



OFFICE OF PREVENTION & EDUCATION AT NORTHEASTERN

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# ALCOHOL OTHER DRUGS CONSENT SEXUAL VIOLENCE



Office of Prevention and Education at Northeastern  
A confidential, non-judgmental resource for students.



# ALCOHOL & OTHER DRUGS

OPEN, the Office of Prevention and Education at Northeastern provides education, consultation and programming on topics related to alcohol and other drugs and sexual violence prevention. We seek to provide supportive, accessible and non-judgmental services to students. OPEN is a resource to all students looking for information about wellness.

To learn more visit [northeastern.edu/open](http://northeastern.edu/open)



OPEN provides education, programming, and 'check in' services for Northeastern students around alcohol and other drugs. OPEN takes a confidential and non-judgmental approach to talking with students. We encourage students to make informed decisions and strive to reduce the harm that can be associated with alcohol and other drugs. OPEN sponsors a variety of educational events and programs throughout the year including Alcohol Awareness Month.

If someone wants to avoid all of the consequences associated with alcohol use, the best bet is to avoid drinking altogether. Remember that it is illegal to drink if you're under 21 and OPEN in no way gives permission for students to drink. If someone makes the decision to drink, they may want to consider ways to do so in a less dangerous and less risky way.



*"My check-in was eye-opening. Talking about issues related to alcohol without risk of getting in trouble was a great resource."*

# ISN'T EVERYONE DOING IT?

Sometimes, people overestimate how much alcohol or drugs people use because it's more noticeable when someone is using than when someone is not. And often people who do indulge a lot tend to assume that everyone uses the same way or more than they or their group of friends do.

## NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS MAY SURPRISE YOU:

**14% do not drink at all**

**26% have not consumed alcohol in the past month**

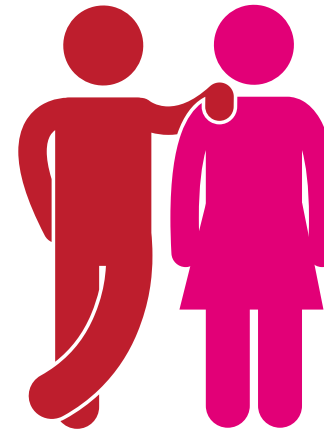
**78% have not used marijuana in the past month**

**More than 65% have never used any other drugs besides alcohol or tobacco**

**Over 90% have not used any other drugs besides alcohol or tobacco in the past month\***

\* Northeastern-specific results excerpted from the 2016 National College Health Assessment.

# ALCOHOL & BIRTH SEX DIFFERENCE SOME MORE SURPRISES



Biologically, men and women process alcohol differently, which can have consequences for both sexes. We encourage all students, but particularly women, never to go "drink for drink" with anyone.

**EVEN AT THE SAME WEIGHT, WOMEN WILL ALWAYS BECOME MORE INTOXICATED THAN MEN, SOMETIMES TWICE AS INTOXICATED, WITH THE SAME AMOUNT OF ALCOHOL.**

### WOMEN'S BODIES PROCESS ALCOHOL MORE SLOWLY FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS:

- Men have a higher muscle content and hold more water in their bodies which dilutes the concentration of alcohol.
- Alcohol dehydrogenase is a metabolizing enzyme that helps the body get alcohol out of its system. Women have less of this enzyme than men, so more of what women drink enters their blood stream as pure alcohol.
- The intoxicating effect of alcohol sets in faster when a woman's estrogen levels are higher. Also, because of the interaction of alcohol and hormone levels, birth control pills and other medications that contain estrogen will cause the intoxicating effect to set in at lower levels of BAC.

## KNOW WHAT YOU'RE CONSUMING

The body can typically process one standard alcoholic drink per hour. If you make the decision to drink, know what you're consuming.

One container does not necessarily translate to "one standard drink."

### 1 STANDARD DRINK :



- 12oz beer
- 10oz malt liquor
- 4-5oz wine
- 1.5oz 80 proof liquor
- 1oz 100 proof liquor
- 0.5oz Bacardi 151

### ALCOHOL POISONING SIGNS TO LOOK FOR:

- Inability to answer basic questions such as: name? date? location?
- Inability to remain conscious
- Inability to control own body. Person should be able to walk without help.
- Vomiting
- Slow or shallow breathing
- Pale, bluish, or cold skin
- Slow or irregular heartbeat

**Do not** leave a person alone to "pass out" or "sleep it off" as their BAC can continue to rise and become increasingly intoxicated even while passed out.

