The Impact of Student Drinking on Campus Health and Safety

Presentation to the Faculty Senate, November 3, 2005

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Session Goals

- To provide recent data on alcohol and other drug use among UMass Amherst students
- To raise awareness of student’s perceptions of the campus and community climate and its influence on student behavior
- To introduce CADAP and programs to address high risk drinking
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism 2005 Update

Each year college drinking causes:

- 1,700 student deaths
- 599,000 unintentional injuries
- 696,000 assaults
- 79,000 sexual assaults

(Hingson et al, 2005)
Other consequences:

- 2.1 million students drive under the influence
- 400,000 have unprotected sex
- 150,000 develop alcohol-related health problems
- 25% report academic consequences
- 31% met criteria for a diagnosis of alcohol dependence (Knight et al, 2002)
2005 Web-Based UMass Student AOD Survey

- Annual Survey from 2005 to 2009
- Study conducted February–March 2005
- Participating campuses: MIT, Clark University, Boston College, Fitchburg State, UMass Amherst
- Sample representative of campus re. race, class year, residential status
Binge Drinking at UMass

- Current bingers: 59%
  - National rate: 48%
  - Rate at Massachusetts public colleges/universities: 51%
  - Rate at participating schools: 51%

- Frequent bingers (3 or more times in past 2 weeks): 33%

- Of the binge drinkers, 74% are drinking for 2-4 hours
Self description of current alcohol use

- 13% Abstainer
- 39% Former drinker in recovery
- Students underestimate their own risk profile; 6% consider themselves heavy to problem drinkers when in reality 59% can be classified as such
AOD Use on Campus

- 78% started drinking at age 18 or younger
- The majority of students drink 0-4 drinks when they party.
- Average number of drinks per week: 9
- Most students drink on 9 days or less per month
Alcohol-related Consequences

- Regret
- Blackout
- Hurt/injury
- Argue w/friends
- Behind in school
- Trouble

- UMass
- Amherst
- Participating schools
- 2001 CAS
Additional Consequences

- Med. Treatment
- Damage property
- Miss class
- Unplanned sex
- Unprotected sex

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Impact of drinking on academics

- 31% have missed class at least once
- 23% have gotten behind in school work
- 7% received lower grade on exam
- 6% received a lower course grade/dropped/or incomplete
- GPA negatively associated with high frequency/high consumption of alcohol
Other students’ drinking impacts all students

61% found vomit in halls
Students do not know the campus policy

- 50% have not read the university’s alcohol policy
- Nearly ½ believe that common sources of alcohol (kegs) are allowed.
- 24% believe that serving persons under 21 is allowed at university-sponsored functions
Underage students have easy access to alcohol at:

- Fraternity parties: 97%
- Residence hall parties: 85%
- Tailgate parties: 82%
- Sports arena: 41%
- Campus-sponsored social events: 33%
How do underage students obtain alcohol?

- 67% from a student or stranger over 21
- 35% from a student/stranger under 21
- 14% from parents or relatives
- 6% with their own fake ID
- 5% without being carded
Off-campus “parties” are large, unhosted gatherings

Reported location of parties:

- Parking lots/vacant city lots: 95% of respondents
- In natural settings (fields, parks, woods): 90%
- Houses/apartments: 8%
- Other places off campus: 60%
Students are concerned about campus drinking

- 90% of UMass Amherst students think alcohol is a problem for students on campus
- 73% believe out of control parties are a part of the UMass tradition

HOWEVER....

