

Binge to Blackout Script

“READY-TO-READ” INTRODUCTION

Chris Volkmann and 26-year-old Toren Volkmann come to you straight out of the trenches. Many of you are aware that the U.S. Surgeon General’s national goal by the year 2010 is a 50% reduction in college binge drinking. If that is going to happen, then we all need to sit down and talk about it. In their new book, *From Binge to Blackout*, Chris and Toren lay it out and talk to parents and teens about trends in the alcohol culture from middle school through high school and college.

1. Why does the book FROM BINGE TO BLACKOUT appeal to such a wide audience?

- Alcohol is the #1 drug of choice for our nation’s youth.
- Binge drinking is the most widespread health problem on college campuses.
- Parents are concerned about their kids’ drinking choices
- Youth are bombarded with alcohol choices, clever marketing and peer pressure
- Families relate to a mom and son voice and the honesty of our story

2. Toren, when did you first start drinking?

Age 14

When did you realize you were an alcoholic?

At age 23 while I was serving in the Peace Corps.

3. Chris, when did you discover your son was an alcoholic?

When Toren phoned me from WA DC after being evacuated from the Peace Corps.

What was your reaction?

I felt like someone had hit me over the head with a sledgehammer.

4. Toren, how much were you drinking and why did you stop?

5. Chris, what would you advise parents now that this has happened to your family?

- Start dialogue about alcohol early with kids
- Learn about the consequences of youth alcohol abuse
- Seek help from experts early if problems arise

6. What is it you’d most like people to understand when they read FROM BINGE TO BLACKOUT?

- Research about the way alcohol affects the brain has improved. We now know how damaging it is to the adolescent brain.
- There is currently more awareness of genetics and the link to alcoholism.
- 30% of college students abuse alcohol and 6 % meet the criteria for alcohol dependency.
- 48 percent of college kids said they drink alcohol to get drunk

- 80% of high school seniors have tried alcohol in the US.

7. What tips does From Binge to Blackout have for parents?

- Do not perceive underage and binge drinking as inevitable
- Parents can combat the way media portrays alcohol as glamorous
- Alcohol is not a benign substance
- Don't be afraid to ask questions about alcohol use or to seek help
- Parents are the most listened-to resource by teens in alcohol decision-making.
- Never give up

8. What are the red flags or danger signals of underage drinking?

- Trouble at school or work, lower grades, accidents
- Legal difficulties, MIP
- Money problems
- Lack of motivation
- Staying out all night/resisting coming in
- Loss of memory, blackouts.

9. What are 5 mental activities compromised by chronic alcohol abuse?

- Memory formation
- Abstract thinking
- Problem solving
- Attention and concentration
- Perception of emotion

10. Where can people get help?

- Most college campuses have prevention and wellness centers with trained staff to assess and assist without blame.
- High school counselors are trained in this area as well.
- AA or Al-anon is helpful.
- Or see a professional counselor.

11. Where is From Binbe to Blackout available?

Your local bookstore, Amazon