If you suspect alcohol poisoning or aren't sure:  
**CALL FOR HELP!**  
 NUPD: 617.373.3333  
 or 911 off campus

## HOW DO I KNOW IF ALCOHOL IS PLAYING TOO LARGE A ROLE IN MY LIFE?

### A PERSON MIGHT EXPERIENCE:

- Decreased performance in school, co-op or work
- Relationship difficulties with friends, family, roommates, or significant others
- Fighting, arguing, or abusive behaviors
- Worsened depression, anxiety, sleep quality
- Repeated regretted decisions

### SOME PHYSICAL CHANGES MAY INCLUDE:

- Increased tolerance
- Blackouts (memory loss in which one is unable to remember segments of time)
- Health problems, frequent illnesses

### WHAT IF I HAVE A HIGH TOLERANCE TO ALCOHOL?

This can be a bit of a mixed bag. An increased ability to “handle your liquor” can seem like a good thing on the one hand. On the other, it’s a misconception that people with a high tolerance get less intoxicated. In fact, Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) rises purely as a function of birth sex, weight, and how much alcohol you consume over what period of time.

“High tolerance” means that a body has become less sensitive to the effects of alcohol, and requires increased amounts of alcohol to produce the same effect.

### THIS CAN POSE TWO MAJOR RISKS:

1. A person might continue to drink because they don’t feel as impaired. As a result, their BAC could reach dangerous levels without them being aware of it.
2. Our bodies weren’t designed to sustain high doses of alcohol. So having a high tolerance poses an increased risk of running into more serious long-term problems, such as forming an addiction to alcohol.

### THE BEST WAY TO DECREASE TOLERANCE

**is to take a break from alcohol for several weeks to a few months**



## WHAT IS A “STANDARD” DRINK?



# MIXING ALCOHOL & OTHER DRUGS

### STIMULANTS + ALCOHOL = A MASKING EFFECT

When you mix alcohol with stimulants (including caffeine, some energy drinks, prescription stimulants, cocaine, etc.) the stimulants mask the effects of how your body is experiencing the alcohol. Depending on how much is consumed, over the course of however many hours, your Blood Alcohol Content may feel inaccurate due to the fact the stimulants are interrupting the body’s natural ability to process the alcohol and send you the appropriate messages. In other words, some of the body’s natural “defenses” and signs will be overridden and hidden from you.

It’s especially important to understand the very real hazards of combining stimulants and alcohol because these mixtures can often be deadly.

### DEPRESSANTS + ALCOHOL = A SYNERGISTIC EFFECT

**[or what happens when 1 + 1 = 10]**

Alcohol, as a central nervous system depressant, slows the body down. Other depressants like marijuana slow the body down, too. When used together, a drug interaction called “potentiation” happens. The effects of both are magnified, such that 1 + 1 is greater than 2 — in other words, there’s the effects of the alcohol, there’s the effects of the other depressant and then some. The “and then some” part is really hard to predict, other than knowing that a person could be at a particular blood alcohol level yet could be showing the depressant effects much greater than that level.



*“I wasn’t looking forward to coming, but I learned a lot and enjoyed talking about other people’s experiences. It helped me put everything into perspective.”*



# MARIJUANA

## COGNITIVE IMPACT

Marijuana affects attention, concentration, and short-term memory. For students with a diagnosis of ADD or ADHD, using marijuana worsens these pre-existing attention difficulties.

## DURATION OF EFFECTS

Research suggests that marijuana's effects can last up to 3 days after use. These persistent effects (sometimes called "pot hangovers") can include impaired memory and learning skills and a decrease in alertness, coordination, and depth perception. Heavy users of marijuana have higher deficits in these areas than those who use at lower levels. Some of the cognitive effects related to marijuana use seem to be temporary. However, new research is showing that deficits in attention from smoking may not be fully restored when compared to control groups.

## LONGER-TERM IMPLICATIONS

Frequent marijuana use is now known to be associated with "Amotivational Syndrome," described as general lethargy, including loss of interest in work, relationships, health, sex and exercise.

