

MARCH 2006

Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs

# Prevention File



■ Keeping Celebrations from Becoming Riots

■ Alcohol and College Sports—Enough?

■ Holding Party Hosts Accountable

**Booze Ban at Cal State University Athletic Events**

When California State University chancellor Charles B. Reed announced that all 23 CSU campuses are now prohibited from selling alcoholic beverages at any intercollegiate athletic events in university owned or operated facilities, he said that serving alcohol at athletic events is contrary to the system's alcohol policy and to promoting "a safe and healthy learning environment for all members of the university community."

Some CSU campuses have existing contracts with vendors allowing alcohol sales, but, once those expire, they will not be renewed. The policy also limits alcohol advertising of beer and wine at all campuses. CSU previously had limited sales of alcohol at events, for instance, restricting the number of drinks that could be served.

CSU, the nation's largest four-year system with more than 400,000 students, adopted a comprehensive policy to curb student high-risk alcohol use in 2001. Eight CSU campuses play Division I athletics in at least one sport: Fresno, Fullerton, Long Beach, Northridge, Sacramento State, San Diego State, San Jose State and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

**Alcohol Control Gains Support**

In Gainesville, home to the University of Florida, the city commission is supporting proposals to restrict the marketing of alcohol specials, such as "bladder buster," and keg registration as a way to curb high-risk drinking.

Gainesville Police Capt. Rick Hanna told *The Gainesville Sun* that keg registration would give police another tool to enforce drinking violations, particularly at large parties that draw college students.

Hanna said it is not uncommon for police to charge homeowners or renters with violations of open house party laws. Having keg buyers register might make them more responsible and enable police to charge them with serving to minors.

Both measures were supported by UF dean of students Gene Zdziarski. And efforts to lessen alcohol abuse have become more aggressive in part because it is a key goal of UF president Bernie Machen. UF officials have been working to develop a community plan to combat underage and high-risk drinking.

**The Ads Made Me do It!**

A new study has weighed in on whether alcohol advertising has an impact on drinking, especially among young people. And it turns out it does. Leslie B. Snyder, PhD, Department of Communication Sciences, University of Connecticut, Storrs, and her colleagues say: "The results of the present large-scale national longitudinal study provide evidence that the amount of advertising expenditures in 15- to 26-year-olds' media environment and the amount of advertising recalled related to greater youth drinking. Youth younger than the legal drinking age displayed a similar pattern of advertising effects as the entire age range, which is important because there is often a greater policy interest in protecting underage youth from harmful communications than in protecting youth older than 21 years" (*Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, January 2006)

The study found that greater alcohol advertising expenditures in a market were related to both greater levels of youth drinking and steeper increases in drinking over time.

"Youth who lived in markets with more alcohol advertising drank more, increased their drinking levels more over time, and continued to increase drinking levels into their late 20s. Youth who lived in markets with less alcohol advertising drank less and showed a pattern of increasing their drinking modestly until their early 20s, when their drinking levels started to decline. The results are consistent with findings from studies of advertising bans and extend them by linking alcohol advertising expenditures per capita directly with individual youth behavior," the researchers wrote.

**Bad News about Teen Girls**

It used to be that teenage girls lagged well behind boys when it came to drinking, using drugs and smoking. Now those roles are reverse, with girls having caught up to their male coun-

terparts in illegal drug use and alcohol consumption and recently surpassing boys in smoking and prescription drug abuse.

In the past two years, in fact, more young women than men started using marijuana, alcohol and cigarettes, according to government findings based on the 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, which interviewed members of 70,000 households. The results are doubly disturbing, researchers said, because they run counter to trends indicating an overall decline in teenage drug use and because young women appear to suffer more serious health consequences as a result.

Adolescent girls who smoke, drink or take drugs are at a higher risk of depression, addiction and stunted growth. And because substance abuse often goes hand in hand with risky sexual behavior, they are more likely to contract a sexually transmitted disease or become pregnant, warned John Waters, director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy.

According to the report in 2004 1.5 million girls started using alcohol, 173,000 more than the number of boys who started drinking. The same trend was found with smoking cigarettes and marijuana use: 729,000 girls, 164,000 more than boys, started smoking cigarettes, and 675,000 girls, 98,000 more than boys, started using marijuana.

**Do as I Say, Not as I Do**

Parents who can't quit smoking can still take decisive action to prevent their kids from smoking, according to a study of 776 children and their parents (*Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, January 2006).

Parents smoking habits can greatly increase the risk of their children smoking. Research shows that if one or both parents smoke, children may have at least twice the risk of becoming habitual smokers by the time they graduate from high school. But it turns out that kids whose parents smoke were half as likely to try cigarettes if their parents instituted a home-based anti-smoking program.

"The fact that parents who smoke can exert a protective anti-smoking effect on their children might seem counter-intuitive," said study author Christine Jackson, PhD, a senior research

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AP Photo

# KEEPING CELEBRATIONS

IN 2005, FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 1922, Iowa State University's student-run spring fete VEISHA, which is a magnet for 75,000 visitors to Ames for a parade, displays, and entertainment, did not take place. That's because ISU president Gregory Geoffroy suspended it in the aftermath of the night time disturbances that marred the April 2004 VEISHEA. Violence in the Campustown retail district, adjacent to the campus and student housing, led to 38 arrests and tens of thousands of dollars in public and private property damage.

After the 2004 disturbances, a Task Force on Assuring Successful VEISHEA and Other Student/Community Celebrations and a Commission on Improving Relations Among ISU Students conducted fact-finding inquiries

and hearings. These led to a number of recommendations, including the convening of Summit on Best Practices in Responding to Developing and Ongoing Civil Disturbances in College Communities, which took place in Ames, Iowa last November.

The Summit brought together 140 speakers and discussants, including researchers, students, city officials, law enforcement personnel, faculty, business owners, and campus administrators, to examine ways that campuses and communities can work together to prevent celebrations from turning into civil disturbances and riots.

## Waves of Disturbances

John McCarthy, PhD, professor of sociology, Pennsylvania State University, pointed out

to summit participants that campus disorders are nothing new. During the 1950s it was party raids as well as civil right protests, often “sit ins,” which continued into the 1960s. In 1974 a wave of streakings—nude students running across campus—took place. During the 1980s campuses experienced anti-apartheid shanty town protests. Anti-Gulf War protests took place in 1991.

of disorderly campus events using electronic newspaper archives.

While they acknowledge the limitations of news accounts as a data source, their findings nonetheless provide a useful profile of these events. The disturbances broke into two main types: convivial (recurring, sports, and impromptu) and protests, each with its own set of

# FROM BECOMING RIOTS

Convivial disorderly gatherings started occurring in 1985 and continue to the present time.

