Invoke your friends, family and colleagues to watch the film together, and then have a post-screening discussion.

WHAT’S THE FILM ABOUT?

Are you a risky drinker? Nearly 70% of American adults drink alcohol and nearly 1/3 of them engage in problem drinking at some point in their lives. Produced by HBO Documentary Films and The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) of the National Institutes of Health, Risky Drinking is a no-holds-barred look at a national epidemic through the intimate stories of four people whose drinking dramatically affects their relationships.

Through immersive storytelling, expert commentary and animation, this 85-minute film offers a new perspective on alcohol use and misuse as it falls along a broad spectrum of risk and includes life-saving information about how to help people dial back or stop their drinking. The film aims to provoke a much-needed conversation about how to identify risky drinking and to suggest alternatives to a one-size-fits-all approach that prevents many people from seeking help.

HOW DO YOU HOST A SCREENING?

Invite your group to a gathering spot - anywhere from your living room to a more formal space - to watch the film together. Before you watch, a note of caution: this film contains content and images that some - especially those struggling with an alcohol use disorder - may find disturbing. Please be mindful of your audience.

Here are some tips for hosting a screening:

1. Bring your group together. Send out invitations and collect RSVPs. Here's a sample of what your invitation can say:

<HOST NAME> cordially invites you and a guest to a screening and discussion of

RISKY DRINKING

Are you a risky drinker? Nearly 70% of all American adults drink alcohol, but for a segment of the population, the risks of drinking can be devastating. Previously viewed as a dichotomy between normal drinking and alcoholism, problem drinking is now
diagnosed as an alcohol use disorder which falls on a spectrum from mild, moderate to severe disorder. Risky Drinking profiles four people, filmed over the course of a year, who fall on different parts of the spectrum.

<TIME> WELCOME
<TIME> SCREENING (length 85m)

Please RSVP to <EMAIL address> by <DATE>.

Create a Facebook event as well. Tag your tweets with #RiskyDrinking and @HBODocs. Share the poster (see the end of the guide). Send the link to the trailer too, available at www.hbo.com/documentaries/risky-drinking

2. Introduce the film. Take a moment to provide a warning to your group: this film contains content and images that some - especially those struggling with an alcohol use disorder - may find disturbing. It should not be viewed by children under the age of 14 without adult supervision. Ask your group ‘What do you think it means to be a risky drinker?’ Give everyone a chance to write or at least consider his/her responses before the film.

3. Watch the film. Extended interviews with the featured experts are available on HBO On-Demand, HBO Now, and HBO GO.

4. Talk about what you saw. What have they learned? Have their perceptions changed? See below for more sample discussion questions.

5. Think about what your group can do to learn about their own drinking patterns and get help. Invite guests to go to Rethinking Drinking (Rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov) from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA). Visitors to the site can take an anonymous self-assessment where they can learn more about their own drinking habits, what counts as a drink, strategies for cutting down, and how to get help. Also, urge people to tell their personal networks about the film, and the issues it raises.

6. Thank your guests. Send a thank you email the next day, and include some follow up comments on the discussion. You can include links to some of the groups listed below.

How do I get the discussion going?

After the credits end, turn up the lights and kick off the conversation. Below are some discussion prompts to start you off. These questions are organized according to the four stories in the film.

THE PROBLEM WITH BINGE DRINKING
According to the film, 1 in 4 adults in the U.S. is a binge drinker. According to the NIAAA, binge drinking is defined “a pattern of drinking that brings blood alcohol concentration (BAC) levels to 0.08 g/dL. This typically occurs after 4 drinks for women and 5 drinks for men—in about 2 hours.”

1 What are some of the consequences of binge drinking that the film shows and how does this kind of drinking affect the quality of their life?

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Do you know someone who binge drinks regularly? Have you ever spoken with them about their drinking habits? If yes, what was the outcome? If no, why not?

**DANGEROUS DRINKING**

If you felt that you were on the spectrum of risky drinking and wanted to limit your alcohol consumption, which do you think would be more effective for you - moderation or abstinence? Why?

What are some examples from the film of the impact of risky drinking on family?

According to the film, about 80% of people with an alcohol use disorder will relapse within the first year of sobriety. Does that surprise you? Why/Why not? Do you know anyone who has sought treatment, achieved sobriety, and relapsed? What was your reaction when you found out?

What are some common mistakes made with in treating people with an alcohol use disorder according to Dr. Stephen Ross, Director, Addiction Psychiatry, NYU Langone Medical Center?

‘...recovery isn’t someone gets sober and stays sober forever. That’s pretty rare. The majority of people will have relapses and slips, and rather than see that as a failure, it’s usually the path towards recovery, that slips and relapses can be learning opportunities ... The other mistake made in treatment is when the treatment is given, it’s given in short term bursts. A week of detox, a one month rehab, you’d never treat diabetes like that. You’d never take a diabetic and give them three days or one month of treatment and assume that they’re okay. This is like any other chronic medical illness. It requires a long-term solution."

An extended interview with Dr. Ross is available on HBO On-Demand, HBO Now, and HBO GO.

**MOM’S HAPPY HOUR**

What would you do if you felt that one of your friends was losing control of their alcohol consumption? Would you intervene? Have you ever suggested treatment for a friend or loved one or tried to help someone find treatment or therapy? What happened?

Do you use alcohol as a coping mechanism? Do you know someone who drinks alcohol regularly to deal with stress and anxiety? What are some coping alternatives?

How can someone who is trying to reduce their alcohol consumption maintain the motivation to quit? How can friends help?

