Challenging College Alcohol Abuse

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Delivery Specifications | Intended Setting | Fidelity | Barriers and Problems | Personnel | Education
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Program developers or their agents provided the Model Program information below.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Challenging College Alcohol Abuse is a social norms and environmental management program that reduces high-risk drinking and related negative consequences in college students 18 to 24 years old. The program corrects misperceptions of alcohol attitudes, behavior, and beliefs that drive heavy drinking and high-risk behavior and encourages the development of policies that establish and maintain a healthy and safe environment for all students. It also seeks to develop community and civic partnerships and collaborations in support of campus substance abuse policies and State and local laws.

The Campus Health Service uses social marketing to communicate public health information to students, the campus community, and the surrounding community to (1) correct misperceptions, increase knowledge, and change attitudes about alcohol and other drug use behaviors among undergraduate students; (2) change policies and practices related to substance use and abuse among campus fraternity and sorority chapters; (3) change faculty, administration, parental, community, and policymaker perceptions to prevent perpetuation of substance abuse myths; and (4) increase restrictions on alcohol availability and monitor on- and off-campus distribution and consumption.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

In 1994, The University of Arizona (UA) Campus Health Service received a 5-year grant from the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) to implement and test strategies to prevent student heavy drinking and illegal drug use. Additional grants were awarded through the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education, and the Safe and Drug Free Schools Act.

Since 1995, the UA substance abuse prevention program has developed a two-pronged approach: social norms and environmental management. (Moderation skills training is also provided for students in the university diversion program.) The goal of the program is to have campus-wide impact on student alcohol and illegal drug perceptions and use patterns, campus and community alcohol and substance use perceptions, and policies and procedures that support safer drinking practices.

RECOGNITION

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Model Program

U.S. Department of Education: Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention: Model Program Award

INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE CLASSIFICATION (IOM)

UNIVERSAL, INDICATED

Developed to be used with the entire college student body, but includes components designed for use with students who have been referred for "diversion" due to alcohol- or substance-related incidents.

INTERVENTION TYPE

ENVIRONMENTAL

CONTENT FOCUS

ALCOHOL, ILLEGAL DRUGS, TOBACCO, PARENT COMPONENT

This program targets alcohol use and abuse but also includes related drug use.

Parent involvement as an adjunct strategy:

Parents receive the brochure, *Is the UA: A "Party School"?,* in the parent orientation packet. It delivers information about alcohol usage norms and asks parents to actively correct the students' misperceptions.

Parents are mailed a newsletter twice a year that reiterates or updates information on the school's alcohol and substance policies, alcohol usage norms, and the "alcohol climate"— what the school is doing to influence and curb alcohol misuse. Parents are encouraged to discuss these issues with students.

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

INDIVIDUAL, PEER, SCHOOL

INDIVIDUAL
• Openness to ability for change and growth
• Value systems open to change and growth
• Correct information about alcohol and illegal drug use

PEER

- Strong "family" support system within Greek chapters

- Leadership development within campus Greek chapters

- Help friends control their actions while drinking

- Express and promote majority norm of moderate use, including non-use

- Express and promote protective behaviors endorsed by the majority

SCHOOL

- Support for student wellness in residence halls

- Faculty and administration support of students' education and wellness

- Quality and credibility of campus health care services

- Policies and enforcement aimed at a drug-free environment

- Policies and enforcement that support correct alcohol and illegal drug use information

- Policies and enforcement aimed at eliminating high-risk alcohol- and illegal
  drug-related behavior

RISK FACTORS

INDIVIDUAL, PEER, SCHOOL, COMMUNITY

INDIVIDUAL

- Freshman-year student experimentation with alcohol and illegal drugs

- High-risk drinking and drug use behavior prior to college

- Misperception of high levels of alcohol and illegal drug use and sexual activity in college

- Combining alcohol and illegal drug use and sexual activities

- Social anxiety

PEER

- Increased alcohol and illegal drug use associated with membership in fraternity/sorority
  chapters and residence housing