## PHYSICAL EFFECTS

Marijuana reduces REM (rapid eye movement) sleep. REM sleep allows people to feel rested and alert after waking up. It also facilitates the development of long-term memory, muscle rebuilding and repair. While some find that marijuana helps with falling asleep, it actually impedes individuals from getting enough of the deep sleep the body needs for real rest.

# PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Prescription medications, when taken as prescribed, are very helpful to a lot of people. However, these same medications have the potential for abuse and dependence if they are misused.

Prescription medication abuse is not the norm, and can result in unintended consequences. Studies show that many people of all ages underestimate the risks associated with misusing and abusing prescription medications.

## WHAT IS PRESCRIPTION DRUG MISUSE?

### MISUSE OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS INCLUDES:

- Using higher doses or taking more often than prescribed
- Taking other people's prescription medication
- Altering the medication's delivery method (e.g. crushing & snorting)
- Using a prescription in order to get high

## ONE SERIOUS RISK IS THAT MISUSE CAN LEAD TO DEPENDENCE

Check out OPEN's "Prescription Drug" brochure for more information about different prescription drugs and their effects or visit:

[northeastern.edu/open/alcohol-and-other-drug-information](http://northeastern.edu/open/alcohol-and-other-drug-information)

**89%** of Northeastern students **have not used prescription drugs that were not prescribed to them in the past year.\***

**OVER 92%** of Northeastern students **have not used prescription stimulants that were not prescribed to them as a study aid.**

\* Northeastern-specific results excerpted from the 2016 National College Health Assessment.



eCHECKUP TO GO offers two online questionnaires:

### ALCOHOL AND MARIJUANA

they provide quick, confidential feedback to you about your alcohol or marijuana use.

See how your drinking or marijuana use compares to other Northeastern University and other college students.

Each questionnaire takes 10-20 minutes to complete. **These surveys do not require you to enter any identifying information in order to take them and can be completed anonymously.**

[northeastern.edu/open/echeckup-to-go/](http://northeastern.edu/open/echeckup-to-go/)



# WHAT STUDENTS ARE SAYING ABOUT MEETINGS



WANT TO KNOW A LITTLE BIT MORE ABOUT YOURSELF?



"This meeting went a lot better than I thought it would. The reflection was very helpful and I do think that it will actually help me to stay true to my goal."

"The meeting was very informative and helpful. I think it prepared me to make better decisions."

"Much more realistic than I expected. Better than other high-school classes because it was actually helpful in a learning sense. I didn't feel as though I was being lectured at."

"I will definitely take into consideration what I have learned and evaluated in this meeting next time I go drinking."

"I consider myself fairly well-informed about alcohol and yet still learned a few things. It was also really nice to have a safe space to have an honest conversation with an informed "adult" who could help me critically look at my usage and give me impartial feedback without fear of reprimand or judgment."

"Very positive. I was able to say what I felt and thought without fear of judgment or repercussions. It was easy being open. I appreciate the confidentiality of our meetings and their understanding attitude."



## HOW DO I SIGN UP FOR AN INDIVIDUAL CHECK-IN ABOUT MY ALCOHOL/OTHER DRUG USE?

If you would like to participate in a check-in about alcohol or other drugs, you are more than welcome to contact OPEN at anytime to set up a meeting or to ask questions.

TO SET UP A CHECK-IN, CONTACT OPEN AT 617.373.4459 OR [OPEN@NORTHEASTERN.EDU](mailto:OPEN@NORTHEASTERN.EDU).

## WHAT IS AN OPEN GROUP LIKE?

Groups are 90-minute discussions that cover facts and tips to minimize the negative effects of alcohol and ways to reduce your risks, whether or not you drink. Groups have five to ten students and are led by one or two staff. All meetings are confidential.



"I felt very comfortable to talk and tell the truth about my experience and my drinking habits."



# CONSENT

CONSENT IS PERMISSION FROM A PARTNER TO ENGAGE IN SEXUAL ACTIVITY. THINK OF CONSENT AS A CONVERSATION OR A WAY TO CHECK IN TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE ON THE SAME PAGE.

## CONSENT SHOULD BE MUTUAL AND ENTHUSIASTIC

Simply stating what you want is an easy way to communicate your consent.



## CONSENT IS AN ON-GOING DIALOGUE

If you are into something, encouraging your partner lets them know that your consent is ongoing.



