

## **College Students' Parental Involvement: A Proactive Model for Alcohol Abuse Prevention**

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### **Abstract**

*This model is proposed to involve parents of college and university students regarding alcohol abuse prevention. The model is designed to encourage a dialogue between parents and their sons and daughters regarding alcohol abuse on campus. It is well known that college and university students misperceive that their peers consume more alcoholic beverages than they actually do consume. Parents' involvement is necessary to help clarify these misperceptions.*

**Keywords:** Public Administration, Leadership, Alcohol Abuse Prevention, Colleges, Universities, Higher Education, Prevention Model, Students, Parents

### **1. Introduction**

It is well known that college, university, and high school students' have misperceptions regarding their peers' consumption of alcohol. College, university, and high school students inaccurately perceive that their peers drink more alcohol than they do themselves. Students may drink more to try and fit in. They already fit in, but they do not realize it. Clarifying these misperceptions might result in fewer alcohol related problems in our schools. This paper offers a unique alcohol abuse prevention model designed to address these social norms. The model is unique because unlike other models designed to address students' misperceptions associated with the consumption of alcohol this model involves the students' parents.

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#### **2. Model Procedures**

**2.1** Parents receive a letter from the alcohol abuse prevention team at their son's or daughter's school inviting them to be proactive in their son's or daughter's education by helping them clarify misperceptions that their sons and daughters may have regarding their peers' consumption of alcohol. The letter is personalized and includes the parents' names and the name of their son or daughter. Parents receive the letter in October after their son or daughter has attended school for two months. This is important because the perceptions must relate to the students' college peers and not their high school peers.

**2.2** Parents are invited to participate by completing the survey below regarding their perceptions concerning what they think the typical male student's and the typical female student's consumption of beer, wine and or liquor is on average at their son's or daughter's school. They do not fill out the Self Section. Anonymity is assured. Parents are informed that their son or daughter will participate in an alcohol abuse prevention activity on campus by completing the same survey administered by the same alcohol abuse prevention team about the same time. Anonymity is also assured for students.

**2.3** Parents receive the results of the survey regarding all parents' perceptions associated with the students' consumption of beer, wine, and or liquor at their son's or daughter's school. Parents also receive the results of the survey for all students who participated regarding their consumption (i.e., the actual norm on campus) and their perceptions associated with other students' consumption of beer, wine, and or liquor.

**2.4** Parents will be asked to engage in the following activities: (a) share with their son or daughter information regarding all parents' perceptions associated with students' consumption of beer,

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wine, and or liquor , (b) ask their son or daughter if he or she completed the survey presented on campus, and (c) directly engage their son or daughter in a conversation regarding alcohol abuse regardless of their accurate or inaccurate perceptions or their son's or daughter's accurate or inaccurate perceptions.

**3. Instrument**

Students' Consumption of Alcohol: A Survey of Parents', their Sons' and their daughters' Perceptions Associated with the consumption of Alcohol at INS\*

This study is being conducted to determine students' and parents' perceptions regarding INS Students' consumption of alcoholic beverages. Your participation is greatly appreciated. Please DO NOT write your name on the questionnaire to insure anonymity.

The following questions relate to your perceptions of the typical male student's and the typical female student's consumption of alcohol. If you are unsure, please offer your best judgment. Please circle only one number corresponding to your answer under the appropriate heading.

TMS = Typical Male Student    TFS = Typical Female Student

1. Students at INS, on average, usually drink beer:
- |   | <u>Self</u> | <u>TMS</u> | <u>TFS</u> |
|---|-------------|------------|------------|
| 1. once a year or less                              | 1 2 3 4 5   | 1 2 3 4 5  | 1 2 3 4 5  |
| 2. more than once a year but less than once a month |             |            |            |
| 3. at least once a month but less than once a week  |             |            |            |
| 4. at least once a week but not every day           |             |            |            |
| 5. every day  |             |            |            |

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2. Students at INS, on average, at any one time usually drink:
- |  | <u>Self</u> | <u>TMS</u> | <u>TFS</u> |
|--|-------------|------------|------------|
| 1. less than 1 can of beer or tavern glass                 | 1 2 3 4 5   | 1 2 3 4 5  | 1 2 3 4 5  |
| 2. 1 or 2 cans of beer or tavern glasses                   |             |            |            |
| 3. 3 or 4 cans of beer or tavern glasses                   |             |            |            |
| 4. 5 or 6 cans of beer or tavern glasses                   |             |            |            |
| 5. more than 1 six pack (6 or more cans or tavern glasses) |             |            |            |

3. Students at INS, on average, usually drink wine:
- |   | <u>Self</u> | <u>TMS</u> | <u>TFS</u> |
|---|-------------|------------|------------|
| 1. once a year or less                              | 1 2 3 4 5   | 1 2 3 4 5  | 1 2 3 4 5  |
| 2. more than once a year but less than once a month |             |            |            |
| 3. at least once a month but less than once a week  |             |            |            |
| 4. at least once a week but not every day           |             |            |            |
| 5. every day  |             |            |            |

4. Students at INS, on average, at any one time usually drink :
- |                              | <u>Self</u> | <u>TMS</u> | <u>TFS</u> |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| 1. less than 1 glass of wine | 1 2 3 4 5   | 1 2 3 4 5  | 1 2 3 4 5  |
| 2. 1 or 2 wine glasses       |             |            |            |
| 3. 3 or 4 wine glasses       |             |            |            |
| 4. 5 or 6 wine glasses       |             |            |            |
| 5. over 6 wine glasses       |             |            |            |

5. Students at INS, on average, usually drink liquor or spirits (whisky, gin, vodka, mixed drinks, etc.):
- |                        | <u>Self</u> | <u>TMS</u> | <u>TFS</u> |
|------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| 1. once a year or less | 1 2 3 4 5   | 1 2 3 4 5  | 1 2 3 4 5  |

- 2. more than once a year but less than once a month
- 3. at least once a month but less than once a week
- 4. at least once a week but not every day
- 5. every day

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6. Students at INS, on average, at any one time usually drink:

<u>Self</u>	<u>TMS</u>	<u>TFS</u>
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

- 1. less than 1 drink with liquor or spirits
- 2. 1 or 2 drinks with liquor or spirits
- 3. 3 or 4 drinks with liquor or spirits
- 4. 5 or 6 drinks with liquor or spirits
- 5. over 6 drinks with liquor or spirits

INS\* Insert school's name.

4.0 These statements regarding the quantity and frequency of alcohol use were developed by Dr. Ruth Engs at Indiana University during the 1973-1974 academic year. I have written permission from Dr. Engs to use these statements. The statements were modified to include (a) the University's name to make them campus specific, and (b) students' and parents' perceptions regarding the typical male student's and the typical female student's consumption of alcohol.