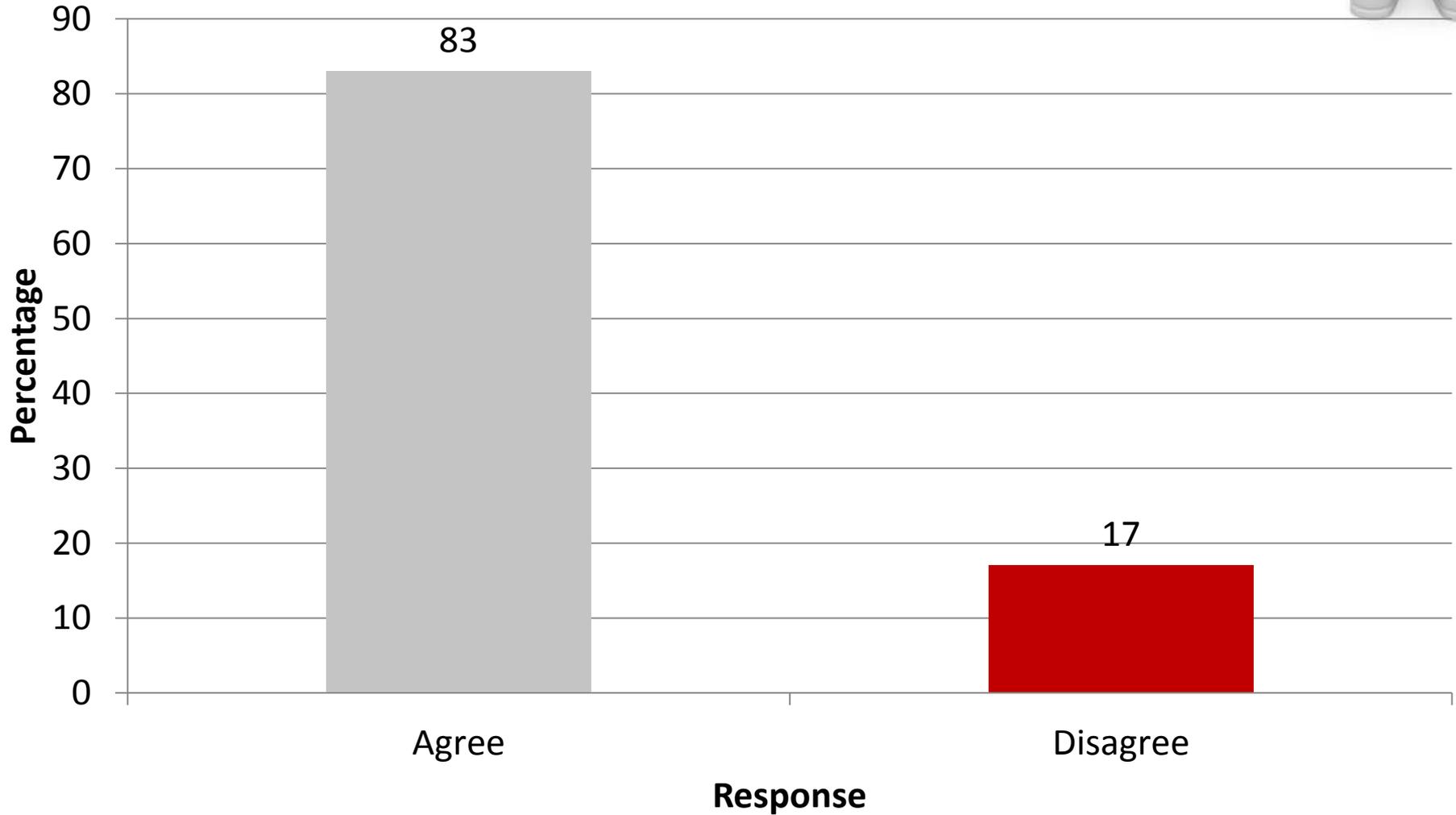
I consider getting my friend in trouble with the police for calling 911 on their behalf for alcohol poisoning to be serious.



