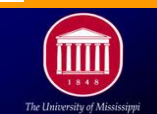


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Best Practices: Motivational Interviewing

The University of Mississippi recently hosted Dr. CoCo Collins, NCC, CTRS, CHt, who is a member of the Motivational Network of Trainers to teach Coalition members about Motivational Interviewing (MI) and how to properly use it as an intervention with students who drink. MI was founded by Dr. Bill Miller and Dr. Stephen Rollnick (2013) and is primarily used with clients who are not ready to change a particular behavior. This method is particularly useful as we work with students who are abusing alcohol or other drugs. Intervening with clients who use substances in this way can be successful in helping them make positive changes in their lives to reduce the risk of harm to themselves or someone else. The following is an explanation of MI as a counseling technique, which was explained by Dr. Collins (2013):



MI is a directive, client-centered counseling style for eliciting behavior change by helping clients to explore and resolve mixed feelings or emotions (ambivalence) with regard to a certain behavior. The counselor's goal is to create forward momentum to elicit change through the use of reflective listening. Often, a readiness ruler is used to assess the client's current motivation to change. Examples of questions on the ruler are, "how important is this change to you right now," and "how confident are you about making this change."

There are four main techniques employed through MI to help move clients forward:

- Open-ended questions – do not elicit a "yes" or "no" response.
- Affirmations – positive comments about the client's strengths.
- Reflective listening – focusing on the client's change talk and "reflecting" that talk back to them.
- Summaries – a type of reflective listening where the counselor reflects back what was heard. This can also be used to shift the focus to increase positive "change talk."

Change talk is the opposite of sustain talk, which often involves resistance from the client. It is important for the counselor to listen for change talk, which is linked to the client's behavior modification goal. There are two types of change talk: preparatory (getting ready to make a change) and mobilizing (taking steps to make a change). To effectively employ MI as a counseling skill, the counselor must engage with the client; use empathic listening; identify a target for change; help the client evoke motivations for change; and plan for the next step to implement the desired behavior.

Collins, C. (2013). *Motivational interviewing training*. Oxford, MS.

Miller, W.R., & Rollnick, S. (2013). *Motivational interviewing: Helping people change*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Timely Topic: Residence Life Staff Interventions in Drinking

During the fall semester, alcohol use in residence halls, whether sanctioned or unsanctioned, is problematic for the Department of Residence Life (DRL) staff, as well as the larger campus community. Freshman students are particularly vulnerable to alcohol problems due to their relative inexperience in the college drinking culture, and their use/abuse is of special concern. Because of this problematic drinking, a great opportunity exists for campus administrators and staff to intervene with students and provide education to reduce risks.



Novik and Boekeloo (2013) conducted a study of 357 college freshman who self-identified as “drinkers” (defined as those who had consumed alcohol since arriving on campus). Their purpose was to determine the rate at which collegiate alcohol abusers living in predominately freshman residence halls experience an intervention with DRL staff (Novik & Boekeloo, 2013). The authors reported that 71.2% of drinkers experienced one or more negative personal consequences from their alcohol use during the two months of their first semester (Novik & Boekeloo, 2013). Novik and Boekeloo (2013) found alcohol abuse and misuse to be frequent among collegiate drinkers living in freshmen dormitories (71% reported at least one consequence), but DRL intercession into alcohol abuse and misuse was relatively infrequent (5.6% were documented by DRL for an alcohol violation).

This article provides evidence of many lost opportunities to reduce the negative consequences for individual students, as well as the university as a whole (Novik & Boekeloo, 2013). Increased intervention by DRL staff into students’ misuse of alcohol may reduce negative personal and secondhand consequences experienced when adjusting to the campus environment.

Novik, M.G., & Boekeloo, B. O. (2013). Comparison of student self-reported and administrative data regarding intercession into alcohol misuse among college freshmen dormitory residents. *Journal of College Student Development*, 54(2), 202-208.

