

Faculty Involvement in AOD Prevention

 Alcohol and other drug (AOD) use continues to be among the most significant problems on college campuses. Negative consequences associated with AOD use include poor performance in academic work, involvement in arguments or fighting, injuries, and even death. Clearly, reducing AOD use is one of the keys to creating a safer and healthier atmosphere that is more conducive to excellence in education.

Effective strategies to prevent AOD problems must involve students, administrators, community members, and faculty. Although AOD prevention has not been seen as part of the traditional faculty role, faculty involvement is vital to the success of prevention efforts.

Faculty have a substantial impact on the campus culture, particularly since they often remain at a college longer than administrators and students. By taking a leadership role in the faculty senate or a campus task force, evaluating ongoing prevention initiatives, or addressing AOD issues in the classroom, faculty can play an essential role in AOD prevention on their campuses and in the local communities.

Faculty Interest in Prevention

Faculty have many opportunities to get involved in AOD prevention, both in the classroom and in the broader campus community. Recent survey data from the Core Institute for Alcohol and Drug Prevention indicates, however, that while faculty are aware of and concerned about AOD issues, they are not as actively involved in campus prevention efforts as they could be.

Between December 1994 and March 1997, 5,583 faculty and staff responded to the Faculty and Staff Environmental Alcohol and Other Drug Survey developed by the Core Institute. These faculty and staff were from 31 institutions, 27 of which were four-year colleges or universities and 4 of which were two-year colleges. The Faculty Survey assesses faculty perceptions of AOD issues and their involvement in prevention efforts.

Data from the Faculty Survey reveal that faculty

seem to be aware of and concerned about AOD issues. The majority of the faculty (64 percent) surveyed considered the current level of AOD use on their campuses to be a concern for educators, and 90 percent believed that institutions of higher education should be involved in AOD prevention efforts. Faculty also believed that AOD use negatively affects the personal and academic lives of their students (87 percent and 92 percent, respectively).

While faculty are aware of AOD problems on campus, 78 percent do not describe themselves as "actively involved" in prevention efforts. Moreover, the majority of respondents (66 percent) have never provided AOD information to students. This apparent inconsistency between the faculty's concern about AOD use and their low level of involvement in AOD prevention may be due to a number of factors, including faculty not perceiving AOD prevention as part of their role, a lack of direct efforts to involve faculty, and the busy schedules of most faculty members. Another factor may be a lack of institutional expectation that faculty become involved; most respondents to the Faculty Survey (72 percent) report that AOD abuse information was not provided at any orientation they had attended.

On the other hand, the survey results clearly showed that many faculty members would like to be more involved in AOD intervention and prevention efforts. Eighty-five percent reported that they would refer students to appropriate services for AOD problems if they knew how, 60 percent would attend a workshop dealing with AOD prevention/education efforts, and 40 percent would like to be involved in

Building Connections Early

At the University of Oklahoma (OU) faculty and incoming first-year students have an early opportunity to meet during Camp Crimson, a summer orientation program. Incoming first-year students who choose to attend the camp stay in the residence halls during the four-day program. In 1997, over 300 of OU's approximately 3,000 incoming students attended one of the two Camp Crimson sessions. Programs on four major areas—scholarship, wellness, traditions, and service—were designed to help first-year students adjust to college. Camp Crimson's organizers actively solicited faculty participation when the program began in 1996. Faculty have become involved in a variety of ways, including presenting information, participating in the camp with a group of students, or interacting informally with students at social events. Camp Crimson gives first-year students the opportunity to develop connections with faculty early in their academic careers.

AOD prevention efforts on campus.

The results of a campus Faculty Survey can show a campus community that faculty do welcome AOD prevention. Discussion of the results in the faculty senate could stimulate interest in AOD prevention among the faculty or could be used to recruit faculty representatives for a campus task force. Highlighting the efforts of faculty who are involved in AOD prevention through articles in the campus newspaper or recognition at a special luncheon could give other faculty ideas on ways to get involved in AOD prevention.

Comparing the results of the Faculty Survey with a survey of students' attitudes can also be a valuable way to dispel common myths about campus norms. The majority of faculty respondents (71 percent) did not think that a person should get drunk, but only

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PREVENTION UPDATES

25 percent believed that this view was held by the campus in general. In addition, 81 percent felt that using drugs was never a good thing to do, but only 35 percent thought that this was the general attitude on the campus.

How Can Faculty Get Involved?