# Perceived Benefits



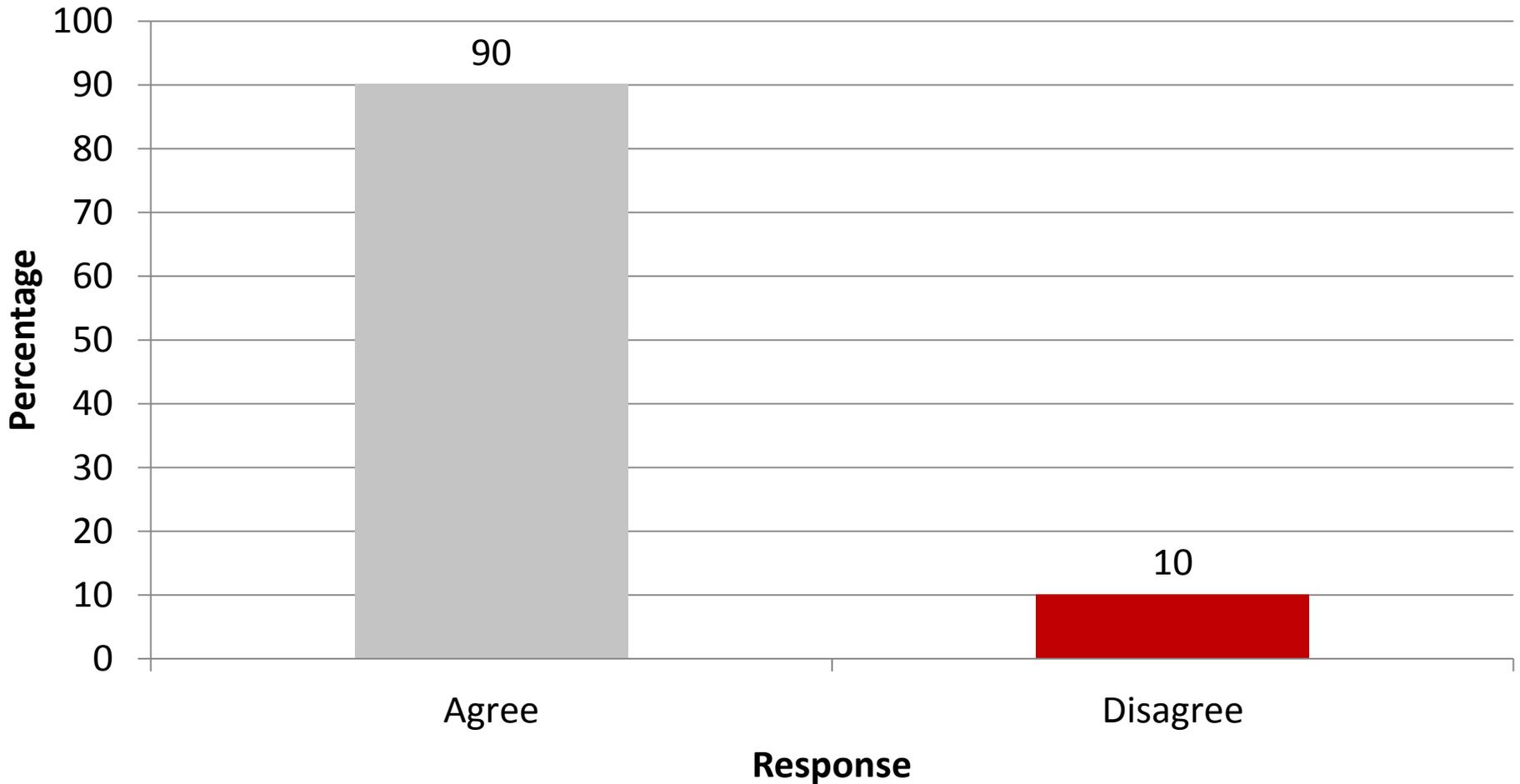
Others would think favorably of me, if I assisted during an alcohol poisoning.



# Perceived Benefits



The victim of an alcohol-poisoning incident would be glad I called for help.





