



Stay Dry!

Mississippi Coalition of Partners In Prevention Newsletter

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Mississippi State
University

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Best Practices: Social Norms & Bystander Intervention

As we begin a new academic year, we are given fresh opportunities to educate our students about the responsible use of alcohol. We also face familiar challenges in those students who abuse alcohol and incur negative consequences, sometimes serious enough to permanently alter their futures. A recent article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* detailed the case of George Huguely V, a former University of Virginia student recently convicted of second-degree murder for killing his girlfriend in a drunken rage (Hoover, 2012). Hoover (2012) used the term "stupid drunk" to refer to Huguely and others like him who consume large amounts of alcohol and behave recklessly on a consistent basis. The question is, how do we as prevention professionals reach the "stupid drunks" on our campus before something serious occurs? And, how do we help our students to safely intervene as they interact with their friends?

While once employed mostly with student athletes, the University of Virginia has expanded its bystander intervention program, Step UP!, which trains students to recognize signs of problems in their peers, as well as how to talk to them about these issues (Hoover, 2012). As prevention professionals, we recognize bystander intervention as an NIAAA Tier 1 strategy. But, what is the most effective way to mobilize our students? How do we handle the issue of repeated negative behavior (as in the case of Huguely) that other students see but may go unnoticed by administrators? Often, teaching students the skills they need to act is not enough. They must also see that it is not only acceptable to do so, but also that campus culture encourages them to intervene.

In addition, Potter (2012) found that students who were exposed to social marketing in conjunction with bystander intervention exhibited changes in attitudes toward the problems of sexual and relationship violence and took actual steps to reduce these problems in their community (p. 293). Her findings suggest that education in bystander intervention would best be employed along with a social media campaign to encourage action of the learned skills (Potter, 2012). As social norming messages have shown effectiveness in reducing college student drinking, it may be worth utilizing this tactic with bystander intervention training as part of an overall prevention strategy.

What do you think:

Does your institution employ bystander intervention training? If so, what type and what methods are used to encourage students to act?



Hoover, E. (2012, February 26). The case of the 'stupid drunk'. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com/article/The-Case-of-the-Stupid-Drunk/130945/>

Potter, S. (2012). Using a multimedia social marketing campaign to increase active bystanders on the college campus. *Journal of American College Health*, 60(4), 282-295.

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Timely Topic: Game Day Drinking...

Drinking on football game days has become an increasingly popular occurrence. This practice is especially prevalent among college students who tailgate before, during, and after football games. Glassman, J. Miller, E. Miller, Wohlwend, and Reindl (2012) examined alcohol expectancies among college students with regard to home football games and found that rowdiness, social confidence, and fun were the strongest predictors of the total number of drinks consumed on game day (p. 206). In addition, the average number of drinks consumed was approximately six; 60% of those who drank engaged in high risk drinking; and 20% drank at double the high-risk drinking threshold, which is classified as Extreme Ritualistic Alcohol Consumption (ERAC) (Glassman et al., 2012, p. 205).

As game day drinking on college campuses constitutes "a serious public health problem both in scope and magnitude," recommendations for education/prevention included:

- Event specific interventions in a comprehensive prevention plan
- Offsetting alcohol advertisements with health communication campaigns
- Implementation of the Brief Alcohol Screening Intervention for College Students (BASICS) for individuals who violate the Student Code of Conduct
- Internet-based alcohol education systems
- Banning alcohol advertisements associated with college sporting events (Glassman et al., 2012, p. 207).



Glassman, T., Miller, J., Miller, E. M., Wohlwend, J., & Reindl, D. (2012). Game day alcohol expectancies among college students from a university in the southeast. *American Journal of Health Education*, 43(4), 202-208.

Sustainability

In the last edition, we examined Gilder's (2010) guidelines for incorporating sustainability into assessment, planning, and evaluation of prevention strategies. Below is a summary of the second half of the article, which provides five mechanisms for developing and promoting sustainable programs:

1. Collaboration

Identify key stakeholders on and off campus who share the same vision
Requires ongoing communication and nurturing of relationships

2. Networking

Can include state or local prevention agencies, MADD chapters, state liquor control offices, county treatment and prevent programs, etc.
Can help modify and improve efforts through exchange of ideas with colleagues

3. Promoting the Program

To sustain, make potential sources of funding aware of the program, individuals involved, successes, and contributions to the organizational mission
Present goals and data in an easily understood format

4. Building Organizational Capacity

Ensure multiple program staff or coalition leaders are trained in essential elements to sustain in times of turnover
Development of written resources (manuals, etc.) assists with fidelity in implementation

5. Building a Diversified Funding or Support Plan

Include in the strategic plan
Keep in mind type of funding to pursue for particular program elements, which approach will be made, and who will make it
Identify a range of opportunities/resources



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?

MSU: Dawg Daze = Alcohol Education

At MSU, Dawg Daze is a collection of activities and events designed to welcome new freshman and transfer students to Mississippi State. The events begin with freshman move-in day and continue through the first week of classes. This provides us many opportunities to grab students' attention with alcohol-free events that also help to educate them about consuming alcohol legally and responsibly. It is also a great way to team up with other departments on campus to show students that there are many fun things to do on campus and in the Starkville community that do not involve drinking. Past successful events include:

- Movie & Treats
- Grill on the Drill
- Bingo Night

As the new academic year progresses, we are also making plans to host a late-night event, which will give students something fun and social to do on campus that keeps them from going down-town to bars, clubs or other parties where alcohol is served. In addition, incentives will be given to those students who volunteer to participate in the Goal Driven Alcohol/drug Intervention Network (GAIN) program and hear about it from attending the event.



Bystander Intervention T-shirts

Poll: Game Day Drinking

Many colleges and universities have policies that prohibit alcohol on campus, even on game days. However, game day drinking continues to be prevalent on many campuses despite regulations.

Does your campus have policies in place that prohibit alcohol on game days?

If so, has your institution taken steps to enforce those policies?

If not, do you think that your institution will adopt anti-alcohol policies in the future?

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



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: social marketing/bystander intervention, game day drinking, 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!