McCarthy identified the life cycle of waves of disturbances as including these elements: emergence of new collective forms; diffusion and innovations; tactical social control responses; and the inevitable decline of a wave. New waves, as they begin, attract tremendous attention from authorities.

Convivial disorderly events—the focus of the summit—also occur in waves. “There have been between one and over 25 incidents a year between 1985 and 2002,” said McCarthy. “We are not quite sure where we are in the duration of this type of wave.”

McCarthy and his colleague Clark McPhail, PhD, professor emeritus of sociology, University of Illinois, Urbana, headed up a study on the nature



characteristic behaviors. The convivial events broke down as follows:

- “recurring” accounted for 25 percent, such as Halloween in Dayton, an arts festival at Penn State, Iowa State’s VEISHEA
- “sports” also accounted for 25 percent, such as Michigan’s loss in NCCAA basketball finals in March 1992



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**Police use of force occurred in around 10 percent of recurring, sports, and impromptu events, but was slightly higher for protest events.**

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- “impromptu” events accounted for the remaining 50 percent, such as a Southwest Missouri State University unruly party in July 1991 and University Colorado house parties August 27, 2002

Protest events are concerned with a diversity of issues, such as confrontation over a shantytown at a UC Berkeley anti-apartheid protest in 1985, a University of Wisconsin animal welfare demonstration in 1999, and a 1992 Columbia University protest over financial aid.

The study found that participant behavior at disorderly campus events fell into observable patterns. For example, in press accounts of convivial events, alcohol was mentioned as a factor in over 60 percent of sports events, over 70 percent of impromptu events, and almost 90 percent of recurring events. Participant behavior mentioned included verbal threats to police, in less than 15 percent of all types of events, and throwing objects, described in 36 percent of sports events and in 43 percent of accounts of recurring and convivial events. Reports of physical attacks were less common, described in about 20 percent of impromptu events and protest events.

Police behavior at disorderly campus events also shared commonalities, with coerced crowd dispersal taking place in more than 50 percent of recurring, sports, and impromptu events, but in only 31 percent of protest events. Police use of force occurred in around 10 percent of recurring, sports, and impromptu events, but was slightly higher for protest events. Allegations of police brutality were more common at convivial events, with a high of 30 percent for impromptu events.

McCarthy and McPhail's research found almost no serious injury at any of the disorderly events. However, minor police injury did occur in 40 plus percent at sports events compared with 20 percent at protest events. Participant injuries, likewise, were neither serious nor extensive, although they were observed in over half of recurring events. The incidence of property damage is higher, at 66 percent of sports events, 56 percent of recurring events, less than 50 percent of impromptu events, and 11 percent of protest events. While property damage was common, McCarthy said, it was not high value, usually at less than \$25,000.

## SUMMIT ON BEST PRACTICES IN RESPONDING TO DEVELOPING AND ONGOING CIVIL DISTURBANCES IN COLLEGE COMMUNITIES.

### Causes of Disorderly Events?

McCarthy contrasted the likelihood of disturbances with the tremendous number of large gatherings. Very few become disorderly, and the ability to predict which will become so is extremely difficult. However, from a risk-management perspective, it is possible to identify underlying community-level conditions such as:

- size—the larger the campus, the greater the risk. Campuses with greater than 20,000 students, of which there are 250 in the United States, are twice as likely to have disturbances as in campuses with smaller student populations
- greater social density, such as residence halls or student neighborhoods, where a concentration of young people exists
- proximity of a central place for gathering, which increases the likelihood that such a place will be the site of disturbances

### Crowds, Riots, and Gatherings

“Planning for orderly or disorderly temporary gatherings requires an understanding of crowds—a topic of extended research over the

While the Summit on Best Practices in Responding to Developing and Ongoing Civil Disturbances in College Communities did not follow a formal process to reach consensus, the following points, not all conclusive, seemed to resonate with a majority of participants:

- Temporary gatherings are heterogeneous events composed of alternating and varied individual and collective actions. Misperceptions about the nature of these events abound. Planning for disorderly gatherings should take into account research about crowds and disturbances rather than relying on stereotypes.
- Gatherings take place within physical space, the characteristics of which can be risk-managed, such as removing flammable materials and precluding potentially hazardous objects such as bottles and cans.
- Prudent control measures are proactive and preventative rather than reactive and provocative. Communities should engage in careful analysis of prior problematic events and upcoming events that have a potential for disturbances to identify specific contributors and corresponding solutions to generate an event-specific plan aimed at problem avoidance. Research suggests the importance of intervening early in problem situations.
- Alcohol alone is not the causative factor for violence in celebratory gatherings. Alcohol, *per se*, is not an excuse for violent or risky behavior. Nevertheless, alcohol control is a key component of an overall risk reduction plan. Determining appropriate alcohol control measures should be informed by scientific evidence about effectiveness, the nature of local problems, and community values.
- Consistent year round enforcement, in and around both commercial and residential drinking settings, is essential in maintaining an environment supportive of law-abiding behaviors when disturbances do flair up.
- Although current students are not responsible for past disturbances, they must take responsibility for helping to make future events safe. Students must be involved in devising actions to reduce risk and in implementation of policy changes. Administrators should seek to increase the power of the non-rioting students who constitute the majority.
- While disturbances can not be totally prevented, the likelihood of their occurrence can be reduced through pre-planning and intelligence-gathering, staff training, working with the media, site surveillance and physical alteration, and advanced negotiation with event sponsors or party hosts.



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**Relying on research about crowd behavior and associated disturbances rather than stereotypes will help ensure better planning, preparation, and management of these types of events.**

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past century,” said McPhail. “Gatherings of people go by many names, often with distinct connotations, such as crowd, throng, crush, mob and horde. It is stereotyping, however, to imply that all members of ‘the crowd’ share the same characteristics and motives, are continuously uniform in behavior, are cognitively impaired, unusually suggestible, distinctively emotional, engage in violence, and are anonymous.”

McPhail defined riots as acts of violence against person or property or threats of such acts by those who are members of a gathering. There are multiple categories of “rioting”—communal (racial, religious, language), commodity (vandalism, looting, arson), protest (Weatherman Days of Rage, 1969), police (Democratic National Convention, Chicago, 1968), celebration (Bulls, Broncos, Red Sox), and beer. The common denominator is that there are two or more persons in a common location in space and time. He recommends “gathering” as a more neutral term with less negative baggage than “crowd,” “throng,” and “horde.”

The life course of the temporary gathering, McPhail said, entails a front-end assembling process and a concluding dispersing process. Gatherings can be periodic (VEISHEA, Halloween, St. Patrick’s Day), *ad hoc* (most protests), or impromptu (house parties).

