



*Effective Substance Abuse and
Mental Health Programs
for Every Community*

Challenging College Alcohol Abuse

Challenging College Alcohol Abuse (CCAA) 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). Under CCAA, the campus health service uses new and innovative methods to communicate public health information to students, the campus community, and the surrounding community to—

- Correct misperceptions, increase knowledge, and change attitudes about alcohol and drug use behaviors among undergraduate students
- Change policies and practices related to alcohol and drug use and abuse among campus fraternity and sorority chapters
- Change faculty, administration, parental, community, and policymaker perceptions to prevent perpetuation of alcohol and drug myths
- Increase restrictions on alcohol availability and monitor on- and off-campus distribution and consumption

CCAA fosters 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 alcohol and drug policies, and State and local laws.

INTENDED POPULATION

The CCAA trial included both male and female undergraduate students 18 to 24 years old, attending The University of Arizona, a large, urban, land grant university with both residential and commuter students. Special emphasis was given to the heaviest drinking subpopulations—fraternity and

Proven Results*

- 29% reduction in heavy drinking
- 48% reduction in driving after drinking
- 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
- Significant decreases in alcohol-related fights and arguments, trouble with campus police or school authorities

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

INTERVENTION

Universal

Selective

Indicated



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Center for Substance Abuse Prevention
www.samhsa.gov

OUTCOMES

Data showed significant changes in alcohol use and related behaviors between 1995 and 1998, including:

- A 29% decrease in the rate of heavy drinking (five or more drinks on one occasion within the last 2 weeks) among undergraduate students (Core 1995-98).
- Decreases in negative consequences, including
 - fights or arguments
 - trouble with campus police or school authorities
 - "did something I later regretted"
 - was taken advantage of sexually
 - did poorly on a test or important project and missed class
- Police statistics for Homecoming, the largest campus/community annual celebration, showed an overall decrease in community calls, arrests of minors in possession of alcohol, and verbal warnings for alcohol

sorority members, freshmen, and students referred to a diversion program. (Diversion program students were primarily underage White males who had on- or off-campus alcohol-related violations.) Social norms and environmental management strategies can be adapted to K-12 populations from any socioeconomic or ethnic group where the norm for alcohol and drug use is less than perceived use (and in many instances is non-use).

BENEFITS

- 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 drug policies and enforcement practices
- Positively affects the overall health and well-being of the campus and greater community

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. The interventions supplant 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 norms.

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 illegal drug policy changes.

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.

IMPLEMENTATION ESSENTIALS

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—

Undergraduate Heavy Drinking Rates



- Survey student behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions about alcohol and drug use, including protective factors before and throughout the program implementation
- Identify misperceptions that influence alcohol and drug use/abuse
- Produce media and saturate the campus with correct alcohol and drug information
- Incorporate social norms information in diversion classes, freshman orientations, and presentations to high-risk and other groups
- Further change the public conversation about alcohol and drug use through faculty, advisors, senior administrators, and campus leadership
- Eliminate mixed messages, policies, and practices for campus sporting and celebration events

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

In 1994, The University of Arizona (UA) Campus Health Service received a 5-year grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention 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 create campus-wide impact on student alcohol and drug perceptions and use patterns, campus and community perceptions, and policies and procedures that support safer drinking practices.

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 alcohol, tobacco, and drug and

related issues. These issues 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 drug-related events like Homecoming, Fraternity Bid Night, and sports events; 4) interviews with staff and students in the target population; and 5) analysis of secondary data sources, e.g., newspaper articles, newsletters, memos, student records and reports, critical incidents, and anecdotes.

PROGRAM DEVELOPER

The University of Arizona Health Promotion and Preventive Services

Staff of the Health Promotion and Preventive Services 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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RECOGNITION

Model Program—Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Model Program Award—U.S. Department of Education