



Stay Dry!

Mississippi Coalition of Partners In Prevention Newsletter

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Mississippi State
University

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Best Practices: Build a Local Coalition or Task Force

Effectively engaging and mobilizing the appropriate campus and community members in alcohol and other drug violence prevention (AODV) can be tough. In an article from the Higher Education Center for Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Violence Prevention, Stubbs (2008) detailed the process of creating a task force to address alcohol use on campuses:

If an AODV task force does not currently exist on campus, a key step for a prevention coordinator is to identify and recruit key individuals with an interest in prevention to serve on one. Having an active task force -composed of up to as many as 15 members to keep the group manageable and productive-will provide credibility to efforts to implement prevention measures. In order to succeed, a task force should have the backing of senior campus administrators, including the president.

When engaging potential partners in dialogue-for a task force or coalition- the idea is to explore the main problems, potential solutions that exist, and the role the task force or coalition can play in advancing prevention. This also is an opportunity to assess current and past efforts: What efforts have succeeded or failed and why? What can be improved upon? How was the previous prevention coordinator perceived and what were the contributors to his or her successes and failures?

More seasoned task forces may consider working with off-campus constituencies, such as local courts, law enforcement, businesses, and the media for task force involvement. The frequency with which these groups meet and the kinds of reports they issue will vary from one situation to another. But, keeping key campus constituencies informed of task force progress and keeping its members involved in meaningful activities is key to the group's success.

Appropriate Partners in Prevention:

Consider the following campus constituencies in building relationships:

- Campus security personnel;
- Health and counseling services staff;
- Judicial affairs personnel;
- Dean of students;
- Student affairs representatives;
- Residence life staff;
- Resident assistants;
- Students from the general population and specific groups (e.g., student athletes, peer educators, student government);
- Students using commuter center;
- Fraternity and sorority coordinators; and
- Athletics director or related staff.

Community groups, such as the following, also can support prevention efforts:

- Community services, including treatment centers;
- Business owners, including alcohol outlets;
- Police department personnel;
- Judges and court staff;
- Local media and newspaper personnel;
- Elected officials;
- Liquor commissioners; and
- Emergency room staff.

Excerpted from *Getting started on campus: Tips for new prevention coordinators* by Helen Stubbs. To access the article, visit: <http://www.higheredcenter.org/files/product/getting-started.pdf>

Department of Health
Education & Wellness:

Dr. Joyce Yates
jjyates@saffairs.msstate.edu
662.325.7545

Michelle LaFleur
mlafleur@saffairs.msstate.edu
662.325.0075

Timely Topic: Mixing Alcohol and...

As you know, mixing alcohol along with various drugs is becoming more prevalent among college students. Unfortunately, college students are unaware of the additional risks they incur when mixing alcohol and drugs, and as a result, more injuries and deaths occur each year. According to Santa Clara University's Wellness Center website (below), the most dangerous combination occurs when alcohol, a sedative, is mixed with another downer, such as Xanax or sleep medications. The effect of mixing both downers exponentially increases their effects, which can push the user toward coma and death.



Several other potentially dangerous combinations that are “popular” today include mixing alcohol with marijuana, antihistamines, and even more “normal” drugs such as aspirin and acetaminophen. For example, marijuana suppresses the urge to vomit, which does not allow a person to purge him/herself of excess alcohol, thus increasing the risk of alcohol poisoning. It is important to note that not all alcohol/drug mixing is done purposely, but some people using various over-the counter medicines or prescriptions (such as an antihistamine for sinus problems) are increasing their risk of overdose simply by inadvertently mixing the two.

To address this at Mississippi State University, we have created displays, hosted programs, and presented to classes about the dangers of mixing alcohol with any type of drugs or medicines, as well as energy drinks. Has this been a problem at your school? If so, how have you addressed it?