## Assembling

How does assembling get started? According to McPhail it is based on the existence of social networks that bring people into contact, interaction, and assembling instructions—what, when, and where plus solicitations, availability of time to devote to the activity (no competing “demands”), and accessibility. Cell phones have greatly facilitated assembling, as those already present can invite friends to join the proceedings.

Why do people assemble? McPhail said that there is no single “motive” for every participant. Some attend to see what’s happening or don’t want to be left at home. Others might come to protest, celebrate, retaliate, placate, exploit, or observe. And, the dynamics of the event might expose participants to new motives.

## Dispersing

The final piece in the life course of gatherings is the dispersing process—the sequential movement of individuals and companions away from their common location. McPhail said that dispersing can be routine, emergency, or coerced. He noted that routine dispersing takes place frequently without adverse events from sports stadium and arenas, classrooms, theatres and concert halls, and worship services, with better designed spaces emptying faster than not so well conceived facilities.

# Slope Day at Cornell

IN THE 1990S, SLOPE DAY AT CORNELL UNIVERSITY IN ITHACA, NY, was a spring festival cherished by students and dreaded by university and city officials. Thousands of students would gather on the Libe Slope—a hillside in front of the Cornell library—for what was mainly a big drinking party. Not surprising, the police and hospital emergency rooms were kept busy.

Not in 2005. Participation in Slope Day was never higher—15,000 students. And the big attraction wasn't booze but the appearance of Snoop Dogg and other famous rap artists. Beer was sold, but with careful controls. A chain-link fence surrounded the area, with gates and ID checkers limiting entry to students and their guests. Yellow-shirted volunteers—students and university staff members—circulated to provide bottled water and to help anyone in trouble.

“The tone has fundamentally changed from an all-you-can-drink blowout to a well-regulated, low risk and still popular celebration,” says Tim Marchell, director of alcohol policy initiatives at Cornell. Eight out of ten students polled afterwards said they liked the made-over event.

The transformation of Slope Day actually began in 2001, when Cornell President Hunter R. Rawlings established a President's Council on Alcohol and Other Drugs and included in

its make-up a Slope Day Steering committee composed of staff, students and faculty. An attempt to limit “hard” alcohol at the 2002 event was not successful, and for 2003 the fence went up and an effort was made to develop music and entertainment rather than drinking as the main attraction. The percentage of underage students who reported consuming alcohol at the event dropped from 49 percent in 2002 (the year prior to the fenced concert) to 16 percent in 2003. In 2002, three out of four first-year students reported consuming alcohol either before or during the event. In 2003, that figure had dropped to one-half. In the last two years, only one student has been arrested at the site.

In 2004 the Student Assembly appropriated funds to assure that top-ranking bands could be hired for the festival, an indication of how student attitudes toward Slope Day are changing. Marchell says all the problems have not been solved, however. Many students drink large quantities of alcohol before coming to the Slope Day event, and much of this drinking occurs in off-campus apartments where the university cannot intervene. The university is exploring strategies that would reduce the

amount of drinking that goes on in residence halls and fraternity houses, says Marchell.

“We still have to treat students for alcohol poisoning, though the proportion and severity of the cases is gradually decreasing,” he says. “We're also encouraged that the percentage who report drinking at high levels—such as nine or more drinks—has begun to decrease. The percentage of underage students who drink before or at the event has decreased significantly, but underage drinking remains a problem.”

Marchell sees a change in the “culture” of Slope Day. “It was a difficult process that involved vision, political leadership and money. The resistance was substantial and many individuals had to be persuaded to support the change. It was costly to pay for the entertainment, but we viewed the concert as a public health strategy that would shift the focus of the event away from heavy drinking, and that's what has occurred.”

**The tone has fundamentally changed from an all-you-can-drink blowout to a well-regulated, low risk and still popular celebration.**



During coerced dispersal, violence is rare, despite media-spawned stereotypes. Research, with reference to video footage, demonstrates that only 10 to 15 percent of participants in thousands of disorderly events engage in violent behavior, and when violence happens, it is intermittent. There are many more onlookers than violent actors in riots.

McPhail described two kinds of violence—intended (hooligans, redneck rowdies) and unintended (reciprocal escalation of initially non-violent goals and actions, for example, police give a lawful order to disperse and civilians resist because they have “done no wrong and have a right to be here”). Unintended violence may arise from resistance to police force, leading to increased resistance, resulting in increased force, with greater violence often the unfortunate outcome.

McPhail and McCarthy summarized the findings from their two research reports as follows:

- temporary gatherings are composed of alternating and varied individual and collective actions where uniformity is an illusion. Relying on research about crowd behavior and associated disturbances rather than stereotypes will help ensure better planning, preparation, and management of these types of events
- violent actions against persons or property are the exception, not the rule
- prudent control measures are proactive and preventative rather reactive and provocative

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*The full report on the Summit as well as other resources for addressing violence in higher education are available at [www.edc.org/hec/violence/](http://www.edc.org/hec/violence/)*

# ALCOHOL AND COLLEGE



# SPORTS—ENOUGH?

**The University of Miami (Fla.) ended a sponsorship arrangement with Coors two years ago. The school is phasing out another with locally headquartered Bacardi.**

INCREASINGLY, COLLEGES ARE GETTING FED UP WITH ALCOHOL-FUELED UNRULINESS at sports events and are taking measures to discourage heavy drinking both inside and outside stadiums and arenas. Such measures range from restrictions on tailgating to outright bans on alcohol sales at games.

According to a *USA TODAY* (Nov.17, 2005) survey of the 119 schools in the National Collegiate Athletic Association's major football-playing Division I-A found that nearly half (54) allow the sale of alcohol—through public concessions, in private suites or both—at one or more playing venues. Eighty-five of those schools have designated tailgating areas, and barely one in ten tries to keep those zones alcohol-free.

Yale University raised the ire of its alumni last fall when it imposed restrictions on tailgating, a campus tradition that dates back to 1904 and the game-day arrival of legions of fans by train. Their walk from the station to the stadium left them hungry and thirsty, and somebody came up with the idea of toting picnic hampers of food and liquid refreshment (*The New York Times*, Nov.19, 2005).

Yale's new "Rules of the Game" banned

drinking games, limited Yale's residential colleges and their visiting counterparts to one "U-Haul type vehicle," otherwise undefined, to transport their beer to parking field parties, prohibited sitting or standing on vehicles, and required tailgate parties to shut down by the end of halftime, the rule that most irked alumni. Earlier in fall 2005, Columbia University banned alcohol from being carried into Baker Field through the pedestrian gate.

But the University of Southern California took an even stronger stance, cutting off alcohol sales starting with the fall 2005 season at home games in the Los Angeles Coliseum. The University of Miami (Fla.) ended a sponsorship arrangement with Coors two years ago, and university President Donna Shalala says the school is phasing out another with locally headquartered Bacardi.