- Increased availability of alcohol and illegal drugs in fraternity/sorority culture, especially
  during membership initiation, and at sports and celebration events

SCHOOL

- Permissive faculty and administration attitudes toward alcohol and illegal drug use

- Inconsistent and ineffective alcohol and illegal drug policies and enforcement

- High tolerance of alcohol effects and consequences

- Easy access to and high visibility and use of alcohol and illegal drugs at
  campus/community celebration events

- Perceived lack of drug- and alcohol-free social and recreational activities

COMMUNITY

- Easy access to alcohol and illegal drugs

- Proximity to accessible and inexpensive alcohol and underage drinking (e.g., Mexico border) and illegal drugs

- Alcohol industry advertising targeting college youth

- Local establishments' alcohol promotions targeting college youth

- Lax local ordinances and policing of underage drinking parties

INTERVENTIONS BY DOMAIN

INDIVIDUAL, PEER, COMMUNITY, SOCIETY

INDIVIDUAL

- Life/social skills training

PEER

- Involving youth in alternative/recreational activities

COMMUNITY

- Education to alter perceptions of societal norms and expectations

SOCIETY

- Classroom-based media education to counter alcohol and tobacco advertising

- Enforcement of tobacco and alcohol sales laws

KEY PROGRAM APPROACHES

INFORMATION SHARING, MASS MEDIA (USE OF), OTHER: POLICY DEVELOPMENT

INFORMATION SHARING, MASS MEDIA

This program corrects the misperception of student norms for drinking and related negative consequences. Using social marketing strategies a variety of messages are posted through newspaper ads, posters, newspaper inserts, fliers, newsletters, and other mass media. This information is published, placed, or distributed weekly throughout the school year. In addition, through in-person reports to key campus committees, campus leadership, and community partners, misperceptions about typical use (most students drink heavily and suffer frequent negative consequences as a result of their drinking behavior) are addressed. Through repeated dosing of accurate information, the misperceived norm that the typical student drinks to excess, smokes, and uses drugs is corrected and the public conversation about alcohol is positively influenced. Protective strategies used by students as well as safety information support the data that the majority of University of Arizona students are more moderate in their behavior, attitudes, and beliefs about substance use.

This information is provided by the Campus Health Service from an annual health and wellness survey and is repeatedly fed back to students and key stakeholders. The feedback helps protect incoming students as they anticipate the new peer group they are about to join.

OTHER: POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The environmental management component helps senior administrators and other key stakeholders develop a consistent alcohol policy for all campus activities, including use of sports facilities and campus grounds, based on actual norms. Frequent and consistent exposure to accurate information helps change the public conversation about substance use and informs campus substance use policy and enforcement strategies.

Typical problems that users experience in implementing these program strategies and potential solutions:

To provide accurate information about alcohol use, a survey first must be administered to serve as a credible data source for each campus. Survey items must capture information about frequency, quantity, level of intoxication, protective factors (factors that slow intoxication or increase safety); and injunctive and attitudinal norms. Asking the right questions, administering a survey, and properly analyzing the data so that moderate norms can be uncovered are often the first set of problems experienced. In addition, finding an outlet for mass and frequent dosing of the information can be formidable. Last, training in social marketing techniques, including message development, design, production, and placement, is important to project fidelity.

HOW IT WORKS

CCAA delivers messages/information about drinking and drug use norms through posters, newspaper inserts, flyers, newsletters and other mass media, as well as in-person reports to key campus committees, campus leadership, and community partners. This approach supplants the misperceived norm that "everybody drinks a lot, smokes, and uses drugs," which helps protect incoming students from the pressure to "drink up" or use drugs in order to fit in with perceived peer use patterns.

Frequent and consistent exposure to accurate information helps to change the public conversation about alcohol and drug use, and informs and reminds students of campus alcohol and drug policy changes, affecting campus social norms.

CCAA's environmental management component helps senior administrators and other key stakeholders to develop a consistent alcohol policy for all campus activities, including use of sports facilities and campus grounds.

