

# Jackie Nitschke Center: Don't let summer take you down the road to addiction

Posted on Tuesday, Jun 21, 2022

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(Green Bay, Wis.) – As the weather heats up, summer activities kick into full swing. That means BBQs, picnics, outdoor recreation and getting together with family and friends. For some people, particularly in Wisconsin, these activities often include alcohol. This summer, be sure to take steps to protect your own health and the health of others.

“It’s so easy to get carried away with alcohol consumption when your activities increase and there’s warm weather to enjoy,” said Tina Baeten, Clinical Supervisor at the Jackie Nitschke Center. “While you may generally limit yourself to one or two alcoholic beverages at an event, when there’s a day-long activity or more activities than usual, that number can easily turn into a half dozen or more. For anyone who may be on the path to a substance addiction, summertime activities can be a tipping point.”

If alcohol is a central part of an event or activity, Baeten says there are some things to keep in mind if you are in recovery or just don’t want to drink. “Don’t be afraid to say ‘no, thank you’ to your host or to someone encouraging you to drink,” Baeten says. “Or simply let them know that you would prefer water or a soda. That, most often, will end the discussion. Or bring your own cooler of non-alcoholic beverages if you don’t think they will be available.”

Family members and friends can also be helpful when they host a summer get-together:

- Have several different non-alcoholic beverages available
- Provide a variety of healthy foods and snacks
- Keep conversations light and about positive things. Don't venture into discussions about controversial subjects or family issues that are likely to make people anxious or angry
- Help guests get home safely - use designated drivers, taxis or ride share services

Keeping these things in mind can help you avoid alcohol-related problems over the summer months. But, if you find yourself heading down a path to substance abuse, be sure to reach out for help. The Jackie Nitschke Center is dedicated to helping those facing substance abuse through residential in-patient, and out-patient programming for individuals and their families as well as recovery housing for those who have completed treatment.