The University of Florida, Ohio State University and the University of Kentucky no longer allow alcohol advertising on any TV and radio broadcasts they control.

The NCAA has long banned alcohol sales and on-site advertising at the 88 championships it runs in 23 different sports, and its executive committee recommended in August that individual schools follow its lead during the



**Community leaders are trying to deal with this issue as it relates to underage drinking and binge drinking and drinking responsibly.**

regular season. But the association gives beer, malt-beverage and wine advertisers access to postseason TV and radio broadcasts. The university presidents and chancellors who sit on the executive committee opted not to remove alcohol from that equation—most

notably during the signature Division I men's basketball tournament.

For most campuses and the NCAA, pressure to toughen alcohol policies arises from escalating campus-wide concerns about student drinking and efforts to moderate it. College student drinking-to-excess rates have remained about the same since the 1990s, according to Harvard's ongoing College Alcohol Study. It found that two in five college students admitted binge drinking, defined as consuming five or more drinks in one sitting for males, four or more for females, in 2001. That was nearly identical to rates reported in 1993, 1997 and 1999.

"Community leaders are trying to deal with this issue as it relates to underage drinking and binge drinking and drinking responsibly," University of Florida athletics director Jeremy

Foley told *USA Today*. "To make that a priority, an initiative, and then there's the athletic association—one of the more high-profile entities on the campus if not the highest-profile—advertising alcohol, that's an inconsistent message."

Meanwhile, Yale officials back pedaled on the rules concerning alumni tailgating for the 2005 football game against Harvard at the Yale Bowl. A few days after Steve Conn, Yale's assistant director of athletic and sports communications said "I don't blame them for wanting to tailgate after the game, but we can't discriminate between students and alumni. The rules are the rules," in the face of a continuing onslaught by angry alumni, he said that people were misinterpreting the rules, and that he expected alumni to be able to continue their tailgate parties after the game ended. □

# Gambling: The New Addiction Crisis in Higher Education

by William DeJong, Beth DeRicco,  
and Jerry Anderson

ON DECEMBER 9, 2005, LEHIGH UNIVERSITY SOPHOMORE

GREG HOGAN—son of a Baptist minister, fraternity member, cellist in the university orchestra, and sophomore class president—allegedly robbed the Wachovia Bank branch in Allentown, Pennsylvania, making off with \$2,871. According to the Associated Press, his lawyer stated that Hogan had run up about \$5,000 in debt playing online poker. What had begun as a way to “blow off steam” had grown into a compulsive habit.

College and university administrators have a new worry: student gambling, which seems to grow with each passing year.

## Growing Problem

A national survey conducted by the Harvard School of Public Health in 2001 found that 2.6 percent of students attending four-year colleges and universities gambled weekly or more frequently. Conducting annual telephone polls, the University of Pennsylvania’s Annenberg Public Policy Center has reported that 8.3 percent of post-secondary students across the United States gambled each week in 2002, while 15.5 percent did so in 2005, an 87 percent increase.

Men dominate the college gambling scene. According to the Annenberg report, 26 percent of male post-secondary students gambled each week in 2005, up from 11.9 percent in 2002. Comparable figures for female students were 5.2 percent in 2002 and 5.5 percent in 2005.

What accounts for the trend? Gambling has gone mainstream, and college students have easier access to gambling opportunities than ever before. State lottery commissions promote scratch tickets and lotteries. Casino gambling is now legal in 11 states and on tribal lands in 28 states, not just in Las Vegas. Sports betting networks operated by students can be found on many campuses.

The largest boost appears to have come from the growing popularity of poker, which has been pushed through a surfeit of televised tournaments on several cable channels. The





Annenberg report noted that 15.4 percent of male post-secondary students gambled on card games in 2005, compared to 2 percent in 2002.

Online gambling, fueled by easy access to credit cards, is a mouse click away, seven days a week, 24 hours a day. The Annenberg report for 2005 found that only 4 percent of male and .8 percent of female post-secondary students engaged in weekly online gambling, but the problem is expected to grow in coming years.

Any game of chance, which mixes risk with immediate results, can be addictive and lead to problems. A study conducted at four Connecticut State University campuses found that 18 percent of men and 4 percent of women could be classified as problem gamblers, meaning that they had experienced at least three negative life consequences due to gambling, ranging from feeling guilty to losing time from work or school.

Campus officials have reason for concern. The scientific literature has identified many individual-level problems that might be directly or indirectly related to gambling, including family dysfunction and domestic violence, alcohol and other drug problems, psychiatric conditions, suicide, financial problems, and criminal behavior.

### Who Gambles?

The 2001 Harvard study identified several student characteristics associated with frequent gambling. The two biggest predictors are male gender and being 21 years of age or older.

Frequent gamblers are less successful academically. They spend less time studying, but more time watching television and using the computer for non-academic purposes. Interestingly, they are also more likely to have parents who did not earn a college degree.

Frequent gamblers are more likely to engage in other high-risk behaviors, especially alcohol and other drug use. The Harvard study found that these individuals are more likely to engage in heavy, episodic drinking (five or more drinks in a row in the past two weeks for men, four or more drinks for women) and to have used illicit drugs in the past year.

According to the Harvard study, a key predictor of frequent gambling is having two or more legalized forms of gambling in the state where students attend college. Stated simply, easier access to gambling outlets is associated with more frequent gambling.

### Prevention Strategies

Recent efforts to combat college alcohol problems provide a useful guide for addressing student gambling. Education will be vital, as will case identification and treatment for problem gamblers, but these strategies should be coupled with efforts to change the environment in which students make decisions about gambling.

To begin, college officials should begin to collect more data on student gambling. A Harvard Medical School survey of Massachusetts high schools and colleges revealed that, although 82 percent conducted regular health surveys, only five percent had asked about gambling behaviors. Such data are required to do adequate needs assessment, but also to gauge progress over time.

Basic education can be provided through orientation programs and campus media campaigns. After reviewing media campaigns to reduce alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use, researchers at McGill University in Montreal recently offered the following recommendations for anti-gambling campaigns:

- emphasize the personal risks associated with gambling
- denormalize gambling by reporting prevalence data, showing that regular gambling is not a majority behavior
- call attention to actions by gambling industry to draw people into “games designed to make individuals repeatedly lose money”

Brief interventions with problem gamblers may hold promise for reducing high-risk gambling. A University of Washington pilot study tested a modified version of the BASICS

(Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students) program, which included a mix of alcohol- and gambling-related content. Individualized discussions focused on self-reported negative consequences of gambling, which was designed to elicit concerns about gambling and an expressed desire to change. Also covered were methods to minimize negative consequences, such as bring limited cash, leave ATM card at home, and do not drink while gambling.