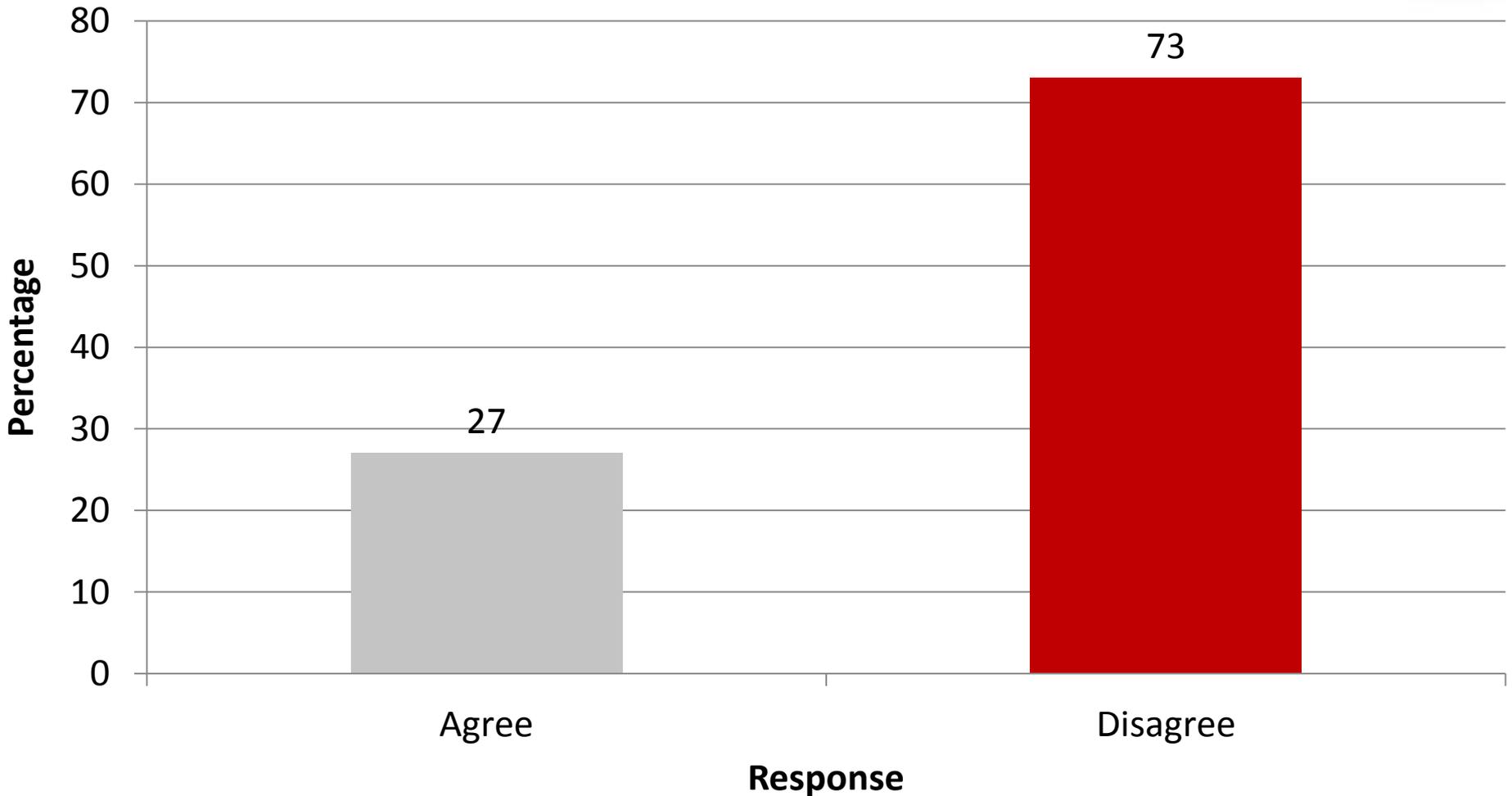
# What Barriers Exist on Your Campus?



