

Practitioner's Response to Research

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This addendum provides evidenced-based program recommendations based on the recently released 2005 Texas *Survey of Substance Use Among College Students*, Texas Department of State Health Services (http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/sa/Research/college/2005/2005_CollegeSurvey_11iu043007.pdf). The colleges and universities in Texas have utilized the study results to justify the need for prevention programs on their campus. Alcohol, other drug and violence (AODV) coordinators and prevention professionals will be able to use the results of the survey to ensure a quality program and reduce underage and binge drinking on campus.

1. Eighty-one percent of underage college drinkers getting alcohol from someone older indicates that practitioner's put an emphasis on explaining the Social Host Law to our students. If convicted of providing alcohol to a minor, it is a Class A on their record which may exclude the student from being accepted in medical, law, military, teaching and other professional careers.
2. The growing amount of alcohol that is consumed off campus (private parties) demonstrates a need for greater collaboration with the community, such as law enforcement, retailers, community coalitions, and neighborhood associations to reduce underage and binge drinking.
3. All students on college and university campus are mandated by the federal government to receive an AODV policy. The survey study shows that a large number of students do not have knowledge of the policy or information contained in the policy. The results also indicate that students are not aware of campus prevention programs. Programs to educate the students on policy, sanctions, and campus prevention programs need to be developed and presented to students effectively. A state policy to mandate a risk management workshop for members of all student organizations that would clearly explain the laws, policies, and sanctions of the college and university is needed.
4. The lower percentage of binge drinking from students of religious background would indicate that faith based chairs on the campuses should play an active role using environmental strategies in reducing students' access.
5. The drinking behaviors between high school and college should encourage collaboration between high school and college counselors in preparing high school students for the non-academic (outside classroom) transition. Survey data indicates that students who reported drinking several times a month in high school were more likely to binge drink in college. A prevention tool would be to involve parents as partners in helping to make a healthy transition from high school to college by working on environmental strategies on and off campus and to promote awareness building efforts. Most parents are paying for a portion of their students' education. Campuses should adopt a policy to notify parents for minor students who receive alcohol and other drug disciplinary violations.

6. Interesting findings show that 77 percent of college students support alcohol-free housing and 72 percent want stricter alcohol rules. The colleges and universities could use this data to make sure we are enforcing the laws and policies (consistent enforcement and consistent adjudication for disciplinary sanctions), training the RA's in enforcement, and offering substance-free housing.

7. The results of binge drinking and academic problems, such as missing classes would suggest that colleges and universities mandate Friday classes and perhaps exams to be given on Friday to discourage starting the binge drinking on Thursday nights. Some additional prevention strategies for academic success are as follows:

- Institute more early morning classes to discourage late parties;
- Less time upon arriving at campus and the beginning of classes;
- Have a shorter period between final exams and graduation; and,
- Redefine spring break to organize campus trips to perform alcohol-free community services projects.

8. The high percentage of students who are driving after drinking would support consistent enforcement and adjudication of laws. Sobriety checkpoints could be authorized as an optional tool for law enforcement. Campus policies could be adopted to restrict or ban an automobile from campus after being cited for driving under the influence.

9. The research findings indicate a high percentage of students with alcohol and other drug problems. A successful strategy with documented effectiveness would require students who receive alcohol and other drug violations on college campus be screened and participate in brief intervention as part of the disciplinary action. This would identify the high-risk students and give assistance under a controlled environment for the students to receive an education.

10. Survey data indicates that students overestimate the levels of alcohol consumption and percentage of heavy or problem drinkers on campus. Utilizing the model programs of social norms marketing campaign will help to correct the misperceptions and convey accurate information to the students about drinking behaviors (Model Programs by U.S. Department of Education Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program- 2002).