Access to treatment is also critical. Student health centers should be able to refer students to counselors who specialize in treating gambling addiction. Students might also benefit from joining Gamblers Anonymous (GA). With sufficient demand, a campus chapter of GA could be formed.

## Policy Options

Campus administrators also need to address aspects of the campus and community environment that promote student gambling. Policy is a key tool, yet a recent national survey by the Harvard Medical School showed that only 22 percent of four-year institutions of higher education had a gambling policy.

One policy option is a total campus ban on gambling. Some institutions allow games of chance to be played, but without anything of value being exchanged. This option, which still permits “casino nights” or similar events, should be approached cautiously, however, as such events might inadvertently communicate that gambling is normative behavior.

If student organizations are to be permitted to have parties with a “casino night” theme, then the organizers should be required to meet with

campus officials to review legal and procedural restrictions, consistent with both state law and school rules, such as no one under 18 years allowed and no bets involving money or items of value. Leaders of these organizations should be held accountable for any violations.

Another policy option is to restrict access to Internet gambling sites through the campus computer network, using firewalls or other measures. Students might be able to access these sites through other means, but there is still no reason for a college or university to abet online gambling through its own facilities.

Looking beyond campus policy, efforts designed to enrich campus life and discourage high-risk drinking might also serve to suppress gambling. Options include campus-sponsored social and recreational events, greater community service opportunities, and expanded hours for student centers and gyms. Other efforts to improve campus culture—promoting faculty-student contact, increasing academic standards,

modifying the academic schedule to increase the number of early morning and Friday classes—might also be beneficial.

Campus officials should also consider their positions on state level policies. Should online betting be banned, or should it be regulated and taxed? In many states, the legal gambling age is 18. Should the minimum legal age be increased to 21? As the gambling problem grows, not just for college students, but high school students as well, campus leaders will find themselves drawn into this debate. □

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# RhodeMap to Safety: A University to Reduce Off-Campus

by William DeJong, Mark Wood, Dorie Lawson, and Fran Cohen

**ALARMED BY STUDENT DEATHS, RIOTS, AND OTHER ALCOHOL-RELATED PROBLEMS ON CAMPUS,** U.S. college and university administrators have worked during the past decade to create stricter alcohol policies and beef up enforcement. Many of these institutions have now moved into a second phase of prevention activity that focuses on off-campus problems.

The University of Rhode Island is a good example. For several years now, URI has

not permitted serving alcohol on campus, including Greek houses. There is a “three strikes” policy that includes fines for first and second violations but automatic suspension for a third alcohol violation. URI also added a parental notification program.

Off-campus problems have remained a formidable challenge. Several thousand URI students, mostly juniors and seniors, live in summer cottages in Narragansett, a resort community with several clubs, taverns, and bars. Student parties are a frequent nuisance and an ongoing source of friction between URI and Narragansett residents.

In response, URI helped establish the Narragansett-URI Coalition, which provides a forum for university administrators, town officials, neighborhood leaders, and students to develop joint approaches for reducing off-campus problems due to student misconduct.

The Coalition’s efforts received a major boost in 2003 when URI received two grants from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism for Common Ground, a five-year project to reduce underage alcohol consumption, excessive drinking, and alcohol-impaired driving among URI students.

## Building on Student Support

Common Ground’s starting point was RhodeMap to Safety, a media campaign launched in

**COMING THIS FALL**  
**To A University Near You**  
 (Actually, very near - It's URI)

**A New Program to Fight Drinking and Driving**

RhodeMap to Safety

**Designed to keep you safe with the power to transform a community!**

**A STUNNING SURVEY REVEALS URI STUDENTS WANT TOUGHER POLICIES TO FIGHT DRUNK DRIVING:**

**The majority of URI students support:**

- ✓ Increased enforcement of drinking and driving laws: 83.3% of URI students say YES
- ✓ Training bartenders to cut off intoxicated patrons: 82.7% of URI students say YES
- ✓ Increased use of designated driver programs: 88.5% of URI students say YES
- ✓ Requiring door personnel and bartenders to be at least 21 years of age: 61.3% of URI students say YES

Data from a random telephone survey of 511 URI undergraduates conducted by Common Ground, Fall 2004.

RhodeMap to Safety

**Narragansett-URI Coalition**

# of Rhode Island Campaign Alcohol Problems

September, 2005 to make URI students more aware of existing URI rules, state DUI laws, and greater enforcement efforts both on campus and in nearby towns.

To begin, the campaign highlighted the results of a random-sample telephone survey conducted in fall 2004, which showed that 83 percent of URI students support increased enforcement of drinking and driving laws.

Positioned as a response to student concerns, the campaign then drew attention to Rhode Island's .08 percent BAC per se law for drivers 21 and older and its "zero tolerance" law, which makes it illegal for drivers under age 21 to drive with a blood alcohol level of .02 percent or higher. The survey had revealed that many URI students are unaware of these laws.

The campaign also reminded students about URI's parental notification and "three strikes" policies.

Also in September, URI's Common Ground announced that it was providing \$34,000 to the Narragansett Police Department to support extra police patrols designed to combat DUI, plus additional funds to the URI Campus Police

Department to increase its enforcement efforts. Campaign materials notified students that URI and the Town of Narragansett were taking these steps to deter illegal underage drinking and alcohol-impaired driving, all toward the end of providing for student safety.

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**"The RhodeMap to Safety campaign is a response to student demand for tougher policies and enforcement to deal with alcohol-related problems among URI students."**

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Neil Cavanaugh, URI Student Senate president

RhodeMap to Safety has utilized a rich mix of campus-based media, including orientation packets, newspaper advertisements, letters to the editor, radio public service announcements, message boards, posters, flyers, email messages, table tents, a street banner, display tables, and stadium announcements.

Student reaction to the campaign has been positive. An editorial in *The Good Five-Cent Cigar*, the URI student newspaper, appeared under the headline,

"RhodeMap to Safety campaign is a step in the right direction." Only a handful of students sent complaints to the campaign's email address.

Within the campaign's first month, RhodeMap to Safety had become a positively regarded "brand" name under which URI could announce future prevention programs.

## Alcohol Retailers Sign on

Narragansett's bar and tavern owners had long ago established themselves as state leaders in responsible beverage service, but URI students were largely unaware that this was the case. Clearly, RBS programs, as a deterrence strategy, will work best when customers are aware of the policies and know they are taken seriously.

Thus, in October, 2005, Common Ground announced a second RhodeMap to Safety initiative: the Cooperating Tavern Program.

This program calls on bar and tavern owners to train and work with their employees to follow RBS practices, including ID checks, confiscation of fake IDs, and refusing sales to patrons who might become intoxicated.