- **Speaking out about AOD issues**

By being vocal about AOD issues, faculty can play an important role in raising awareness. Faculty can use opportunities such as the faculty senate and committee meetings to speak out about AOD issues and get prevention on the agenda.

- **Participating in the biennial review process**

The Drug-Free Schools and Campuses Regulations [34 CFR Part 86] require that, as a condition of receiving funds or any other form of financial assistance under any federal program, an institution of higher education must certify that it has adopted and implemented a program to prevent the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students and employees. Faculty need to be involved in conducting the review.

- **Participating in the AOD task force**

The task force examines all aspects of the university system, exploring the institution's structure and the basic premises of the educational program to see how they affect alcohol and other drug use. As members of the task force, faculty can exercise leadership in proposing new initiatives to change the campus climate on AOD use.

- **Working with the community**

By serving as members of campus and community coalitions, faculty can participate in shaping AOD prevention strategies. In addition, faculty can utilize their skills to design, implement, and evaluate AOD programs and provide AOD information to the community.

- **Making connections with students**

Faculty on many campuses are involved in their students' lives beyond the classroom, serving as advisors, dining with students, or inviting a group of students to their homes for an end of the semester celebration. This involvement encourages stronger connections between faculty and students and helps invest students in the academic life of their college.

Collecting data on whether students feel

focused on their education goals or perceive that faculty members care about them as individuals may be an effective method of monitoring how integrated students feel with their college and how effective the college is in building stronger student-faculty ties. In addition, collecting data on why students drop out of school and the problems they face can assess both the strength of student-faculty ties and how student services, including AOD prevention initiatives, might be better delivered.

At the State University of New York at New Paltz, faculty involvement in prevention programming has soared. Major Connections: Interaction Beyond the Classroom is a proactive approach to environmental change, whereby faculty members foster a "common bond" among students through theme-based events developed by academic major. In addition to creating a link between students, faculty, and alumni, these "academic socials" provide free refreshments, expose students to mentors who are modeling intellectual discussions in an alcohol-free atmosphere, and pique student interest in community service and internship opportunities.

- **Curriculum infusion**

In just about any course, from English to biology, faculty can seamlessly integrate AOD content into the curriculum, facilitating awareness of AOD issues. Curriculum infusion incorporates faculty as allies in campuswide AOD efforts and reaches students who may not have a primary interest in AOD issues. It can be an especially useful strategy at commuter colleges and universities where it is difficult to reach large numbers of students outside the classroom. *Characteristics of Successful Curriculum Infusion Programs*, the monograph from the Network for Dissemination of Curriculum Infusion, describes factors that contribute to the success of curriculum infusion.

- **Service learning**

Faculty can incorporate student service into course work or supervise students who work as volunteers. Student service can be connected with

Mathematics and AOD Prevention

The campuswide committee on drug and alcohol abuse at Humboldt State University sent an e-mail message to all faculty in advance of Alcohol Awareness Week encouraging them to think about ways to incorporate substance abuse prevention into their classes. Inspired by that suggestion, Dr. Phyllis Chinn, chair of the mathematics department, asked prospective secondary school teachers in a capstone mathematics course to explore mathematical models related to determining blood alcohol levels. Students examined such questions as (1) how many deciliters of blood are in the body, (2) how many grams of alcohol are in various drinks, (3) how quickly alcohol enters the bloodstream, and (4) how fast the body metabolizes alcohol. These problems raise awareness of AOD issues while helping students learn mathematical skills. See Dr. Chinn's Problem of the Week: <http://math.humboldt.edu/~prompt/407/POWs/pow7.html>

ongoing AOD prevention efforts or other efforts to promote safer and healthier environments.

- **Referrals**

Close contact between faculty and students may be used as a vehicle for identification and referral of students with AOD problems to appropriate treatment services on campus or in the community. Faculty need to know what treatment or counseling resources are available on campus or in the community in case a student approaches them expressing concern about an AOD problem. Too often, students in trouble do not ask for help directly, but faculty are in a unique position to offer help in the way of a referral to assessment or counseling services. Among possible warning signs that faculty may notice include a drop in academic performance; ignoring or excusing behavior associated with alcohol and other drug problems, such as traffic violations and motor crashes; and skipping class frequently or staying out of classroom discussions.

Engaging faculty in alcohol and other drug prevention requires framing prevention work as a part of their other professional duties or as a natural extension of their intellectual interests. Reducing AOD use would likely lead to an atmosphere more conducive to excellence in education through increased class attendance and improved quality of work. Involvement in AOD prevention would, therefore, allow faculty to be more effective in their role as educators.