# Perceived Barriers



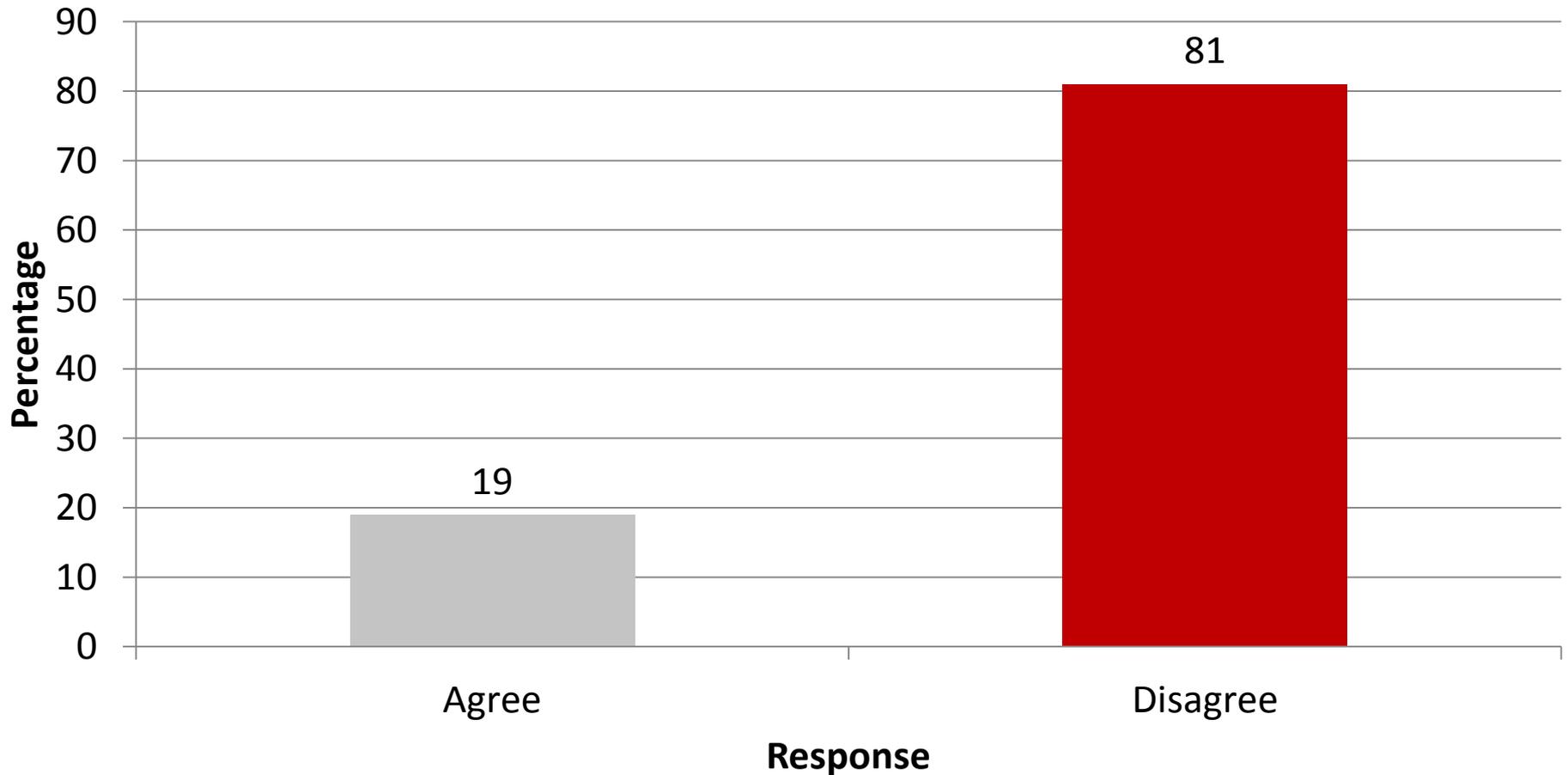
If my friend was suffering from alcohol poisoning and I called for help, he or she would get mad at me.