A companion program for package store owners focuses on preventing illegal off-premise sales to customers under age 21, as well as adult purchases of alcohol for minors.

The media campaign featured paid advertisements in the Narragansett Times, the South County Independent, and the URI student newspaper to congratulate owners who signed the agreement. The advertisements also outlined the major components of RBS.

The participating retailers have posted a sign in their storefront to indicate that their establishment is a member in good standing. The sign



proclaims, "Responsible Alcohol Beverage Service Practiced Here." The posted signs remind the public, including URI students, that town and university officials are united in their resolve to prevent alcohol problems in the community.

Importantly, signers to the agreement have promised to work toward future improvements in responsible alcohol retailing. Present discussions are focused on setting up an alternative rides program.

### Campaign Impact

The fall 2005 telephone survey suggests that the RhodeMap to Safety campaign has succeeded in changing URI students' perceptions of the alcohol policy environment.

In 2004, just 15 percent of the students correctly stated that .02 percent BAC was the legal limit for drivers under age 21. A year later, this figure rose to 36 percent. Awareness of the state's .08 percent BAC

per se law increased more modestly, from 75 to 82 percent.

The percentage of URI students hearing two or more times about "formal efforts to increase

the enforcement of drinking and driving laws in Narragansett" jumped from 44 to 74 percent. Likewise, the percentage hearing two or more times about RBS efforts in Narragansett rose from 31 to 60 percent.

Most important are students' perceptions of the likelihood of getting caught when driving while intoxicated. In 2004, 43 percent of URI students said it was "not at all likely" or "not very likely," but this figure dropped to 36 percent in 2005.

Regarding alcohol service, 30 percent of the 2004 survey respondents said it was "not at all likely" or "not very likely"

that a student under 21 would be served alcohol at a local bar. By 2005, however, 38 percent said this was the case. Similarly, while 49 percent

of the 2004 respondents said it was "not at all likely" or "not very likely" that an underage student would be able to purchase alcohol at a local liquor store, by 2005 this figure rose to 59 percent.

Figures for students under age 21 were comparable. In 2004, 25 percent said it was "not at all likely" or "not very likely" that a student under 21 would be served alcohol at a local bar; by 2005, 33 percent said this was the case. In 2004, 44 percent said it was "not at all likely" or "not very likely" that an underage student would be able to purchase alcohol at a local liquor store; the 2005 figure was 57 percent.

Fully 70 percent of URI students said they had heard of the slogan "RhodeMap to Safety" since the beginning of the school year.

### Future Directions

The RhodeMap to Safety campaign will continue to grow as other URI prevention programs are added in the coming months. Plans are underway to add the nearby town of South Kingstown to the Cooperating Tavern Program. Also in the works is a student-initiated safe rides program, which is pending approval by the URI student senate.

Fraternity reform efforts are continuing, with a focus on promoting fellowship, scholarship, leadership, and community service.

URI's new jurisdiction policy took effect this January. URI students can now be held accountable by the University for their off-

**"I am confident that students will make safe and healthy decisions if they have all the facts in front of them, including the greater certainty of being caught and punished for alcohol-impaired driving."**

Robert L. Carothers, president,  
University of Rhode Island

# HOLDING PARTY HOSTS ACCOUNTABLE

campus behavior. With this policy now in place, URI and local officials will be able to work together even more effectively to address student alcohol problems.

## Important Lesson

The most important lesson to be drawn from the RhodeMap to Safety experience is the value of framing campus prevention efforts as a response to student concerns.

U.S. college and university administrators commonly believe that students are opposed to stricter alcohol policies and enforcement. In fact, surveys conducted at several campuses have shown that a clear majority of students can be counted on to support at least some measures to deal with alcohol-related violence or other negative consequences of drinking.

Learning that URI students wanted stricter enforcement of drinking and driving laws provided the key to designing the RhodeMap to Safety campaign. URI students pointed the way, and Common Ground was pleased to take their direction. □

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**IT'S A FAMILIAR PROBLEM:** alcohol flowing with little restraint at parties where many of the guests are too young to drink legally and often leave the party too drunk to drive. If young drinkers at parties seem deaf to warnings that they're risking their lives and the lives of others by their behavior, what do you do?

Shine the spotlight on the party hosts and make them accountable.

Local lawmakers are responding in increasing numbers to pleas from prevention groups and townspeople to place responsibility for what happens at teen parties on the people who host the party or allow it to be held on their property.

The community has a choice of weapons—social host liability laws, or ordinances aimed specifically at teen parties, or both.

Social host liability makes the host responsible and subject to criminal action or civil

suits if an underage drinker at a party causes harm to himself or another. The liability principle also can be carried a step further by billing hosts for the cost when police respond to complaints about raucous parties.

A teen party

ordinance can make it against the law simply to host a party where alcohol is available to underage drinkers. The underage drinker does not have to cause injury or property damage to make the host accountable for violation of laws against furnishing alcohol to minors.

These legal strategies are an evolution of historic "dram shop" laws that held sellers of alcoholic beverages to be liable for harm done by intoxicated customers. Legislatures and the courts have extended the principle to apply to those who furnish alcohol to others under social circumstances—at an office party or at a party in the home, including parties attended primarily by young people. Teen party ordinances, on the other hand, make a host liable for penalties simply for allowing guests under 21 to consume alcohol at the party whether or not there is bodily harm or property damage as a result.



## Parties in Private Homes

Behind the growing popularity of these strategies lie local and national surveys finding that when underage drinkers are involved in traffic crashes or crimes like sexual assault, more often than not they obtained alcohol in a private home, and most likely at a party. Local support for the new laws is based both on concern for the safety of young people and on the impatience of neighbors whose property and peace of mind is threatened by raucous drinking parties heavily attended by those of high school and college age.

Prevention organizations often seek to have teen-party laws adopted throughout a county or

metropolitan area so a crackdown in one community does not simply push such parties into another jurisdiction. Some efforts to bring the law to bear against negligent social hosts are a work in progress. In California's San Diego County, several communities adopted ordinances calling for criminal penalties—fines or jail terms—for hosts allowing alcohol to be served to underage guests. Enforcement was suspended after a judge ruled the ordinance unconstitutional, and advocates say they will seek enactment of new versions providing only for civil penalties.

State laws may provide that social hosts are open to lawsuits when drunken guests cause harm to others, but it may remain for local prevention advocates and law enforcement agencies to assure that party hosts are aware of these potential consequences. And local communities can add their own legal weapons in the form of ordinances aimed at controlling what happens at parties. The city council in Bowling Green, Ohio, adopted an ordinance in 2004 allowing police to shut down parties where there is underage drinking and the kind of dis-

### PUTTING THE LID ON LOUD PARTIES

After the alcohol poisoning death of a freshman at a fraternity event in September 2004, the University of Oklahoma implemented initiatives the following January to combat alcohol abuse, including making fraternities, sororities and residence halls dry. But when parties moved off-campus to neighborhoods, a new set of problems developed for the city of Norman.