To successfully implement CCAA on a college campus, organizers must focus on the environment, not the individual. Implementation also requires a team of people who have evaluation, program, materials design, and target market analysis expertise, in order to—

• Survey student behaviors, attitudes and perceptions about alcohol and illegal drug use, including protective factors before and throughout the program implementation.

• Identify misperceptions that influence alcohol and illegal drug use/abuse.

• Produce media and saturate the campus with correct alcohol and illegal drug information.

- Incorporate social norms information in diversion classes, freshmen orientations, and presentations to high-risk and other groups.

- Further change the public conversation about alcohol and illegal drugs though faculty, advisors, senior administrators, and campus leadership.

- Eliminate mixed messages, policies, and practices for campus sporting and celebration events.

OUTCOMES

DECREASES IN SUBSTANCE USE, REDUCTIONS IN BEHAVIORS RELATED TO RISK FACTORS, OTHER TYPES OF OUTCOMES

DECREASES IN SUBSTANCE USE IN STUDENTS BETWEEN 1995 AND 1998

29% decrease in the rate of heavy drinking among undergraduate students.

49% reduction in heavy drinking among frequent heavy drinkers.*

Significantly fewer students used alcohol in the past 30 days.

Significantly more students reported their alcohol use decreased in the last year.

Heavy drinking means having five or more drinks at a sitting three or more times in the last 2 weeks.

REDUCTIONS IN BEHAVIORS RELATED TO RISK FACTORS

Reductions in student reports of "did something I later regretted."

Reductions in doing poorly on a test or important project and missing class.

Reductions in sex after drinking.

48% reduction in driving after drinking.

Reductions in alcohol-related fights and arguments.

Reductions in trouble with campus police or other school authorities.

Increases in those who did not drink so they could serve as a designated driver.

OTHER

Between 1995 and 1998 the campus also experienced:

- Reductions in police statistics for Homecoming with respect to neighborhood calls, arrests of minors in possession of alcohol, and verbal warnings for alcohol

- Changes in the public conversation about student alcohol use norms

OTHER TYPES OF OUTCOMES:

• Students drink more moderately and experience fewer negative consequences

• Identifies and corrects student misperceptions about campus heavy drinking

• Increases awareness by students that the majority are moderate or non-drinkers

• Eliminates mixed messages about drinking and drug use

• Eliminates ineffective and confusing alcohol and illegal drug policies and enforcement practices

• Positively effects the overall health and well being of the campus and greater community

EVALUATION DESIGN

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected from 1994 through 1998. A nationally recognized survey instrument, the Core Alcohol and Drug Survey (Core), and a program-specific instrument, the Health Enhancement Survey (HES), were utilized to provide baseline data. The Core was mailed to a random sample of undergraduates. HES, first administered in 1996, was mailed to all students in the identified high-risk population—those living in residence halls and fraternity/sorority residences.

The Core and HES gathered information on students' alcohol, tobacco, and drug knowledge, attitudes and perceptions, and their frequency of exposure to activities related to campus substance use and related issues. These included, sexual health, violence, and behaviors students engaged in that could lower their risk of harm when drinking—protective factors. A third survey, the 1998 Annual Campus Health and Wellness Survey (a random sample of undergraduate students administered in classrooms), was developed to pilot new items for potential incorporation into the HES.

In addition, multiple qualitative evaluation methods used included: 1) one-on-one interviews with key informants; 2) focus group interviews with students; 3) observation of key alcohol and illegal drug-related events like Homecoming, Fraternity Bid Night, and sports events; 4) interviews with staff and students in the target population; 5) analysis of secondary data sources, e.g., newspaper articles, newsletters, memos, student records and reports, critical incidents, and anecdotes.