- 67% believe police should break up out of control parties
Social Norms

- Students overestimate the quantity and frequency of drinking among peers.
- Students believe that peers’ attitudes are more permissive than they really are.
- Carriers of misperception—alumni, faculty, staff, community members, parents.
- These factors contribute to a “reign of error” and normative environment supportive of high risk drinking.
Students misperceive peers’ attitudes toward policy

Prohibition of kegs on campus

- **Support:** Perception: 10, Actual: 60
- **Oppose:** Perception: 90, Actual: 40

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Student Support for More Stringent Sanctions

Stricter disciplinary sanctions for students who repeatedly violate alcohol policies

![Bar chart showing support and opposition to stricter sanctions]

- Perception
- Actual

Support Oppose
Support for more stringent sanctions for alcohol-related violence

Stricter disciplinary sanctions for students engaging in alcohol-related violence

Support Oppose

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The graph shows the perception and actual support for stricter disciplinary sanctions for students engaging in alcohol-related violence.
Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Prevention (CADAP) Initiatives
Theory Driving AOD Prevention Initiatives

- Ecological Framework for organizing AOD prevention efforts

- Recent scholarly reviews indicate:
  - Educational approaches have limited effectiveness
  - Success is unlikely unless you change the environment
Ecological Framework

- Individual factors (students)
- Peer factors (students)
- Institutional factors
- Community factors
- Public policy

Environmental Management
Five Strategies for Environmental Change

- Limit alcohol availability
- Restrict marketing and promotion of alcohol
- Offer alcohol-free social and recreational options
- Increase enforcement of laws and policies
- Change the normative environment and correct misperceptions of social norms
Campus and Community Coalition to Reduce High-Risk Drinking

- Utilizes evidence-based prevention strategies to work toward environmental changes and to decrease the negative consequences of high-risk alcohol use for individuals and the community.
- Membership is comprised of key university and community leaders.
- Strategic plan based on campus data and best practices.
CCC Subcommittees

- 3 active subcommittees are in place
- Policy and Enforcement
  - August 2005 – Roundtable addressing issues in Greek community
- Changing the Normative Environment
  - Developing a Social Norms Marketing campaign
- Alcohol-free Options
  - Working to increase visibility of events
  - Working to increase late night events
BASICS: Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students

$1.5 million grant awarded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in July 2005

3 year grant to implement an evidence-based program for policy violators

BASICS is a program to help students explore their alcohol and drug use in a non-judgmental environment. The goal of the program is to reduce risky behaviors and harmful consequences of alcohol abuse.
SMART CHOICES

$30,000 3 year grant was awarded in July 2005 by the NCAA to implement a Small Group Norms Challenging program with student athletes (SGNM)

Athletic events to be used to communicate alcohol responsibility messages
Personalized, interactive alcohol website
UMass Amherst specific emergency information
Opportunity to “rate your self” and get individualized feedback
1 hour course can be mandated for first year students, judicia, Greeks, Athletes, or general student body through academic courses
Currently, 46% are exposed to AOD education on campus. Could achieve 100% by mandating MSB for first years.
Students highly evaluate the website, and would recommend to others
SCHOOL CODE: UMASSA
New Students Program/Parents’ Program

- First year student outreach
- Alcohol training for all New Student Program Counselors
- All incoming first year students received alcohol information through the Not Ready for Bedtime Players at summer orientation sessions
- Parent/Caregiver sessions at summer orientation sessions
Peer Health Education

- 2 semester 6 credit course (Com Hlth 213/214)

First semester:
- Focus on a wide variety of health topics
- Students complete outreach hours where they table in the campus concourse and various events

Second semester:
- Continued discussion of health topics as well as facilitation skills
- Students present health related workshops to peers in residential and Greek areas
Athletic Health Enhancement Program

- Designed to meet the specific needs of student athletes

- Services include: health programming, support, referrals, the one-credit Lifeskills class, nutrition services, alcohol and other drug services, etc.

- Supports drug testing program, and mandatory counseling requirements
Fresh & Sober

- An anonymous recovery based student support program for UMass Amherst students recovering or seeking recovery from alcohol and/or other drugs

- Provides up-to-date Alcohol Anonymous, Narcotic Anonymous, and Al-Anon meeting lists

- Provides information and referrals

- Available to talk with parents/caregivers
Other Services

- Training and Consultation for UMass Amherst community
- Resources/Referrals
Holding young people solely responsible for underage drinking is like holding fish responsible for dying in a polluted stream.

Source: FACE
For more information:

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