# Perceived Barriers



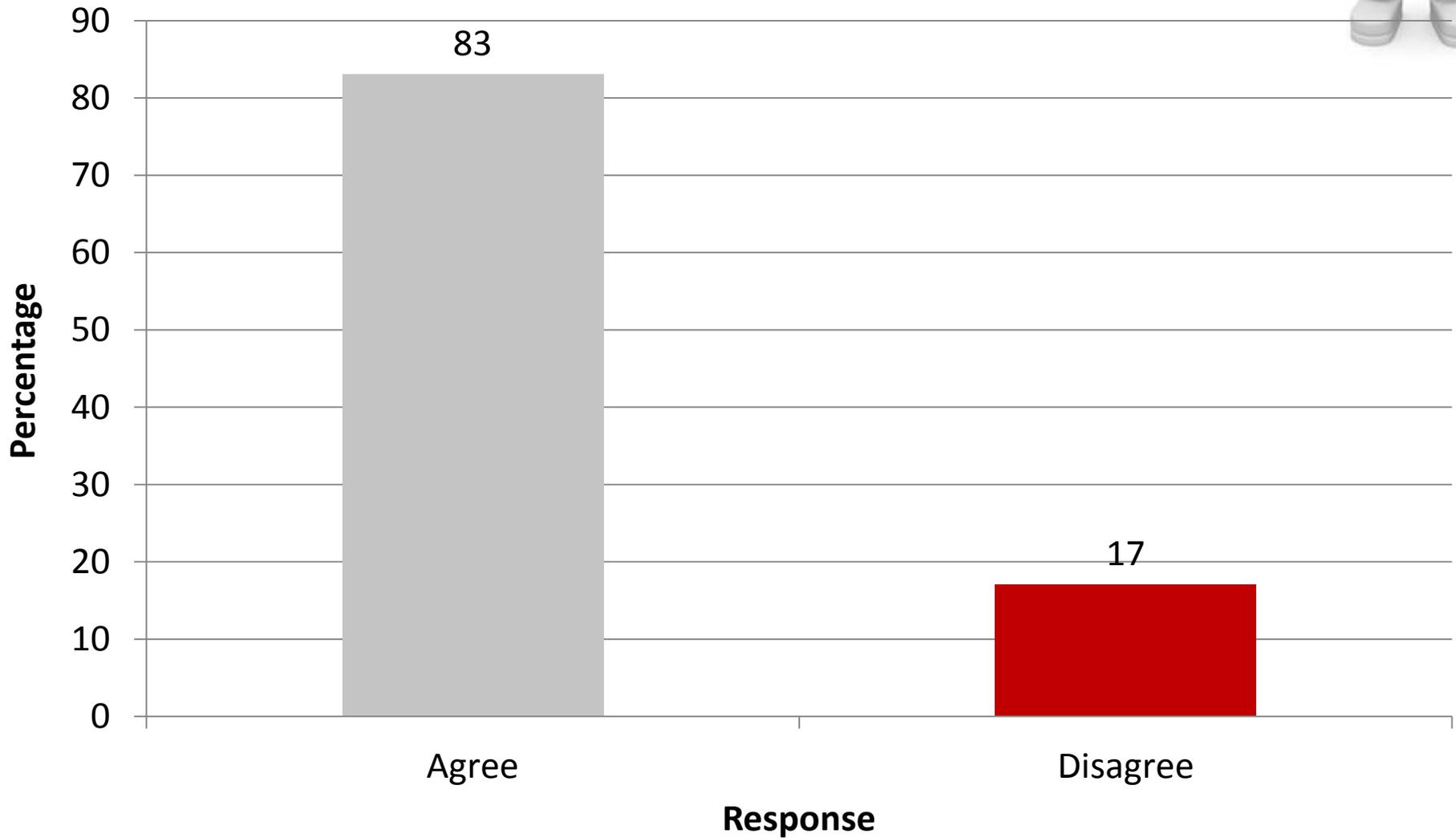
**I would be reluctant to call for help, during an alcohol poisoning, because I am concerned I would get into trouble with the University.**



