



## PRC COMMUNITY OUTREACH

<http://resources.prev.org/>

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**We would appreciate your assistance** by completing a survey on environmental strategies. The survey asks questions such as identifying the environmental strategies used in your community to prevent and reduce alcohol problems and which strategies you believe are most effective. The link is below, feel free to pass it along to others to fill out. Expected time to complete: 15-20 minutes.  
<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2QPRWGL>

### Community Efforts to Reduce Youth Access to Alcohol

The Lamorinda Alcohol Policy Coalition in the East Bay Area has found that a common method youth obtain alcohol in their community is from stealing at Safeway and have joined forces with Safeway representatives to reduce the amount of alcohol thefts. One step they recently took was to increase plain clothes security at three local Safeway stores during homecoming month of the local high schools. Among other recent news from the Coalition is proposing positive social norm marketing campaigns. Youth from the local high schools, and possibly the middle schools, would be involved in planning the campaigns. We look forward to reporting more on their efforts to reduce youth access to alcohol in future newsletter editions.

**At the Prevention Research Center website is** a page with links to video taped presentations from our research scientists, one discussing the community trials. Listed below are some of the titles of the presentations and the link to the web site:

- \*Preventing Alcohol Trauma: A Community Trial
  - \*Sacramento Neighborhood Alcohol Prevention Project (SNAPP)
  - \*Evaluating the New Mexico Alcohol Server Education Act
  - \*College Student Drinking & The Campus Environment: A Community Prevention Intervention
- [http://www.prev.org/prc/prc\\_videopresentations.html](http://www.prev.org/prc/prc_videopresentations.html)

### Community-Based Impaired-Driving Programs

#### *Local Ordinances and Other Strategies Addressing Impaired Driving*

This publication available online from the U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, focuses on understanding impaired-driving problems in a community and strategies to reduce the problem. For communities to understand driving impaired issues it is recommended that communities focus more deeply on the who, what, where, when, how and why. Community strategies to reduce impaired driving discussed include communications, prevention, and deterrence. Specific topics include social norm campaigns, impaired driving, and social access to alcohol such as alcohol restrictions in public and alcohol retail density. Examples of ordinances from different cities are included such as:

**San Francisco, CA:** Drama Shop – exterior parking lot lighting

**Pittsburgh, NH:** Open container

**Salinas, CA:** Social Host

**Dekalb, IL:** Alcohol drink promotions

**Madison, WI:** Home deliveries

**Albuquerque, NM:** Billboards and Signage



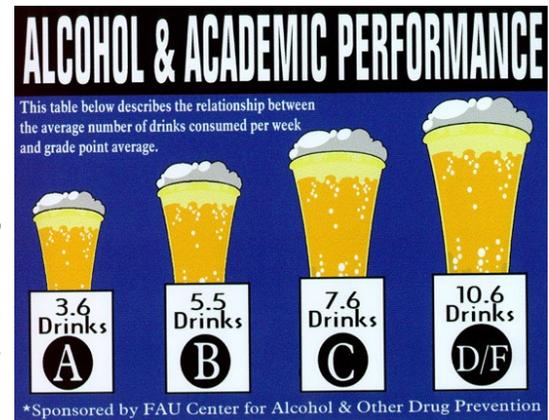
To view the report:

[www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/pdf/811678.pdf](http://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/pdf/811678.pdf)

# Online Alcohol Education Course for College Students Reduces Heavy Drinking

AlcoholEdu for College, an online course for college freshmen designed to reduce heavy drinking and alcohol-related problems, was found to have short term, but not long term effects on these behaviors. The 30-campus study was carried out by the Prevention Research Center of the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation in Berkeley, California, using a randomized controlled design. The study was also designed to explore what changes in student knowledge and attitudes resulted from the course.

Drinking among college students, especially heavy drinking, has created serious problems for many years. Approximately 40 to 45% of college students report that they have engaged in heavy drinking within the previous two weeks, a rate that has remained stable over the past two decades. In response, many colleges now administer prevention programs that capitalize on the advent of interactive online learning technologies, among them AlcoholEdu for College. As of 2011, AlcoholEdu was being administered by over 250 colleges and universities nationwide. Students take the two- to three-hour course in two parts, the first in the summer before they begin at the university and the second in their first fall semester. Previous research has shown that students who take the course reduce their heavy drinking, but no study had examined AlcoholEdu as a campus-level strategy even though it is typically required for all incoming freshmen. The current project was designed to evaluate AlcoholEdu as a campus-level prevention strategy, and to investigate intervening processes by which the course reduces student drinking.