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.scu.edu/wellness/topics/alcohol/mixingalcohol.cfm>

<http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/Medicine/medicine.htm>

www.higheredcenter.org/thisweek/almost-half-college-student-substance-abuse-treatment-admissions-involve-alcohol

Sustainability

Often, the question of sustainability arises once funding for a particular project ends, rather than in the planning phase. In the article below, *Sustainability: Building program and coalition support*, Gilder (2010) provided guidelines for incorporating sustainability into assessment, planning, and evaluation. The second half of the article explained mechanisms for developing and promoting sustainable programs, which will be examined in the next edition of this newsletter.

- *The first, critical step in planning a program or building a coalition is to determine the scope and nature of the issues to be addressed, examine existing and needed resources, and identify barriers to implementation and sustainability.*
- *Ongoing problem analysis allows campuses to tailor programming or coalition goals to meet changing needs, to secure appropriate resources, and to identify key individuals who are supportive of prevention efforts and can help integrate existing programming or coalition efforts into the larger prevention efforts of the community.*
- *Effective programming and collaboration require planning. A strategic planning process is extremely useful in designing, implementing, and modifying prevention efforts to meet the needs of the campus and community, as identified through the problem analysis.*
- *It is important to note that not all strategies, no matter how effective they have been, are appropriate for all campuses or situations. Even if evidence-based strategies are implemented, ongoing process and outcome evaluation are needed to provide data to strengthen programming.*
- *Process evaluation documents what was done while outcome evaluation documents the changes that occurred due to the program or coalition efforts. Evaluation needs to be part of the strategic plan to ensure that the appropriate data are collected and utilized to monitor program or strategy implementation, make improvements, as needed, and to determine level of impact.*
- *When seeking resources for sustainability, evaluation data help to build the argument for why current efforts should be continued and the potential costs (e.g., medical, property damage, liability insurance premiums) if they go away.*



Excerpted from *Sustainability: Building program and coalition support* by Peggy Gilder.

To access the article, visit: <http://www.higheredcenter.org/files/product/sustainability.pdf>

What's Happening at Your School?

USM: Spring Break Mocktail Party

To help students prepare for Spring Break, Student Health Services, in conjunction with the Southern Miss Activities Council, held a Mocktail Party in the student union lounge. The party included a DJ who played fun dance music; mocktails and appetizers were served; and students were encouraged to dress in cocktail attire. Vendors were set up in the back of the room with information about various topics including alcohol, road/travel safety and sexual health. A pour station was also included, so that students learned the appropriate serving size of an alcoholic beverage. Midway through the party, Jodi Ryder, health education and promotion coordinator, talked to the students about responsible drinking, and an officer from the UPD spoke about the consequences of underage drinking, as well as drinking and driving. The event was a success, with 80 students in attendance!



Students at an Alcohol Awareness Month Display

MSU: "Drugs and Drinks: A Deadly Combo"

To promote Alcohol Awareness Month, Health Education and Wellness graduate assistants created the "Drugs and Drinks: A Deadly Combo" campaign for the month of April to educate students about the dangers of mixing alcohol with any type of medicine, illicit drug, or energy drinks. Media included ads in the student newspaper, posts on Twitter and Facebook, updated information on the Health Education and Stay Dry! websites, as well as placement on the campus news station. Displays were also held throughout the month to engage students about this important, but often overlooked, topic!

Poll: Medical Amnesty

Several colleges and universities in the U.S. have adopted medical amnesty policies, which protect students (and the hosting campus organizations) from judicial consequences on campus when they call for help for themselves or another person in need because of severe intoxication or serious injury as a result of consuming alcohol.

Does your institution have a medical amnesty policy?

If not, do you see your campus adopting one in the near future?

Email Michelle, and your results will be published anonymously in the next edition.



University of Pennsylvania's Medical Amnesty Campaign



Suggestions?

If there is a specific topic you would like us to address in the next edition of this newsletter, please email Michelle at mlafleur@saffairs.msstate.edu. Also, please share with us the ways in which you address the issues covered in this edition on your campus: building a local task force, students mixing alcohol with other drugs, medicines, or energy drinks, and sustainability.

We want to use this newsletter as an informal way to share ideas with one another, and we'll publish your feedback (anonymously) in the next edition!