# Self-Efficacy/Knowledge



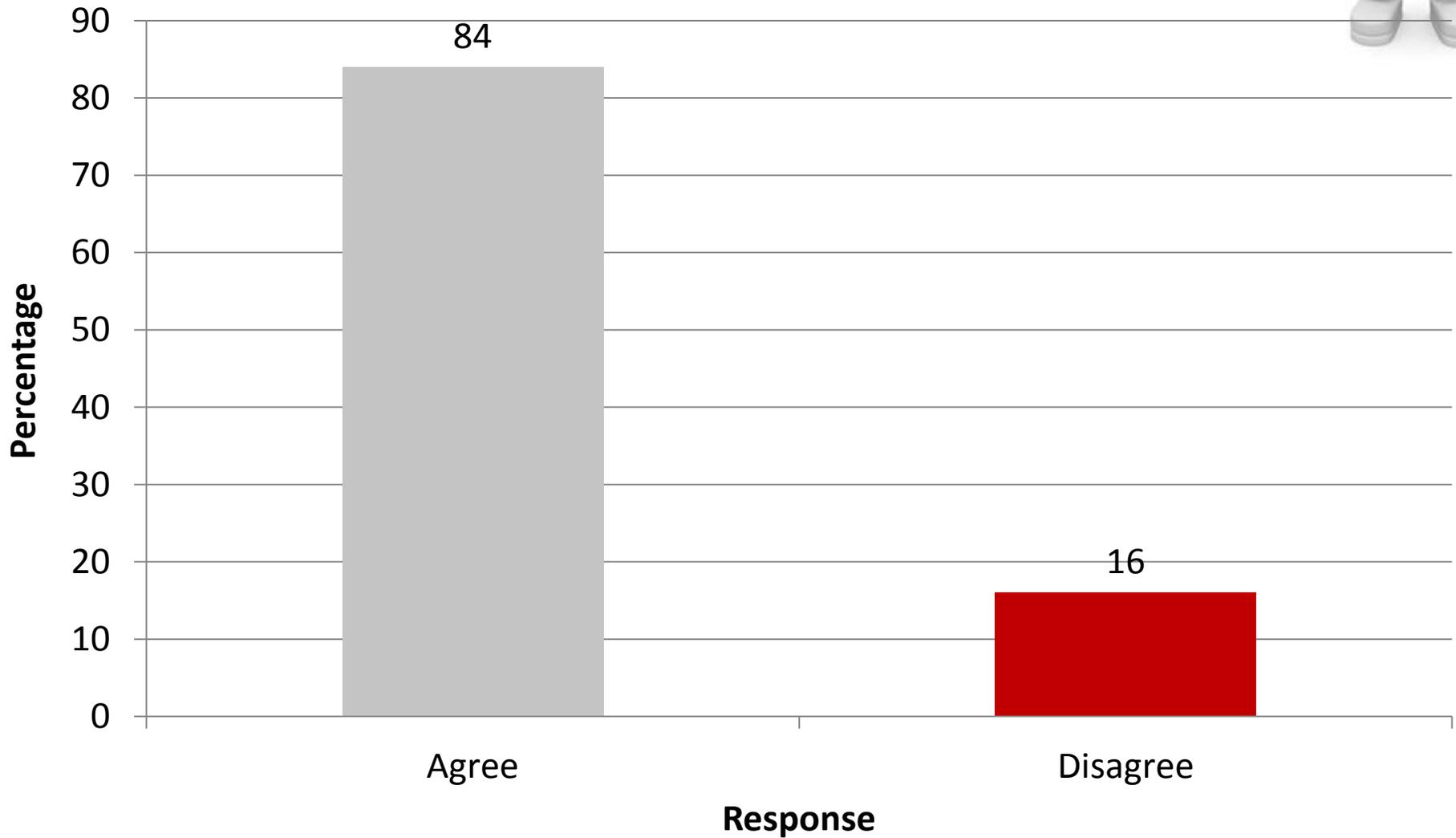
I can recognize when to respond to an alcohol poisoning.