Resources

Publications

Making the Link: Faculty and Prevention, by B. E. Ryan and W. DeJong. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention, 1998. Available from the Higher Education Center. Faculty involvement in AOD prevention is key. Campus administrators and AOD coordinators on campuses across the nation have discovered ways to approach faculty members to engage their interest and have collaborated with them in developing prevention strategies. Filled with inspiring examples, this 30-page publication summarizes lessons learned from those experiences.

Bringing Prevention into the Classroom: Key Concepts and Designing the Course Module (set of training materials; includes two videos, a facilitator's guide, 5 narrative sections, 29 overhead transparency masters, and 18 handout masters; \$250, plus shipping). Available from NDCI at (773) 794-6697. These materials help campus prevention personnel prepare faculty to integrate prevention content into their courses across the curriculum. The training provides faculty with a background in several critical areas and a draft of a prevention module for the course they intend to teach.

Monograph: Characteristics of Successful Curriculum Infusion Programs. Available from NDCI, online at www.neiu.edu/~cinfusi/ or call (773) 794-6697.

Based on a study of all curriculum infusion programs funded by the U.S. Department of Education between 1989 and 1993, the 16-page monograph reports research results on factors that have contributed to successful curriculum infusion programs. Features five exemplary programs from different parts of the country.

Model Pre-Post, Follow-Up Instrument. Available from NDCI at (773) 794-6697.

Measures changes in student attitudes and behavior as a result of prevention curriculum infusion. (Based on the Core instrument.)

Faculty Write Ups of Prevention Curriculum, forthcoming. Will be available from NDCI, online at www.neiu.edu/~cinfusi/ or call (773) 794-6697. Provides current examples demonstrating how faculty

from colleges and universities in different parts of the country have integrated prevention into courses across disciplines.

Faculty Member's Handbook: Strategies for Preventing Alcohol and Other Drug Problems, by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. Rockville, Md.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, 1991. Available from NCADI (800) 729-6686.

Describes actions that faculty members can take to become involved in campus AOD prevention efforts.

Partners for Prevention: A Guide for Faculty. Denver, Colo.: The BACCHUS & Gamma Peer Education Network, 1992. Available from the BACCHUS Materials Center at (352) 377-5228 or order online at www.bacchusgamma.org. Offers suggestions on how faculty can become partners in campus prevention efforts.

Organizations

The Core Institute at the Southern Illinois University at Carbondale provides assistance for colleges and universities in conducting the Core Alcohol and Drug Survey and the Faculty and Staff Environmental Alcohol and Other Drug Survey.

Core Institute for Alcohol and Drug Prevention
Student Health Programs
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale
Carbondale, IL 62901
(618) 453-4366
www.siu.edu/~coreinst/

The International Coalition of Addiction Studies Educators (INCASE) is a professional society of educators dedicated to enhancing the quality of educational programming in alcohol, drug, and other addiction studies. Founded in 1990, INCASE is devoted to educational issues relevant to addiction studies, including counselor education, prevention and treatment, research, and social policy.

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The Network for Dissemination of Curriculum Infusion (NDCI) has been funded by the U.S. Department of Education to support the development of curriculum infusion programs on a national basis. It is staffed principally by teaching faculty who have experienced success in implementing curriculum infusion at Northeastern Illinois University and in disseminating the process at national and regional meetings. NDCI conducts workshops for administrative/faculty teams and provides consultation for the development of curriculum infusion programs in higher education.

The Network for Dissemination of Curriculum Infusion
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Our Mission

The mission of the Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention is to assist institutions of higher education in developing alcohol and other drug (AOD) prevention programs that will foster students' academic and social development and promote campus and community safety.

How We Can Help

The Center offers an integrated array of services to help people at colleges and universities adopt effective AOD prevention strategies:

- Training and professional development activities
- Resources, referrals, and consultations
- Publication and dissemination of prevention materials
- Support for the Network of Colleges and Universities
Committed to the Elimination of Drug and Alcohol Abuse
- Assessment, evaluation, and analysis activities

Read Our Newsletter

Keep up to date with *Catalyst*. Learn about important developments in AOD prevention in higher education. To receive free copies, ask to be put on our mailing list.

Get in Touch

Additional information can be obtained by contacting:

The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention

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Phone: 800-676-1730; Fax: 617-928-1537

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