**Safer Campuses and Communities: Tools for Implementing Evidence-based Interventions to Reduce Alcohol Problems**

QUESTION AND ANSWER SUMMARY

On June 26 and 27, 2013, the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (NCSSLE) hosted a Higher Education Series webinar to review an evidence-based intervention to reduce problem alcohol use among college and university students. During the session, the presenters (**Dr. Bob Saltz**, Senior Research Scientist, Prevention Research Center; **Ms.** **Genie Cheng**, Prevention and Outreach Coordinator, UC Santa Barbara; **Ms.** **Karen Hughes**, Health Educator, UC Berkeley) received several questions from the audience. Because the presenters could not answer all of the questions submitted during the event, the Center has prepared the following Webinar Q/A Summary with responses to each question. For additional information, please email or call the Center (ncssle@air.org; 1-800-258-8413).

*Please note the content of this summary was prepared under a contract from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Healthy Students and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to the American Institutes for Research (AIR). This Q/A summary does not necessarily represent the policy or views of the U.S. Departments of Education or Health and Human Services, nor do they imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education.*

1. **What university(ies) currently have party patrols and how are they implemented?**

**Saltz:** While we are monitoring all California Universities to see which components are sustained and which are not, I don’t have those data easily on hand (they’re in a collection of report forms at the moment). The main challenge for implementation is that we wanted to focus on the party host and not on the minors who might be in attendance. Usually, it’s the other way around, but we wanted to make potential party hosts aware that they may be violating local ordinances and, thus, at risk of being cited and fined. As noted in the webinar, our aim was to reduce the number of parties being thrown, especially large and noisy ones. We also wanted hosts to better control their parties if they did decide to host them.

**Hughes:** Campus and city police in Berkeley (UCPD and BPD, respectively) run joint [Safety Patrols](http://www.uhs.berkeley.edu/psafe/whatsatstake/patrols.shtml) Thursday thru Saturday nights from 10pm-2am. City police dispatchers are able to route calls from neighbors about loud, late parties and other [public nuisance](http://www.uhs.berkeley.edu/psafe/whatsatstake/citylaws.shtml) issues directly to both the UCPD and BPD officers already in the vicinity so they respond more quickly to problems. The joint patrol overcomes jurisdictional constraints by allowing the police to coordinate directly with the UCB Center for Student Conduct without delay. Students cited by campus or city police have their information transferred to the center for possible additional disciplinary action within three days.

1. **What were the specific messages used to let students know about enforcement efforts?**

**Saltz:** Each University tailored messages for its own campus. Perhaps “tailored” suggests a greater level of effort than what many schools put into it, however. The main point is to make the students (and community) aware of the enforcement operations. The most effective way of doing this is to have specific and timely information on any citations given out and/or parties being broken up, etc. General “awareness” of an ordinance or vague information about enforcement is not likely to have the same impact.

**Cheng:** We market several campaigns on our campus; one specific campaign that was developed by our Students was the **Keep It Safe, Keep It Local** campaign. This campaign included information about all of the DUI checkpoints in the area as well as all the enforcement efforts happening during Halloween Weekend. All cars must be moved from the streets, students must obtain a special permit to park on campus, no visitors or guests are allowed in the residence halls during Halloween Weekend. Another campaign that was created specifically for the Safe California Universities Study was the Life of the Party Campaign, where we provided education information to the student body regarding all the citations students could receive, along with actual tools and safety tips students can utilize to avoid citations and arrests.

**Hughes:** 1)Student safety, especially at night, is a campus and community priority. Both police departments are working closely together to maintain safety and livability for all in the Southside of campus. 2) Police have stepped up enforcement of alcohol laws and policies around campus. Know the policies, penalties and what’s at stake. If you get caught for alcohol violations, you face sizable fines and campus as well as city sanctions. Berkeley police regularly share student violation s with Campus Student Conduct.

1. **How did you engage students in the Host Party Program? And community agencies such as liquor stores and police units?**
**Saltz:** We did certainly have students involved, and I think every campus in this project is routinely involving students at some level in their planning and in the implementation. I think you will hear a bit of that from my colleagues today. Again, that is something -- that is a localized strategy that depends on the fact that I am working with some pretty creative people who have that experience and know how to recruit students to that effort.

**Hughes:** Students have been engaged in a variety of ways. Students serve on the Chancellor’s Advisory Council on Student-Neighbor Relations which provided its endorsement of the Safer Schools’ Enforcement and Visibility Strategy. Students have been PartySafe@Cal Interns who developed and delivered 1 to 1 and small group education as well as campus-wide social marketing messages to their peers. Leaders of various student constituencies (e.g. athletes, greeks, co-ops) have been required to inform and educate their peers.

1. **In your safety campaign, do you use social norms data?**
**Saltz:** We do use social norms data and then we utilize information that was provided to us from the Prevention Research Center. 80% of our students are drinkers, but 20% are nondrinkers so we share that information with our students so they get a better picture of what is going on our campuses.

**Hughes:** Yes – we usually lead with it. We use social norms data about consumption, consequences, protective and risk behaviors, and support for policies and interventions. The actual social norms at UC Berkeley are quite positive, which facilitates our ability to use the data a lot.