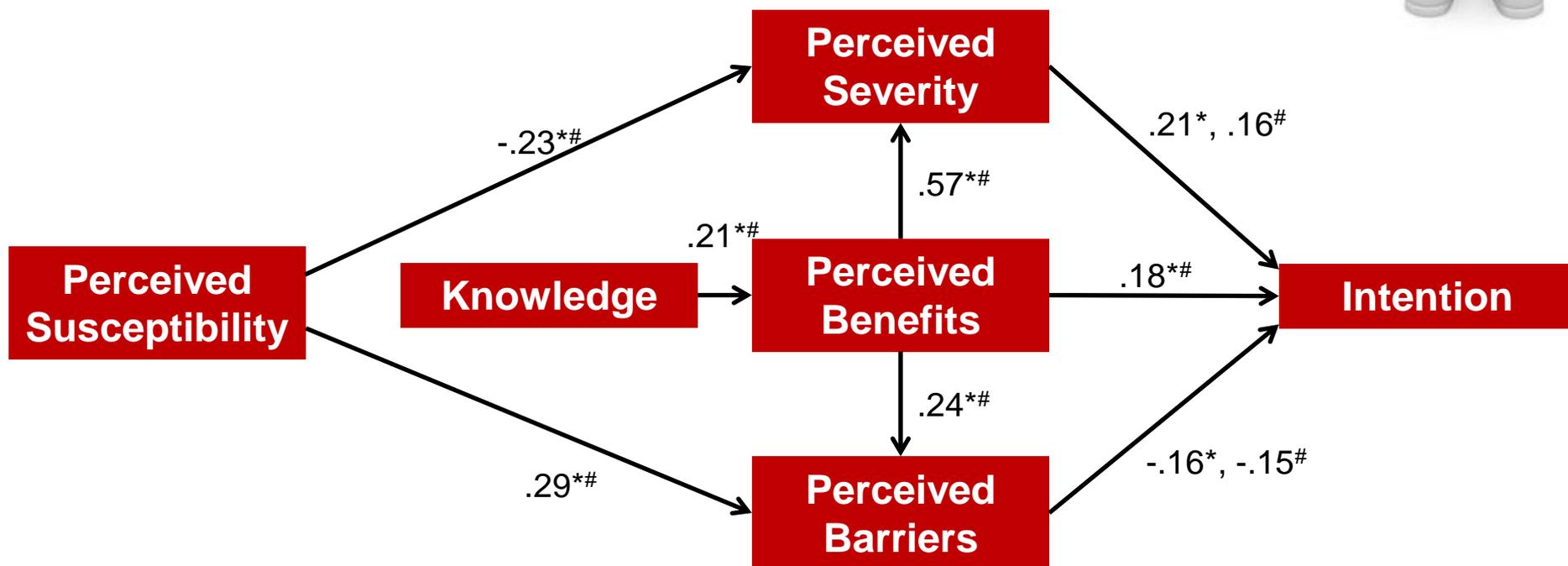
# Self-Efficacy/Knowledge



I know what action to take during an alcohol poisoning.



# Path Model of Intention to Call for Help for a Stranger or Friend



Note:

1. All path coefficients reached the  $p < .05$  or more significant level.
2. \* and # indicates the path coefficient when predicting to call for help for a stranger or a friend, respectively.



What Cues to Action would encourage college students to call for help?



# UTADS Utilizing HBM Cont.

- Cues to Action
  - How often have you seen an educational flyer on medical amnesty? *67%*
  - How often have you seen a computer screen saver on medical amnesty? *46%*
  - How often have you attended an educational presentation on medical amnesty? *48%*
  - How often have you seen information in the student newspaper, *The Independent Collegian*, on medical amnesty? *37%*



# Research Limitations

- Most of the data collected are self-reported data
  - Memory
  - Under/over report
- Social desirability
- Contamination effects
- No pretest data
- Concurrent interventions



# What Should Be In A Policy?



- Policies should be inclusive of all substances AND sexual assaults.
- Clearly define the following:

- Who
- What
- When
- Where
- Why
- How



- Policies must also include what kind of educational programming a student will still be required to take.



# Current Legislative Initiatives

- Some states have already addressed the need of Medical Amnesty or good Samaritan laws through their legislature.
  - Washington (2010)
  - New York (2010)
  - Connecticut (2011)
  - Illinois (2012)

**YES  
AMNESTY**

# Future Legislative Initiative



- Other states are considering similar laws.
  - OH: Jan. 2014: OSU Student Government President testified before legislature
  - Rhode Island
  - Michigan
  - Massachusetts
  - California
  - Hawaii
  - Florida



# Strategic Planning



- What is your next step?
  - Do you have a coalition/committee?
  - How can you reignite interest with this topic?
  - Look for *tipping point*
    - Statewide policy
    - Another (similar) school implemented the policy
- If you have a policy implemented, have you considered evaluating it?