How much do you pay attention to the alcohol content of what you drink?

Have you ever had a blackout? What happened?

When should a woman be concerned about her alcohol consumption according to Dr. Diedra Roach, Project Officer at the Division of Treatment and Recovery Research of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism?

“When alcohol becomes her friend, the thing that she turns to relieve her stress, to numb her pain. Because when alcohol becomes a friend, it’s firmly on the path to becoming a partner, and as a partner, it’s poisonous.”

An extended interview with Dr. Roach is available on HBO On-Demand, HBO Now, and HBO GO.
THE END GAME
According to Dr. George Koob, Director of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, “One of the most important things about excessive drinking is that it changes your brain” so that you have “no brake on impulsive behavior and stress-like responding.” This promotes a vicious cycle where people can end up drinking to fix the problem that drinking caused.

What are some examples of this in the film? Do you think you could recognize the behavior of someone who was in this cycle?

An extended interview with Dr. Koob is available on HBO On-Demand, HBO Now, and HBO GO.

MORE QUESTIONS
How can friends or family members of those with a severe alcohol use disorders avoid becoming enablers? What can they do for themselves in a relationship with someone engaged in risky drinking?

Do certain times of the year like the holidays or certain social situations make you feel more tempted to drink? What are some strategies for remaining within safe drinking guidelines during these times? According to one recent study, there are significant associations between alcohol use disorders and other disorders like anxiety and depression. How can those who are predisposed to these conditions take precautions in settings where they might be more tempted to drink?

Take a look at the information below about risky drinking and standard drink size. Do you think you drink too much?

Are you a risky drinker?

Source: “What’s ‘At-Risk’ Or ‘Heavy’ Drinking?” The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)

For healthy adults in general, drinking more than these single-day or weekly limits is considered "at-risk" or "heavy" drinking:

- **Men:** More than 4 drinks on any day or 14 per week*
- **Women:** More than 3 drinks on any day or 7 per week*

About 1 in 4 people who exceed these limits already has an alcohol use disorder, and the rest are at greater risk for developing these and other problems. Again, individual risks vary. People can have problems drinking less than these amounts, particularly if they drink too quickly.

**Too much + too often = too risky**

It makes a difference both how much you drink on any day and how often you have a “heavy drinking day,” that is, more than 4 drinks on any day for men or more than 3 drinks for women.

* See the next section for more information about the standard drink size.

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2. Bridget F. Grant, PhD; Risë B. Goldstein, PhD, MPH; Tulshi D. Saha, PhD; S. Patricia Chou, PhD; Jeesun Jung, PhD; Haitao Zhang, PhD; Roger P. Pickering, MS; W. June Ruan, MA; Sharon M. Smith, PhD; Boji Huang, MD, PhD; Deborah S. Hasin, PhD. Epidemiology of DSM-5 Alcohol Use Disorder JAMA Psychiatry. doi:10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2015.0584 Published online June 3, 2015
How big is a standard drink?

Not all drinks are poured equally. As Dr. Roach points out, “a single serving of alcohol is 12 ounces of beer or 5 ounces of wine or 1 and a half ounces of liquor. But a server may bring you a drink that actually contains the alcohol equivalent of two or three drinks. So you think that you’ve had one drink when in fact you’ve consumed three. And over an evening of drinking that can really add up.”

Here are the standard drink sizes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drink Type</th>
<th>Standard Measure</th>
<th>Alcohol Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 ounces of regular beer</td>
<td>12 oz</td>
<td>About 5% alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 ounces of wine</td>
<td>5 oz</td>
<td>Typically about 12% alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 ounces of distilled spirits</td>
<td>1.5 oz</td>
<td>About 40% alcohol</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: “What Is A Standard Drink?” The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)

GO TO RETHINKING DRINKING @ RETHINKINGDRINKING.NIAAA.NIH.GOV TO TAKE AN ANONYMOUS SELF-ASSESSMENT

Where can I learn more and get help?

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS
al-anon.org

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS (AA)
www.aa.org

COLLEGE DRINKING – CHANGING THE CULTURE
CollegeDrinkingPrevention.gov

NIAAA
www.niaaa.nih.gov

RETHINKING DRINKING (NIAAA)
Rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov

HAMS Harm Reduction Network
www.hamsnetwork.org

Moderation Management (MM)
www.moderation.org

SAMHSA Treatment Navigator
findtreatment.samhsa.gov

Rational Recovery
rational.org

Secular Organizations for Sobriety (SOS)
www.sossobriety.org

Life Ring Secular Recovery
lifering.org

Smart Recovery
www.smartrecovery.org

Women for Sobriety (WFS)
www.womensforsobriety.org
Statistics from the Film

1 in 4 adults in the U.S. is a binge drinker.

Binge drinking accounts for more than half of the alcohol consumed by adults in the U.S.

Less than 20% of people with an alcohol use disorder receive treatment.

About 80% of people with an alcohol use disorder will relapse within the first year of sobriety.

Although more men than women have alcohol use disorder, the gap is quickly narrowing.

Blackouts are episodes of amnesia that disrupt the ability to form new memories while intoxicated.

One in six women will develop an alcohol-related health problem including cancer, heart disease and liver damage.

Chronic alcohol use can cause an overall reduction in brain function and size.

Nearly one third of adults in the U.S. engage in problem drinking at some point in their lives.

The majority of people who receive treatment for an alcohol use disorder will recover.
RISKY DRINKING

ARE YOU AT RISK?

HBO DOCUMENTARY FILMS

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