1. **Was there any engagement with parents?**
**Saltz:** It varied tremendously from campus to campus. The main challenge is to have a plan for how to make use of parent engagement. While there is no real penalty for just informing them of the prevention program, it would be much better to ask them to do something, e.g., talk to their child about the community’s concern for excessive drinking and the stepped-up enforcement. If the local administration feels that they are criticized by some parents when they do enforce student discipline, other parents can be brought in who are concerned about the risks of drinking and appreciate the efforts to reduce harm.

**Cheng:** Our school engages parents in a variety of ways. We provide alcohol and drug safety information to parents during orientation. During orientation we also provide parents with the opportunity to drop into our office to ask questions. We also have a parental notification policy on our campus. If students receive a citation in Isla Vista it is a matter of public record. The University sends a letter to the student informing them that a letter of concern will be sent to their parents. Letters of concern are then sent to parents letting them know what happened.

**Hughes:** Some, but it’s not extensive. The Cal Parent organization is part of the Chancellor’s Council on Student-Neighbor Relations, and it educates its members about the alcohol-related issues, services, and initiatives on our campus. While we do not have a formal Parent Notification Policy, parents (or other emergency contacts) are very often contacted by the Director of On Campus Housing or the Dean of Students in cases of serious alcohol-related incidents.

1. **What was included in the 21st birthday email? And how were these received (could you speak to effectiveness)?**

**Cheng:** We provide information to parents in the parent handbooks as well as through monthly parent newsletters. 21st birthday e-mails are sent to students, which include safety information about how to stay safe. In addition, because we are under the auspices of student health we are also able to follow-up with students if they get transported to the emergency room for alcohol or other drug related visits.

1. **Can you provide more information about the distressed students program?**

**Cheng:** Our school has a distress students program. Key campus officials meet weekly to discuss important student cases that need the attention of the University. The Director of the Alcohol & Drug Program, along with Student Health, Social Work, Mental Health, Judicial Affairs, Student Life work together to help students who might be in distress.

1. **Have the other UC campus used this intervention? If so, how does it differ from the Santa Barbra Campus?**

**Saltz:** With the exception of Merced (which was too new), all the campuses of the University of California have implemented the Safer Universities intervention. As you can see from my colleagues’ presentations and their responses to specific questions, there were certainly local variations and additions to the Safer intervention from campus to campus. The core elements (DUI enforcement, retail compliance checks, party patrols all with high visibility) were common to the interventions, however. Each campus also had other prevention activities that they either started or were ongoing as well, of course.

**9. What universities implemented the tier 2 interventions?**

**Saltz:** The Safer Universities project as described here represents a “Tier 2” intervention. The category was used by the NIAAA Task Force to define interventions that had been shown to be effective in general populations, but which had not yet (in the year 2000) been evaluated in college communities. Our project was able to show that these strategies were, in fact, also effective in college settings.

1. **Were there different results from institutions in urban settings to institutions in suburban settings due to the density of alcohol outlets/bars?**
**Saltz:** As a community-level control variable, we found that density was not statistically significant. The density did not have a direct impact, or more likely, it meant that in the settings we were in, the density did not vary that much. And so, where we did not have a clear pattern of density, it may not have contributed to the outcomes we were reporting. It probably is worth the effort to look at possible effects of density independent of the outcomes that we were reporting today. But we just have not done that yet. I will say that we have some preliminary data showing a strong relationship between density of parties proximal to the campuses.
2. **How did you measure "drinking to intoxication"?**
**Saltz:** We ask students if they had consumed enough to be drunk. Although one might think this is too subjective to be of use, other research has shown it to be a fairly good measure of intoxication. In an evaluation of this type, we expect there to be some error, but as long as that doesn’t systematically change over time and differentially across the experimental conditions, it shouldn’t affect the results.
3. **Any suggestions for community colleges without residential halls, Greek Life, diverse population, etc.?**
**Saltz:** We haven’t yet moved from residential colleges to community colleges, but I would think that the community college would work even more closely with city or county partners on the alcohol control side while taking advantage of their contact with students to handle the visibility. Details of the effort would depend on whether students (and other young adults) were congregated in any particular neighborhoods in the community or instead widely spread out. In some cases it might make better sense for a prevention effort to be headed up by city or county agencies.
4. **What do you think about publicizing data regarding student support for alcohol policies and community law enforcement?**
**Saltz:** This has been done successfully, for instance, in the University of Rhode Island’s “Common Ground” prevention program. Students generally support efforts to control drunk driving, and may support other strategies if they believe the drinking behavior goes beyond their own sense of acceptable behavior.

**Hughes:** I think if you have the data you should make it as visible as possible and use it to start some conversations.

1. **Do you have any recommendations on reinvigorating an already existing task force?**
**Saltz:** Many task forces or coalitions tend to “burn out” if they haven’t got clear objectives and deadlines, but continue to meet for no important reason. They may often be too large to work effectively, too. One suggestion would be to adopt a clear objective or prevention “target,” with one or more evidence-based strategies that are chosen to work synergistically, and then invite just those who have a concrete role to play in the prevention implementation. A small work group can set the parameters. Many others are happy to participate in the effort, but are often not interested in attending meetings. They can be effective partners nonetheless.

**Hughes:** Ensure that there’s accountability at the highest administrative levels possible for 1-3 specific actions/outcomes per year. Be strategic in your choices.