DELIVERY SPECIFICATIONS

25–52 WEEKS

Amount of time required to deliver the program to obtain documented outcomes:

Typically, more than 10 different newspaper ads are prepared and published in the campus daily newspaper each year—two per week—forming the core of the media campaign. In addition, a series of four normative posters are created and distributed in freshman halls. Normative data are also included in feature articles, newsletters, shuttle bus ads, fliers, cable TV, and orientation materials and presentations. Special memoranda to faculty, special edition supplements and brochures directed at parents, frequent reports and presentations to key stakeholders, and information included in other health-related posters for the Campus Health Service building also serve to expose students and key stakeholders to accurate misperception-correcting information.

INTENDED SETTING

RURAL, URBAN, SUBURBAN

Developed for use in rural, urban, or suburban college settings.

FIDELITY

Components that must be included in order to achieve the same outcomes cited by the developer:

Survey student behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions about alcohol and illegal drug use, including protective factors, before program initiation and each year of program implementation. (This is essential.)

Identify alcohol and illegal drug misperceptions and norms.

Produce media and saturate the campus with correct information about alcohol use, attitudes and behaviors about alcohol and illegal drug use, and related policy.

Provide social norms information in diversion classes, freshman orientations, and presentations to high-risk and other groups.

Establish a campus/community advisory committee with key campus offices, including Residence Life, Dean of Students Office, Campus Health, Campus Police, Faculty Senate, Office of Public Information, Student Newspaper, Fraternity and Sorority Life, Student Union, Student Programs, Student Government, Parents Association, Athletics, to ensure access to target populations, establish partnerships, and increase project buy-in.

Further change public conversation about alcohol and illegal drug use through presentation of normative information to faculty, advisors, and senior administrators and through changes in campus policy.

Eliminate mixed messages, policies, and practices for campus sporting and celebration events.

Optional components or strategies and how they were determined to be optional:

Establish a campus/community coalition to identify community issues related to access, promotion, law enforcement, and other campus/community issues and create similar working partnerships. This activity acknowledges the role of the environment in supporting more moderate drinking norms.

BARRIERS AND PROBLEMS

Summary of key problems and solutions:

Problem: Accessing the norms for a particular population, including data gathering, and data interpretation.

Solution: Hire proper staff or consultant to conduct survey and analyze data.

Problem: Lack of fidelity to the social norms model—messages focus on alcohol attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of the minority, imply value judgments about alcohol use, do not provide accurate and current data about college consumption, attitudes, or behaviors, including protective factors.

Solution: Hire consultant to oversee first year of project and provide necessary training.

Problem: Not enough staff to administer public information.

Solution: Hire student workers or identify talented amateurs to help design and test-market social norms materials. Identify where the target population gets its information and look for free or less expensive alternatives to placement in the campus newspaper or poster development. These could include electronic applications, placement in other newsletters, curricula infusion, and feature articles in newspapers.

PERSONNEL

FULL TIME, PART TIME, PAID, VOLUNTEER

Three full-time professional staff trained in public health, social work, and alcohol and illegal drug prevention/treatment. One half-time psychologist serves as the professional evaluator providing technical assistance in survey design, administration and analysis, and project evaluation assisted by 20-hours-a-week graduate assistant. The program also employs a part-time graphic designer, secretary, and business manager. One or two student workers conduct market testing and assist in other program activities at approximately 20 hours per week.

Typical personnel problems encountered by users when implementing this Model Program and potential solutions:

Social norms strategy relies heavily on current campus data. Hiring program staff and contracting or collaborating with evaluation/research staff skilled in survey design, administration, and analysis are critical to success.

EDUCATION

UNDERGRADUATE, SPECIAL SKILLS

Other organizations that have successfully implemented a social norms program have relied on volunteers for media design and market testing activities.

Student volunteers can be used for market research and testing.