## IS EVERYONE HAVING SEX?

No, over 68% of Northeastern students had no sexual partners or only one partner in the last 12 months.\* It's important to make the decision that's best for you.

\* Northeastern-specific results excerpted from the 2016 National College Health Assessment.

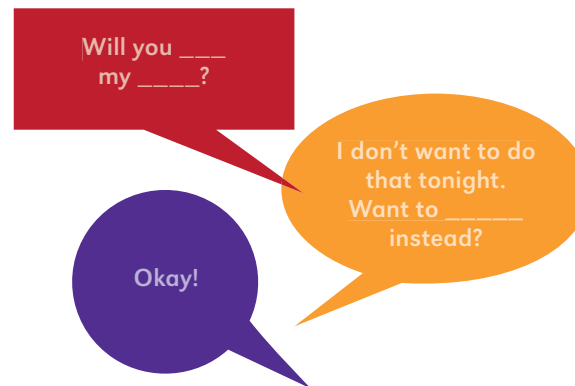
## "MAYBE" IS NOT CONSENT

If your partner responds by saying things like "I don't know", "I should go home," tensing up, hesitating, or moving away, these are some examples of cues that your partner isn't entirely comfortable or wants to stop. If you notice these things, it's important to check in!



## IT'S OKAY TO SAY "NO." RESPECT YOUR PARTNER'S NO.

Consent is also about feeling safe and comfortable and helping your partner to feel safe and comfortable enough to communicate if something doesn't feel good or if you don't want to do something.



## HOW DOES NORTHEASTERN DEFINE CONSENT?

**Consent** means a voluntary, affirmative agreement to engage in sexual activity proposed by another; it requires mutually understandable and communicated words and/or actions that would demonstrate to a reasonable person agreement by all parties to participate in sexual activity.

Consent must be freely given, without physical force, threats, intimidating behavior, duress, or coercion.

Silence, a lack of resistance, previous sexual relationships or experiences and/or a current relationship may not, in itself, constitute Consent.

The initiator, or the person who wants to engage in the specific sexual activity, must obtain Consent from the partner(s) for each sexual act. Each participant may be an initiator at different points of sexual activity. If confusion or ambiguity arises during sexual activity, participants are encouraged to stop and clarify a mutual willingness to continue that activity.

A person's initiation of a sexual act constitutes Consent to that act, but not necessarily to subsequent acts. Consent to sexual activity may be withdrawn at any time and the withdrawal must be communicated in mutually understandable words and/or actions; if so, sexual activity must cease immediately.

To learn more, see Northeastern's Policy on Rights and Responsibilities Under Title IX

## WHAT ARE YOUR BOUNDARIES?

TAKE SOME TIME TO REFLECT ALONE OR WITH A PARTNER ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT.

- If you are interested in being in a relationship, what type of relationship are you looking for/ hoping for? (exclusive, open, casual, serious, romantic, sexual etc.)
- How much time do you hope to spend with your partner (alone or with friends)?
- What makes you feel loved and supported in a relationship?
- What kinds of things feel hurtful to you emotionally?
- What are you comfortable with your partner sharing about your relationship and with whom? Are there things that you do or do not want your partner to communicate about your identity (in some or all settings)?
- How is technology/social media a part of your relationship?
- Are you interested in engaging in sexual activity? What type? How soon and often?
- What words or actions from a partner help you to feel most comfortable if you choose to be physically intimate? What is it important for you to communicate?
- Are there parts of your body that are off limits? Are there things that are triggering to you or your partner?
- What are your preferences in terms of protection? Birth control (if relevant)?
- What's important to you in terms of sexual health? Have you both been tested? What feels important to share about your sexual history or to know about theirs?
- How can you communicate these boundaries with a partner and find out about theirs?

# ALCOHOL & CONSENT

Consent may never be given: by minors (in Massachusetts, those not yet 16 years of age), mentally disabled persons, those who are incapacitated as a result of intoxication by alcohol or other drug consumption (voluntary or involuntary) or those who are unconscious, unaware, or otherwise physically helpless.

Engaging in sexual activity while under the influence of alcohol or drugs may create ambiguity for either party as to whether Consent has been sought or given. A person who has consumed alcohol and/or drugs still has a responsibility to obtain Consent for any sexual activity with another person(s). Being impaired by alcohol or other drugs is no defense to any violation of this Policy.\*

\* Northeastern's Policy on Rights and Responsibilities Under Title IX.