To crack down on loud parties in the city's residential neighborhoods, the Norman City Council approved a Nuisance House Ordinance. Now, if a location receives three nuisance party citations, it can be declared a nuisance house and water can be cut off, rendering the residence legally uninhabitable. To receive a nuisance party citation, a party must violate three different sections of city ordinances. That could include several dozen potential violations ranging from disturbing the peace to littering to parking across sidewalks or in yards.

The Norman Transcript reported that Norman Police spokesperson J.D. Younger told the city's Nuisance House Committee that 35 citations for loud or nuisance parties have been issued at about two dozen locations from June 1 to December 12, 2005. Seventy-eight locations received loud party calls. All parties were dispersed by police officers. "It looks like we are narrowing the gap," Younger told the committee. "It appears there have been fewer citations as months went on." In addition, OU has implemented a zero-tolerance alcohol policy with a "three strike" suspension. Students can get a "strike" if they are cited on an alcohol-related offense on or off campus.

The first strike results in parental notification and alcohol education. A second strike will have parental notification and further sanctions. The third strike results in automatic suspension from OU for at least one semester. Norman City Councilwoman Cindy Rosenthal said she believes the Nuisance House Ordinance has affected parties in Norman.

"It seems to be working fairly well. We don't have any repeat violations," Rosenthal told the OU Daily. "The end result in my opinion is to encourage and reinforce strong neighborhood norms."



AP Photo

## NEW CONSEQUENCES FOR A BEER BELLY

Now “minor in possession” laws are no longer limited to the beer the hand of the underage drinker. In New Hampshire, minors can be arrested for what is colloquially called “internal possession” of alcohol. That means that an underage person with drinks in his or her system often faces the same charge as one with a drink in hand, according to *The Washington Post*, Feb. 5, 2006).

Similar statutes are now on the books in a few other states. But they have drawn criticism from some who say the laws are pushing the definition of a real possession charge. “When the law makes the offense simply a biological fact, of simply having a certain chemical in one’s body, that steps over a line in the law that has been traditionally accepted,” said Richard J. Bonnie, a law professor at the University of Virginia who has studied underage drinking.

While every state has some kind of ban on possession of alcohol by those younger than 21, and most also have laws against alcohol consumption by youths, New Hampshire, police say it’s not that simple.

Routinely teenagers at a party drop their drinks and run when officers arrive, leaving police with few of the particulars—who drank what, and when—necessary to build a legal case. “You couldn’t charge them with anything,” Eddie Edwards, the state’s chief of liquor law enforcement told the *Post*. “There’s no deterrent.”

In 2002, New Hampshire expanded its underage-possession statute to apply to those “intoxicated by consumption of an alcoholic beverage.” The offense is on the same level as a traffic violation, but carries a \$300 fine and the possible loss of a driver’s license. Under the new law, police didn’t have to establish when and how a minor had become intoxicated. They needed only to determine that the minor was intoxicated, with the alcohol inside them.

“It’s just like looking for someone who’s a drunk driver,” Sgt. Kevin Kincaid of the Manchester police told the *Post*. The clues might be a stumbling walk, glassy eyes, an odor of alcohol or a blood alcohol concentration of .02.

According to the judge who oversees New Hampshire’s district courts, about half of the state’s 6,000 cases of underage-possession in a typical year involve intoxication, not possession in the traditional sense.

But some New Hampshire legislators are trying to make the law stricter. If their bill passes, police would no longer have to determine whether a young person has drunk enough to be intoxicated—any alcohol consumption at all would be enough for a charge.

turbances that parties often generate when there is heavy drinking. The ordinance has survived court challenges brought on behalf of students at Bowling Green State University who argued that they were being denied rights of due process and freedom of assembly.

North Carolina’s law covering social host liability includes three requirements that must be met if a host is to be held liable for property damage or personal injury caused by a drinking guest. The conditions are that the host provided alcohol to the person, that he knew or should have known that the person was intoxicated, and that he knew the person would be driving afterwards.

The city of Lexington, KY, took another route, adopting an ordinance aimed at property owners or tenants who repeatedly host noisy parties. The hosts are subjected to a graduated scale of fines for first, second and third complaints about their parties, and can wind up with a designation as a “no party property” that forbids having parties altogether.

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**CampusHealthandSafety.org** is an online resource for higher education administrators, students, parents, and other professionals who are seeking information about creating healthier and safer living and learning environments for college and university students, both on campus and in the surrounding community. This Web site emphasizes a comprehensive public health-based approach to addressing alcohol and other drug use and violence and in promoting mental health wellness among students. Go to [www.campushealthandsafety.org](http://www.campushealthandsafety.org).

## Neighborhood Nuisances

In many communities police can break up a raucous party only if the neighbors complain. That was the case in Syracuse, NY, until the City Council in 2005 adopted a new ordinance giving police the right to intervene on their own if they see evidence of underage drinking or public nuisances at a party scene. So far the policy has survived complaints by some students at Southeastern University that the policy is an invasion of their rights of privacy. At the University of Delaware in Newark, local law enforcement has teamed up with university police to carry out a “zero-tolerance” policy against loud parties. The policy was adopted in the light of a steep increase in the number of local arrests for underage drinking, assault, and disorderly conduct associated with local parties.

Not all the party counter-measures are punitive. The University of Nebraska circulates a flyer urging students who want to organize a party where alcohol will be available to follow a set of guidelines that can keep them out of trouble. Besides a warning not to serve alcohol

to minors, the guidelines include: “Keep the party to a smaller size with less than 30 people . . . Let your friends know that it is not okay for them to take advantage of someone sexually at your party . . . Cut people off who appear to be headed to acute intoxication . . . Cooperate with the police if they show up. Have a calm, sober person speak with them. If they ask you to break up the party, do it.”

In Connecticut, the Governor’s Prevention Partnership publishes a guide for parents explaining how alcohol laws in that state apply to them and their teen-agers where parties are concerned. The guide suggests ways to organize an alcohol-free party and keep it from turning into a drinking party. To make its point, the guide recounts a landmark legal case involving parents who allowed a keg party for graduating high school seniors to be held in their home. After an intoxicated 18-year-old left the party and caused a fatal traffic crash, the parents were the target of a

successful wrongful-death lawsuit holding them liable.