PERSONNEL TRAINING

Type: SEMINAR/WORKSHOP, WORKBOOK, Location: ONSITE (user)/OFFSITE (developer or trainer location)

Professional program staff should receive training in social norms theory and practice. There are three case study guides, currently available online at the Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention, that provide detailed information about the social norms marketing projects at the University of Arizona, Northern Illinois University, and Hobart and William Smith Colleges. A hard copy of the University of Arizona workbook is available free of charge—contact John Priewe at priewe@health.arizona.edu. A guide to environmental management—*Environmental Management: A Comprehensive Strategy for Reducing Alcohol and Other Drug Use on College Campuses*— can be downloaded. A new and comprehensive book edited by H. Wesley Perkins, *The Social Norms Approach to Preventing School and College Age Substance Abuse*, Jossey-Bass, 2003, is in press.

The annual Social Norms Conference is also an important source for training and continuing education in social norms theory and practice for college, middle school, and high school populations. For more information about training and onsite consultation, contact the Social Norms Resource Center, http://www.socialnorms.org. A Social Norms Summer Institute 2003, which will provide intensive training in both social norms theory and practice, is being planned. Contact Dr. Jeff Linkenbach for more information at (406) 994-3837.

In addition, *The Report on Social Norms*, edited by Alan Berkowitz, Ph.D., and published by PaperClip Communications, is recommended. This newsletter features regular columns on current social norms research and theory as well as practical advice from model social norms programs.

Consultation is available but limited. Contact Koreen Johannessen at Koreen@dakotacom.net or Carolyn Collins at Collins@health.arizona.edu for more information.

COST (estimated in U.S. dollars)

$10,000+

Cost considerations for implementing this Model Program as recommended by the developer:

Cost for 1 year's implementation for the social norms media campaign, including staff time and materials development, is approximately $25,000. Additional staff time for environmental management, survey development, administration and analysis, and consultation and supplies are approximately an additional $25,000. The program is housed within the Campus Health Center of the University of Arizona and other costs (for example, office space and office machine rental) are not included.

MATERIALS

A Practical Guide to Alcohol Abuse Prevention: A Case
Study in Implementing Social Norms and Environmental
Management Approaches . . . . Available at no charge

Typical cost issues encountered by users when implementing this Model Program and potential solutions:

Typical cost issues include materials development, market testing, design, photography, production, and placement costs. In addition, survey design, administration, and analysis can be expensive. Using a standardized national instrument can cut costs. Talented student volunteers and student workers can, with some training, assist with design and materials development and dissemination.

INTENDED AGE GROUP

YOUNG ADULT (18–24)

Developed for college students 18 to 24 years old.

INTENDED POPULATION

MULTIPLE ETHNIC GROUPS

The program was delivered to the entire college population—predominantly White, with Hispanic/Latino, African American, and American Indian students.

GENDER FOCUS

BOTH GENDERS

Developed for use with both male and female students.

REPLICATION INFORMATION

The program's social norms strategies have also been successfully tested in the States of Montana, Illinois, and New York for young adults and middle school and high school populations.

Other sites using social norms strategies, though not program replication sites, include Northern Illinois University, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, University of Missouri, Western Washington University, University of Virginia, 18 test college sites under a National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Social Norms Marketing Research Project, the State of Montana (delay of onset for smoking with youth), University of Kansas, Kansas State University, Emporia State University, Fort Hayes State University, and Northern Arizona University.

Successful replication is currently under way with sorority women at The University of Arizona. A tobacco use prevention social norms marketing project sponsored by the Montana Department of Health (Montana Most of Us) has shown significant results with American Indian youth population.

CONTACT INFORMATION

ABOUT THE DEVELOPER

The University of Arizona Health Promotion and Preventive Services

Staff of the Health Promotion and Preventive Services (HPPS) department of The University of Arizona Campus Health Service, developed this model collegiate substance abuse prevention program under the direction of Koreen Johannessen, M.S.W. and Carolyn Collins, M.S. Additional funding from the U.S. Department of Education Safe and Drug Free Schools program, and training and support from its contractor, the Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention, have allowed refinements and new target audiences for social norms and other environmental management strategies. Ms. Johannessen, Ms. Collins, and Peggy Glider, Ph.D., the project's chief evaluator, consult nationally on the implementation and evaluation of the program.

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