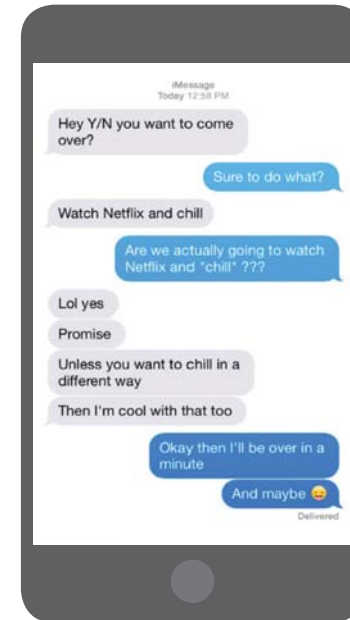
## WHAT DOES INCAPACITATION MEAN?

A person who is incapacitated as a result of intoxication cannot give consent to sexual activity. Incapacitation is a state where one cannot make a rational, reasonable decision because they lack the ability to understand the who, what, when, where, why or how of their sexual activities.

## HOW DO I KNOW IF SOMEONE IS INCAPACITATED OR TOO DRUNK TO CONSENT?

If someone is passing out, vomiting, stumbling or losing motor control these are some signs that they are incapacitated and unable to consent. Keep in mind that alcohol affects different people differently. If it's unclear whether or not a person can consent, wait until another time.

# HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS



**NETFLIX AND CHILL?**  
Healthy relationships are about trust and communication. Make sure you and your partner are on the same page.

Knowing yourself and your boundaries and being able to communicate those is an important part of any relationship. **Personal boundaries** are the limits we set for ourselves within relationships. Boundaries and expectations can vary from person to person and culture to culture. Having a conversation about physical, sexual, emotional, and digital boundaries can help people to feel safer and happier in a romantic relationship (whether a casual hookup or a long time dating partner). A good place to start when it comes to boundary setting is reflecting on what you want.





**NORTHEASTERN** TAKES A STRONG STANCE AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND STALKING. THESE BEHAVIORS ARE NOT TOLERATED BY THE UNIVERSITY. YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO FEEL SAFE HERE.

### SEXUAL ASSAULT

The oral, anal, or vaginal penetration by an inanimate object, penis, or other bodily part without the consent of all parties involved;

The attempted oral, anal, or vaginal penetration of an individual(s) by an inanimate object, penis, or other bodily part without the consent of all parties involved, or

The touching of the intimate body parts of another—such as breasts, buttocks, groin, genitals, or the clothing covering them— without the consent of all parties involved.

### SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

Any unwanted or offensive sexual behavior that has the purpose or effect of creating a hostile living, learning, or working environment, or whenever toleration of such conduct or the rejection of it is the basis for a personal or academic decision affecting the individual. Sexual harassment may be found in a single episode, as well as in persistent behavior.

Examples of sexually harassing behavior include, but are not limited to: sexual advances; request for sexual favors; comment or inquiry about an individual's body or sexual experiences; unwelcome leering, whistling, or name calling; sexual gestures; displaying sexually suggestive photos, cartoons, or videos.

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE)

The intentional infliction of physical, sexual, or psychological harm on a current or former partner or spouse.

### STALKING

A willful and/or malicious pattern of conduct or series of acts directed at a specific person, which seriously alarms or annoys that person and would cause a reasonable person to fear bodily injury or to suffer substantial emotional distress. Examples of stalking include, but are not limited to: conduct, acts or threats conducted in person, or by mail, phone, electronic communication, or social media.

# WHAT CAN I DO?

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE IS PREVENTABLE.

As a bystander who is willing to step in, you have the power to change a situation and to prevent sexual violence from happening.

When you see other people looking uncomfortable or have a bad feeling about something, trust your gut reaction and intervene in the situation in a way that feels comfortable to you. How you decide to intervene might vary depending on whether you are a friend, acquaintance, or stranger or how comfortable or safe you feel in the particular environment.

**SEPARATE** Make it appear like you are splitting people up for some reason other than potential abuse. Focus on getting someone out of the situation safely.

“Let’s go get food.”

“Hey I need to talk to you about something. Come with me for a minute.”

**DISTRACT** Sometimes it’s hard to know if someone is uncomfortable or not. Creating a distraction allows a person to get out of the situation if they are truly uncomfortable.