MCPP Summer Meeting

On June 24, Jason Powell, director of the Coalition for Healthy and Safe Campus Communities (CHASCo), presented “Strategies for Development and Growth of a Statewide Higher Education AODV Coalition” to MCPP members at Mississippi State University. Powell leads a group of over 30 universities and community colleges in Tennessee in alcohol prevention. His message for continued progress is important, as CHASCo members have faced some of the same challenges MCPP is currently confronting, such as the struggle to maintain a unified group with a lack of Coalition funding. The main topics covered were advantages of membership, aspects necessary for the development of an effective state-wide group, funding processes and avenues, expansion, and solidifying/moving forward. The entire presentation is available in electronic format, but this article will cover the six aspects Powell said were necessary for the development of an effective state-wide coalition of institutions of higher education:



1. Identify a Need
2. Find Members – bringing key stakeholders from each campus to the table is important.
3. Assessment – allows us to determine the scope of the problem; CHASCo institutions administer the Core survey every three years.
4. Commitment from Members – to participate in strategic planning and group initiatives.
5. Creating Partnerships – both between similar campuses and with potential funders.
6. Building Sustainable Leadership – creation of an organizational structure and professional development opportunities.

In addition, Powell detailed several things members can do to provide support to the Coalition:

- Invite the members of your campus to participate.
- Be the point of contact.
- Serve on a committee.
- Provide letters of support.
- Complete annual demographics/statistics for your institution.
- Take a leadership role.
- Be active and responsive.

By being an active participant in MCPP, each member can help solidify the Coalition to work for unified goals, which make the group attractive to future funders and will establish our reputation as the authority on college student alcohol use behaviors in Mississippi.

Powell, J. (2013). Strategies for development and growth of a statewide higher education aodv coalition. 2013 MCPP Meeting. Starkville, MS.

What's Happening at Your School?

University of Mississippi: Glow Run

The Office of Health Promotion at The University of Mississippi is hosting the 1st Annual Glow Run on August 28 at 9:30 p.m. as part of Welcome Week. This is an alcohol-free event and will be a music filled course with lots of glow in the dark entertainment! They currently have 230 runners registered and are expecting many, many more!

Mississippi State University: "We Got the Beat" Late Night Event

On Aug. 14 from 9 p.m. to midnight, the staff at MSU Health Education and Wellness hosted, "We Got the Beat," an 80s-themed, alcohol-free, late night event for new freshman and transfer students. "We Got the Beat" was set-up as a club atmosphere with a DJ, food, drinks, and giveaways, such as t-shirts and Wayfarer-style sunglasses. The event was made possible by a grant from the MillerCoors/ABMRF Foundation for Alcohol Research.

Guests presented their student IDs prior to admission and were given wrist bands as incentive to take a pre-survey of their first impression of the event. In addition, students were also asked to take a follow-up survey as they were leaving to determine if further late night activities are in demand on campus.



Overall, "We Got the Beat" was a huge success! While 200 students were expected, the final attendance total was 615. The staff had to cut the event 40 minutes short, as the building was over capacity. Guest comments were positive, and students tended to stay at the event once arriving (rather than coming in, eating and leaving). The surveys have not been evaluated yet, but we feel the attendance and duration of stay are indicators that more late night programming is in demand on campus. Also, students arrived sober, and the event was a safe and alcohol-free place for them to have fun and meet new people, while taking up several of the typical drinking hours of the night.

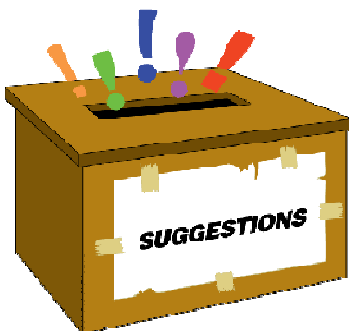


Poll: Motivational Interviewing

Do you use motivational interviewing when talking with students about their alcohol habits?

If not, would you like to learn more about how to use motivational interviewing?

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. Also, please share with us the ways in which you address the issues covered in this edition on your campus. 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!