The research was carried out at 30 colleges, half of which were randomly assigned to offer the AlcoholEdu course and half of which did not offer that or any other online alcohol education course. A large sample of 1,102 students at the AlcoholEdu schools and 1,298 at the control schools responded to a questionnaire about their perceptions of alcohol and drinking habits before the course was implemented and during subsequent fall and spring semesters.

The study found that students who took the course reported less drinking in the past 30 days, less binge drinking and fewer negative physiological and social consequences in the fall semester, but these effects did not persist in the following spring semester. The study also showed stronger course effects on these outcomes among schools with the highest course completion rates (schools with 70% completion or higher).

The researchers also wanted to learn *how* the course had those effects. The materials in AlcoholEdu course are designed to address student misperceptions of drinking norms and other psychosocial factors such as personal disapproval of alcohol use, expectations regarding positive and negative effects of alcohol use, and strategies to minimize alcohol-related harm. AlcoholEdu presents accurate descriptive drinking norms by means of graphical displays of information concerning college students' alcohol use. This information helps students compare their drinking to that of their peers and corrects any exaggerated misperceptions they may have concerning their peers' alcohol use. College students tend to overestimate levels of alcohol use and heavy drinking among their peers, which may negatively influence their own drinking behavior.

The researchers found that exposure to the online AlcoholEdu course had an effect on perceived drinking norms – that is, students had a more realistic understanding of how much their peers drink. Exposure to the course, however, was not related to any of the other variables that the materials were designed to affect. Findings of this study suggest that AlcoholEdu for College affects alcohol use and related consequences indirectly through its effect on student perceptions of drinking norms. Further research is needed to better understand why this online course did not appear to affect other targeted psychosocial variables, and how to increase the number of students completing of the course.

## Alcohol and Bullies...and the Bullied

Researchers at the University of Cincinnati recently looked at alcohol use and problem drinking among middle and high school students (7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade) across Greater Cincinnati. The study included students living in Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana. The data found that more than 38% of over 54,000 students were involved in violent encounters. The encounters were defined as ranging from verbal intimidation to the use of or threatening use with a weapon. An association was found between school violent victimization and increased odds of recent and heavy alcohol consumption. Their findings also included the following:

- ⇒ Both victims and bullies reported similar drinking patterns
- ⇒ Students from all grades who had been bullied were one-and-a-half times more likely to have abused alcohol
- ⇒ The effect of victimization had an impact on drinking behaviors and level of intoxication across sex, age, and race
- ⇒ Both victims and bullies were less likely to be engaged in positive social activities

<http://psychcentral.com/news/2012/10/30/alcohol-abuse-common-among-bullies-victims/46862.html>

Other studies have also found that bullies and victims of bullies are more likely to have used alcohol in the last 30 days than those not involved in bullying, one recommendation being that early evaluation of bullying be part of alcohol prevention programs for youth. The data below comes from a Massachusetts report that focused on bullying and victims of bullying:

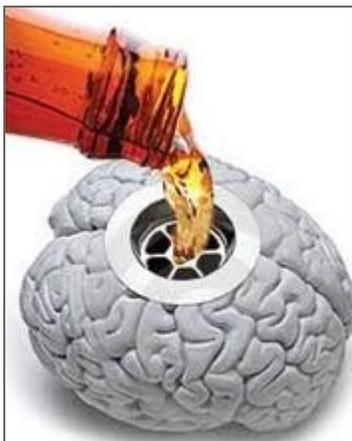
<i>Recent reported use of alcohol use:</i>	Bullies	Bullied	Neither
Middle school students	32.7%	22.7%	8.1%
High school students	63.2%	56.3%	38.5%

Data from:

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6015a1.htm>

## Drinking and College Student Performance

A recent article discussed the lasting effects of drinking large quantities of alcohol, referencing the heavy drinking behaviors college students participate in during celebrations such as during Halloween or homecoming. As pointed out by Jenna Jones, the Assistant Director of Health Promotion and Education at the Sincuse Health Center, one useful statistic for educating students on the dangers of alcohol abuse is that “Any night that students have five or more drinks, it takes their bodies three full days to recover,” and that consequences include problems with concentration, critical thinking, forming memories, and solving problems. When students drink heavily for two days, Jones said that it takes a full five days to recover. Recommendations for students caught in the drinking cycle are to take a break from drinking and pay attention to when they wake up, how they feel in class, and after they workout. Students should be encouraged to really think about their plans for a night out, their expectations and responsibilities, as well as the positive and negative aspects of drinking. Jones also noted the AlcoholEdu program as part of their efforts to educate students about the dangers of heavy alcohol use and to address responsible drinking. She further noted “I’ve found that students who take a few minutes to check in with themselves before heading out are better able to keep their end goals in mind, rather than get caught up in the revelry and drink more than they intended to.”



<http://www.westernherald.com/news/alcohol-affects-students-academic-performance-health/>

## Recommended Reading :

An article published in Alcohol Research and Health focused on community efforts to prevent underage drinking and discussed why community-based initiatives are important for success and sustainability. They also discussed which strategies are successful in reducing underage drinking, and some of the challenges with implementing community-based prevention.

One of the studies listed for demonstrating evidence of effectiveness is the Community Trials Project, led by research scientists at the Prevention Research Center, which found significant results in reducing alcohol sales to minors, heavy drinking among adults, and alcohol-related car crashes.

For the full article: <http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/arh342/167-174.htm>

Table of contents for other related articles in the Alcohol Research and Health issue, including authors from PRC: [http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/arh342/toc34\\_2.htm](http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/arh342/toc34_2.htm)

## Parents Drinks, Kids Remember

The relation between the onset of alcohol use among adolescents and their perception of parent drinking was examined through associations with alcohol-related memories. Over 600 adolescents in Canada were recruited, 57% female and 43% male, from 7<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> grade, that did not have any alcohol experience at the beginning of the study. The alcohol-related memory associations were positively related to their perceptions of parental drinking and predicted adolescents' alcohol use a year later. In other words, the more often adolescents reported their parents drinking alcohol increased the number of alcohol-related memory associations formed by the adolescent, which also increased the onset of drinking a year later. As the authors point out, other research has shown that environmental alcohol cues strengthen the alcohol-related memory associations that form during childhood. The same can also be said for after the onset of drinking; the more alcohol-related memory associations formed while drinking then the more likely drinking alcohol will increase. Questions that researchers still hope to answer are how alcohol associations are formed, and at what age are implicit alcohol cognitions formed.

In previous newsletter editions we have included articles on alcohol and the effect it has on cognition. Studies are now looking at implicit cognitions, which is basically the automatic processes that a person is general not aware of, and how these automatic process relate to drinking alcohol. If a person has repeated exposure to alcohol in various forms then their impressions of alcohol strengthens and thus drive alcohol behaviors with little or no cognitive thought.

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/add.12042/pdf>

## PRC Updates!

In our August 2012 issue, we included a report on our resources site on Comprehensive Community Approaches Reduce Underage Drinking and Sales to Minors. A link to one of the study publications can be found at: <http://www.udetc.org/documents/reducingyouthaccessalcohol.pdf>

There is also a new section on the Center Grant—Environmental Approaches to Prevention on our Resources site:

<http://resources.prev.org/centergrant.html>

## Updates on Alcohol-Related Risk of Driver fatalities

Researchers compared blood-alcohol data from crash cases during 2006 and 2007 and compared them with 1996 data. Overall the relative risk did not change for being involved in a fatal alcohol-related crash. However, they found that the risk for underage women increased for being involved in a fatal alcohol-related crash and the risk for sober underage men doubled over time for being involved in a fatal crash. For the full study:

Voas, R. B., Torres, P., Romano, J. H. (2012). Alcohol-related risk of driver fatalities: An update using 2007 data. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, 73, 341-350.



## Website Explorer:

At the Community Prevention Initiative website are resources such as upcoming trainings and publications such as the Power of Prevention, Research to Practice, and Community Indicators reports for the years 2004, 2007, and 2010. In the Community Indicators for Alcohol Drug Abuse Risk reports are links to the overall reports for California and for the specific counties, and includes information and data for alcohol use during the past month, alcohol and drug treatment information, alcohol and drug-related crime, and drinking and driving.

<http://www.ca-cpi.org/main.php>