“Don’t we have a class together?”

**BE DIRECT** Depending on the situation, you may want to confront a person directly.

“They seem too drunk to hook up.”

“I’m going to take my friend home now.”

**RECRUIT HELP** You don’t have to do this alone! This strategy is especially important if you think your safety might be at risk too.

Ask your friend to intervene with you.

Find friends of the people involved and ask them to intervene.

Get a professional like a bartender, bouncer, RA, RD or the police.

# GET INVOLVED

## PEER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

### RED WATCH BAND

The mission of the Red Watch Band is to provide Northeastern University community members with the knowledge, awareness, and skills to prevent student toxic drinking deaths and to promote a student culture of kindness, responsibility, compassion, and respect. The student-led initiative is aimed at encouraging students to identify dangerous levels of intoxication, and to call for help if their friends have had too much to drink. Red Watch Band events occur one to two times per semester, in partnership with NU EMS and RWB peer educators.

### HUSKY TO HUSKY

Husky to Husky raises awareness of mental health resources that are available for all students in the Northeastern community. Peer educators are given the skills to discuss resources related to mental health with their peers. Peer educators also provide the necessary information to help students access services. Find Husky to Husky at tabling events that occur twice a month on campus or get involved by applying to become a peer educator.

### ONE LOVE

The One Love Foundation is a national organization founded in 2010 to honor the memory of Yeardeley Love, who was killed as a result of intimate partner violence. One Love works with young people across the country to raise awareness about the warning signs of abuse and activate communities to work to change the statistics around relationship violence. Trained peer One Love Ambassadors lead the 90 minute Escalation Workshop which consists of a powerful video plus a discussion on warning signs of partner violence, how to support a friend in a relationship that is unhealthy or abusive, and how to intervene in order to prevent violence in our community.

Find out more about these programs by going to our website: [northeastern.edu/open/peer-education](http://northeastern.edu/open/peer-education) or by e-mailing [open@northeastern.edu](mailto:open@northeastern.edu)



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**IF YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED SEXUAL ASSAULT, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, STALKING, AND/OR ARE IN OR HAVE BEEN IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP, PLEASE KNOW THAT IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT AND THAT YOU ARE NOT ALONE. THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE ON AND OFF CAMPUS READY TO SUPPORT YOU.**

### NAVIGATING RESOURCES

The **VISION RESOURCE CENTER** serves as an entry point for students who have been affected by sexual violence. The Office of Prevention and Education provide staffing at the center. Information is available about resources and reporting options both on and off campus.

The ViSION Resource Center operates on an empowerment model, meaning that we won't tell you what you should do, but rather will listen and provide information in order to help you make whichever decisions feel best for you.

**HOURS** 12pm-5pm Monday-Friday or by prior arrangement (Email [vision@northeastern.edu](mailto:vision@northeastern.edu))

**LOCATION** The ViSION Resource Center is located in the basement of 106 St. Stephen St. The entrance is located on the side of the building.

**ACCESSIBILITY** All students have the right to access ViSION's resources and services. Phone translation services are available in over 200 languages including ASL. Staff will work to accommodate any other accessibility needs. Please note that the ViSION Resource Center is not a wheelchair accessible space. Please email [vision@northeastern.edu](mailto:vision@northeastern.edu) to set up a meeting in Ell Hall alternatively.

### RIGHTS & REPORTING OPTIONS

If you are afraid for your safety, call **Northeastern University Police Department (NUPD)** at **617.373.3333** (on campus) or **911** (off campus).

If you would like to make a report, please contact the **Office for Gender Equity and Compliance** at [titleix@northeastern.edu](mailto:titleix@northeastern.edu). Visit their website to learn more about your rights and reporting options.

### ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS

- University Health and Counseling Services. . . . . **617.373.2772**
- Violence Recovery Program at Fenway Health (LGBTQ+ specific) . . . . . **617.927.6202**
- Boston Area Rape Crisis Center 24-hour hotline . . . . . **800.841.8371**
- SafeLink Massachusetts Domestic Violence 24-hour hotline . . . . . **877.785.2020**

For more resources on alcohol and other drugs, please go to our website: [northeastern.edu/open/staying-connected-away/resources](http://northeastern.edu/open/staying-connected-away/resources)