In the fall of 1999, changes in the law that governs the privacy of student records, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), permitted colleges and universities to inform parents/guardians of students under 21 years of age when their student has been found in violation of university alcohol and drug rules. Texas A&M University decided to notify the parents/guardians of students under 21 years of age found to commit such violations. This was not a decision made without serious consideration.

We understand that students want and need to be treated as adults. The college years are often a time of trial and error for many students and they need time to reflect upon their actions, accept responsibility, and learn from their mistakes. However, we also know that the abuse of alcohol and other drugs at colleges and universities across the nation is a serious concern. Texas A&M is no different in this regard.

Changing the campus environment to be one free of alcohol abuse, illegal drug use and their effects requires collaboration and commitment from many individuals and constituencies. By notifying you of your student’s violation of university alcohol and drug rules, we are asking you to partner with us in addressing the increasing use and abuse of alcohol and other drugs by college students. We think this is an important partnership.

Should your student be found in violation of university alcohol and drug rules, you will receive a letter from the Director of Student Life indicating that your student has committed a violation and been issued a disciplinary sanction. As part of the disciplinary sanction, your student may be enrolled in an alcohol education program presented by staff in the Offices of the Dean of Student Life Alcohol and Drug Education Programs. Serious or repeat violations of alcohol rules may result in assessment and basic intervention by a Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor and/or referral for counseling and treatment to an agency or professional outside the University.

As parents/guardians, we hope you take the opportunity to discuss improper use of alcohol and other drugs with your student especially if you receive a letter from the Director about a violation committed by your student. Ultimately, dealing with an alcohol or drug problem requires commitment from your student and you. Texas A&M University can be there to assist, both you and your student, but only the individual student can change his/her behavior. If at any time you have questions regarding Texas A&M policies and resources, please feel free to discuss this issue with the Director of Student Life, or staff members in the Offices of the Dean of Student Life Student Conflict Resolution Services Office. Each student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with and to comply with the Texas A&M University Student Rules. A copy of the student rules and regulations can be obtained online at http://student-rules.tamu.edu.

http://studentlife.tamu.edu
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