



College Students Influenced Heavily by Perception of Their Peers'

Alcohol Use

A study reported by *Health Behavior News Service* found that when college students think that their peers drink a lot of alcohol, they drink more themselves. The study also found that when college students learn that their perception is incorrect, they sometimes drink less. The reviewers looked at how social norms- our beliefs about what is "normal" behavior in the people close to us- might influence students' drinking. If a student believes that his or her peers drink heavily, it will likely influence the amount of alcohol the student personally drinks, the Cochrane reviewers say. However, they say that much of peer influence is the result of incorrect perceptions. **Go to:**

<http://www.cadca.org/CoalitionsOnline/article.asp?id=2237>



For more information on HCTC, the latest on upcoming HCTC Meetings and Activities

Go To: <http://www.gvhp.org/Home/OurProjects/HealthyCommunities/tabid/102/Default.aspx>

Oregon Partnership Tackles "Shoulder Tapping" with New Campaign

"Excuse me sir, do you think that you could pick me up a six-pack? I forgot my ID at home." The phrase is often used by teens when they're trying to get an adult to buy them alcohol at a store. Teens often wait around the parking lot and look for the "perfect" unsuspecting stranger to ask. In Portland, Ore., "shoulder tapping" – as it is commonly referred to – became such a problem that a coalition launched a campaign to raise awareness about this practice among parents. The new campaign includes advertisements, posters and radio and TV PSAs along with extensive media outreach. OP has also developed tools that other coalitions throughout the state can use in their communities to spread the word. **Go to:** <http://www.cadca.org/CoalitionsOnline/article.asp?id=2243>



FOCUS ON ALCOHOL AND GIRLS

While girls' substance use once lagged behind boys', research studies conducted in the past decade have shown that adolescent girls and boys are now equally likely to drink alcohol. However, there are significant differences in how alcohol is consumed and how it affects girls. For example, girls are more likely to drink to fit in with their friends than adolescent boys, and even small amounts of alcohol are more intoxicating to girls than boys, regardless of their size. Community groups need to be aware of these gender differences and tailor some of their prevention efforts specifically to girls.

Facts

- ☑ In Livingston County 60% of girls age 12 to 17 have used alcohol at least once. Of these, 32% are current users and 17% are binge drinkers (have consumed five or more drinks in a row at least once in the past month) Source: Prevention Needs Assessment Survey, 2005)
- ☑ Half of the girls who have sexual intercourse by the age of 16 are intoxicated at the time and of these, half later regret their action (Sachs, H.C MD, 2000)
- ☑ Among 8th grade girls who drink heavily, 37 percent report attempting suicide, compared to 11% who do not drink (Windle, 1992)

What to Do:

- ☑ Implement Girl Power! a national public education campaign sponsored to help encourage and empower 9- to 14-year-old girls to abstain from alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs and be physically active through positive activities and identifying their own interests and aspirations. Coordinate a **Girl Power!** day in your community. Invite adult female role models to talk to girls about the importance of making healthy life decisions. Hold workshops on topics such as substance abuse, nutrition, physical activity, positive relationships, and goal setting. Organize a youth forum to discuss underage drinking and what girls can do to prevent it.
- ☑ Contact local guidance counselors and help support gender-specific activities and initiatives in the schools
- ☑ Work with local businesses to sponsor internships for girls or invite girls to shadow employees for a designated period of time. Host brown bag lunches to discuss careers, job skills, and interview. Include discussions of how substance use can affect girls' plans for the future.

How to do it: Simple! Just Contact Rachel Pena, HCTC Coordinator: 227-0279 to help you arrange any of these activities