# Article Under Review

Blavos, A., Glassman, T., Sheu, J. & Diehr, A. (Under Review). Using the Health Belief Model to predict bystander behavior among college students. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*.



# Acknowledgements

- Alexis Blavos, M.Ed., MCHES  
330.607.5101  
alexis.blavos@rockets.utoledo.edu





# Contact Information

- Tavis Glassman, PhD, MCHES  
419.530.2770  
tavis.glassman@utoledo.edu



# References

- AlcoholEdu for College. (2010). Login available at <http://college.alcoholedu.com/>.
- Beseler, C.L., Taylor, L.A., Kraemer, D.T., & Leeman, R.F. (in press for 2012). A latent class analysis of DSM-IV alcohol use disorder criteria and binge drinking in undergraduates. *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*. 1-9.  
doi:10.1111/j.1530-0277.2011.01595.x
- Blavos, A., Glassman, T., Sheu, J. & Diehr, A. (Under Review). Using the Health Belief Model to predict bystander behavior among college students. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*.
- Chapman, R.J., (2005) Medical amnesty: professional enabling or indicated prevention? Retrieved on November 28, 2011 from <http://archives.higheredcenter.org/drughied/2399.html>.
- Dawson, D.A., Grant, B.F., Stinson, F.S., & Chou, P.S. (2004). Another look at heavy episodic drinking and alcohol use disorders among college and non-college youth. *Journal on Studies of Alcohol and Drugs*, 65, 477-488.
- Higher Education Center for Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention. (2010). Medical amnesty and good Samaritan policies. *Hot Topics*. Retrieved November 28, 2011 from <http://www.higheredcenter.org/services/assistance/topics/medical-amnesty-and-good-Samaritan-policies>.



# References

- Higher Education Center for Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention. (2007). Medical amnesty – effective or not? *The Catalyst*, 9, Retrieved November 28, 2011 from <http://www.higheredcenter.org/files/product/catalyst25.pdf#page=6>.
- Hingson, R.W. (2010). Magnitude and prevention of college drinking and related problems. *Alcohol Research & Health*, 33, 45-54.
- Hingson, R.W., Heeren, T., Winter, M. & Wechsler, H. (2005). Magnitude of alcohol-related mortality and morbidity among u.s. College students ages 18-24: changes from 1998 to 2001. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 26, 259-79. doi: 0163-7525/05/0421-0259\$20.00
- Lewis, D.K., & Marchell, T.C. (2006). Safety first: a medical amnesty approach to alcohol poisoning at a U.S. university. *The International Journal of Drug Policy*, 17, 329-338. doi:10.1016/j.drugpo.2006.02.007
- Oster-Aaland, L., Thompson, K., & Eighmy, M. (2011). The impact of an online educational video and a medical amnesty policy on college students' intentions to seek help in the presence of alcohol poisoning symptoms. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 48(2), 147–164.



# References

- Red Watch Band Alcohol Bystander Training. (2009). Retrieved on November 28, 2011 from <http://www.stonybrook.edu/sb/redwatchband/>.
- University of Toledo Office of Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Prevention. (2010). University of Toledo alcohol and drug prevention needs assessment. Retrieved on November 28, 2011 from <http://www.utoledo.edu/studentaffairs/reslife/ATODPC/pdfs/UT%20Needs%20Assessment%207.12.11.pdf>.
- University of Toledo Office of Student Conduct. (2010). Annual alcohol and drug judicial violation report.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2007). The surgeon general's call to action to prevent and reduce underage drinking: a guide to action for families. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Surgeon General. Retrieved on November 28, 2011 at <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/underagedrinking/FamilyGuide.pdf>.
- Wechsler, P.W., Nelson, T. & Weitzman, E. (2000). From knowledge to action: how Harvard's college alcohol study can help your campus design a campaign against student alcohol abuse. *Change*, 32, 38-43.