A Call to Action: Changing the Culture of Drinking at U.S. Colleges

Recommendations for Colleges and Universities
"I'm in my prime drinking years, and I intend to take full advantage of it!"

- College student, after a few drinks at a wedding
Mean Score for 5+ Drinks in a Row in Past 2 Weeks by 4-year College Student Status

Measurement Wave (Modal age)


- College
- Non-College
Excessive Drinking During College as a “Developmental Disturbance”

*Developmental disturbance features:*

- Time-limited deviance
- Unpredictable in advance based on individual risk factors
- Not predictive of future functioning (if you are lucky)
The 3-in-1 Framework

1. Individuals, Including At-Risk or Alcohol-Dependent Drinkers
2. Student Body as a Whole
3. College and the Surrounding Community
Human Ecology Approach

- Individual embedded in social context
- To change behavior, best bet is to intervene at both individual and context level
- Demand and supply
Tier 2

Evidence of Success With General Populations That Could Be Applied to College Environments
Recommendations – Tier 2

(1) Increased enforcement of minimum drinking age laws
Alcohol Use (30-day mean) Before and After Minimum Drinking Age (MDA) was Raised--United States

Source: O’Malley & Wagenaar (1991)
Minimum age to 21 reduces youthful single vehicle nighttime crashes (-20%)

(O’Malley and Wagenaar, 1991)
Recommendations – Tier 2

(2) Implementation, increased publicity, and enforcement of other laws to reduce alcohol-impaired driving
Reduce Alcohol-Impaired Driving

- Lower legal blood alcohol limits reduces alcohol-related crashes (e.g., Hingson et al., 1996, 2000)
- Make it illegal for those under 21 to drive after any drinking
- Administrative license revocation
Recommendations – Tier 2

(3) Restrictions on alcohol retail outlet density
Local Outlet Density

- Higher levels of drinking and “binge” drinking with higher number of alcohol outlets within one mile of campus (Chaloupka & Wechsler, 1996)

- Even simple mapping may suggest interventions
Recommendations – Tier 2

(4) Increased price and excise taxes on alcoholic beverages
Pricing

- Many studies show association of price with consumption and harmful outcomes, especially for young heavy drinkers (Toomey & Wagenaar, 2002)

- For example:
  - Restrictions on happy hours or price promotions
  - Excise taxes on alcohol
(5) Responsible beverage service policies in social and commercial settings
Server Training and Responsible Policies (Saltz, Holder, et al.)

- Limiting sales of pitches
- Alcohol-free drinks and food
- No more last call
- ID Checks
Alcohol-Involved Traffic Crashes Before and After Mandatory Server Training Policy in Oregon, USA
Recommendations – Tier 2

(6) The formation of a campus and community coalition may be critical to implement these strategies effectively.
Community Interventions

- PRC Community Trials Project (Holder, Saltz et al.)

- Communities Mobilizing for Change (Wagenaar et al.)

- Massachusetts Saving Lives Program (Hingson et al.)
Concluding Thoughts

- Try to keep major players moving in the same direction

- Keep trying (even when you succeed)

- Involve local researchers for design and evaluation
(Extra slides from Bob Saltz follow)
Cumulative Underage Access Activities

- Enforcement Visits
- Citations Issued
- Outlets Trained

Graph showing cumulative data for Q1 to Q2 with counts on the y-axis and quarters on the x-axis.
Probability of Impairment and Intoxication Following Alcohol Beverage Server Training

Santa Cruz, CA

Predicted Probability

Pretest

Posttest

T = Server Training Site, C = Comparison Site

Saltz and Hennessy, 1990
Newspaper Score - Local Stories

Organizational Development and Planning
Training, Planning and 1st Media Events
Additional Training
Ongoing Advocacy Efforts

Experimental Sites
Comparison Sites

J F M A M J J A S O N D 1992
J F M A M J J A S O N D 1993
J F M A M J J A S O N D 1995
Examples of Tier 2 Interventions

Northwest Region
Willamette University

- Community Task Force
- Greater Enforcement – Underage
- Training in Controlled Dispersal
University of Portland

- Community Substance Abuse Prevention Team
- End of Finals Night
- Business Training in Marketing & Pricing
- Integrated Evaluation Data
Washington State University

- Comprehensive Community Program
- Greater Enforcement – Proactive
- Coupled with extensive Normative Education
END

Thank you!