Law suits attempting to hold fraternities and sororities responsible for harm done by those attending alcohol-fueled social events have led those organizations to invoke new policies regarding alcohol use by their chapters. Also, alcohol policies have gained greater priority for universities and colleges faced with liability issues arising from on-campus or off-campus drinking. □

**State laws may provide that social hosts are open to lawsuits when drunken guests cause harm to others.**

*Editor’s note: The Training, Applied Research, and Alcohol and Drug Prevention Division of the Ventura County Behavioral Health Department collaborated with the Center for the Study of Law Enforcement and Policy of the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation to develop the publication Model Social Host Liability Ordinance. The model ordinance and commentary were designed to address communities of diverse settings and needs. To read the full report, please visit [www.venturacountylimits.org](http://www.venturacountylimits.org)*

## NATIONAL MEETING 2006

The U.S. Department of Education will convene its **20th Annual National Meeting on Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention in Higher Education and the National Forum for Senior Administrators** on October 19 – 22, 2006, at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City hotel in Arlington, Virginia.

For more information please visit [www.higheredcenter.org/natl/2006/](http://www.higheredcenter.org/natl/2006/)

Continued from inside front cover

scientist at Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation's Chapel Hill Center. "Other research has already found that strong parental attitudes and actions against smoking reduce the odds of children using tobacco. Our study found that the same is true even when the parents themselves are smokers."

**Want to Smoke? Go Outside**

In response to a growing desire for smoke-free work environments, public

places, and even the great outdoors, six states enacted indoor smoking bans in 2005, more than in any previous year, as public sentiment appears increasingly anti-tobacco.

According to Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights, 39 percent of Americans are covered by statewide or local laws limiting smoking. In 1985, there were fewer than 200 such state and local laws in the United States. Now, there are more than 2,000. Of those, 118 state or local governments ban all smoking in restaurants, bars and other workplaces.

The toughest law in 2005 was passed in Washington state, which banned smoking inside all public facilities and workplaces and outside within 25 feet of doors, windows and vents. Vermont extended its ban in restaurants to bars and other workplaces. Rhode Island enacted a comprehensive ban on smoking in all three places, too. Montana did the same but gave bars until 2009 to comply.

North Dakota banned smoking in workplaces. Georgia banned it in all places without special ventilation or where people under 18 are served or work.

Cities and counties not covered by state bans are taking action on their own. At least 159 cities, including Chicago, Minneapolis, Birmingham, Louisville and Indianapolis, passed some kind of smoking restriction. Of those, 23 covered all workplaces. In the nation's capital this month, the District of Columbia Council voted 12 to 1 for a comprehensive smoke-free law,

but final action is unlikely until next year. But at least one workplace in town will be spared: Congress, the beneficiary of a kind of diplomatic immunity for federal lawmakers. According to *The New York Times* (Feb. 12, 2006), smoking is still allowed in numerous indoor spaces in the Capitol, most noticeably in the gilded reception area where lawmakers crowd together during the long yeas and nays.

**Taking the Pledge**

College presidents from across Connecticut gathered on January 20 at the University of Hartford Friday to sign a pledge to reduce high-risk alcohol use on their campuses. It's the third time in about 15 years that Connecticut universities have joined together to invigorate their prevention efforts.

About 35 college and university presidents

have signed the pledge, which includes a commitment to the creation of a statewide data collection system on student alcohol use and related problems and the designation of a contact person for each person. This effort is part of the Governor's Prevention Partnership and is supported by a federal grant administered by the state Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. Last spring, the group came up with an action plan to reduce alcohol and other drug-related problems.

For more information on Connecticut's statewide initiative go to [www.preventionworksct.org](http://www.preventionworksct.org).



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## Ten Years Ago in *Prevention File* (Vol. 11, No. 1, Winter 1996)

# SMOKING CRISIS IS WORLDWIDE

### INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS HEARS APPEALS FOR GLOBAL PREVENTION STRATEGIES

A more concerted international effort is necessary to deal with a pandemic of tobacco-related disease that is dooming millions of people to premature death. This was the message emerging from the 37th International Congress on Alcohol and Drug Dependence.

"It has been predicted that if current smoking trends continue, 2.5 million children alive today will be killed by tobacco," said Neil E. Collishaw, a Canadian who serves with the substance abuse program of the World Health Association.

Smoking rates have declined in recent years in the United States, Canada, and many countries of Western Europe. Tobacco companies in response are putting new marketing efforts into countries considered fertile for recruitment of new smokers. Smoking rates in those countries are on the rise, especially among women.

"Most people know that tobacco is hazardous, but few people, even among the ranks of health professionals, appreciate how hazardous it really is," Collishaw declared.

Collishaw and others at the San Diego Congress described a frustrating experience in prevention efforts. Declining tobacco consumption in developed countries has been offset by increasing consumption in developing countries. Advances in tobacco control in some countries has been negated by tobacco growth in other countries. The result is that, globally, there has been no net progress. World consumption has hardly changed since the early 1980s.

Collishaw urged delegates from the 57 countries attending the Congress to join the World Health Organization (WHO) in efforts to strengthen

national and international tobacco control programs. Here are the ingredients of an effective tobacco control strategy as outlined by the WHO:

- Protect children from becoming addicted to tobacco
- Use of tobacco taxation to discourage use of tobacco
- Health promotion, health education, and smoking cessation
- Health workers and institutions set a good example
- Protection from involuntary exposure to tobacco smoke
- Elimination of socioeconomic, behavioral and other incentives that maintain and promote the use of tobacco
- Elimination of direct and indirect tobacco advertising, promotion and, sponsorship
- Prominent health warnings on tobacco products

- Promotion of economic alternatives to tobacco
- Effective management, monitoring, and evaluation of tobacco and health issues

The WHO has already scored some success. The World Bank is no longer providing loans for tobacco growing and processing projects. The International Civil Aviation Organization has adopted a resolution calling for a ban on all international flights by July 1, 1996. The WHO has provided on-site assistance to more than 20 governments to help them develop national tobacco-control programs. This includes not only developing countries but also countries of Eastern Europe that are seeing a surge in tobacco marketing since the collapse of communism.

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*Editor's Note: On MARCH 27, 2005, the world's first public health treaty, the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), became international law. The treaty represents the first coordinated global effort to reduce tobacco use, which is the world's leading preventable cause of death. It requires countries that have ratified it to implement scientifically proven measures to reduce tobacco use and its terrible toll in health, lives and money. Tobacco is truly a global problem. Some five million people die from tobacco-caused diseases each year. If current trends continue, this figure will rise to 10 million per year by the year 2030, with 70 percent of those deaths occurring in developing countries. Just as infectious diseases know no political boundaries, leaving individual countries incapable of effectively containing them, the tobacco epidemic also requires international cooperation if it is to be controlled.*

