

Library Watch on colleges

www.projectcork.org

Winter 2009

How important are parents during the college years? A longitudinal perspective of indirect influences parents yield on their college teens' alcohol use.

Abar C; Turrisi R. *Addictive Behaviors* 33(10): 1360-1368, 2008. (37 refs.)

Building on previous findings supporting the continuing influence of parents on their teens after they have gone to college this study examined the possible indirect influence that parents may have on their teen's alcohol use through the selection of alcohol using peers in college. Friend use served as a mediator of the relationship between parenting characteristics and alcohol use in a longitudinal college sample. As part of a larger study, 392 incoming college freshmen were assessed for their perceptions of their parent's parenting practices, and peer alcohol use. Results from SEM indicated that friend alcohol use (first semester freshman year) mediated the relationship between parental knowledge about what their teen was doing in his/her free time and individual use in college (2nd semester freshman year). Findings suggest that even at this late stage of early adulthood parents continue to exhibit influence on the choices their teens make as far as friends, which in turn influences their teens' drinking in college. Implications for prevention are discussed. Copyright 2008, Elsevier Science.

Perceived harmfulness predicts nonmedical use of prescription drugs among college students: Interactions with sensation-seeking.

Arria AM; Caldeira KM; Vincent KB; O'Grady KE; Wish ED. *Prevention Science* 9(3): 191-201, 2008. (53 refs.)

This study describes the level of perceived harmfulness of nonmedical prescription stimulant and analgesic use in a sample of college students, and examines the prospective relationship between perceived harmfulness and subsequent nonmedical use. In addition, we explore whether the association between perceived harmfulness and nonmedical use varies by level of sensation-seeking. Personal interviews, including questions on sensation-seeking and drug use, were conducted with 1,253 first-year college students. Participants were then followed-up

twice at 6-month intervals. Perceived harmfulness of nonmedical use of prescription drugs was assessed at 6 months via a web-based survey. At the 12-month follow-up interview, drug use was again assessed. Students who never had the opportunity to use prescription drugs nonmedically were excluded from all analyses. Results revealed that one in four students perceived a great risk of harm from occasional nonmedical use of prescription stimulants (25.2%) and analgesics (27.8%). As expected, low perceived harmfulness and high sensation-seeking were independently associated with increased risk of nonmedical use, holding constant demographic characteristics. The protective effect of high perceived harmfulness could be seen at all levels of sensation-seeking with one important exception: Among high sensation-seekers, perceived harmfulness was not related to nonmedical use of prescription analgesics. Perceived harmfulness appears to distinguish nonmedical users from non-users, given the opportunity to use. Increasing perceived harmfulness may be a viable prevention strategy for most students, but alternative approaches might need to be developed that are tailored to high sensation-seekers. Copyright 2008, Springer.

Profiles of college students mandated to alcohol intervention.

Barnett NP; Borsari B; Hustad JTP; Tevyaw TO; Colby SM; Kahler CW et al. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* 69(5): 684-694, 2008. (52 refs.)

Objective: Most colleges have sanctions or required interventions for students who receive alcohol violations or medical evaluation for intoxication. The aim of this study was to establish profiles of mandated students from a combined data set using exploratory and replication cluster analysis. Method: Data sets from three samples of mandated students (total participant n = 393) were combined for exploratory analyses, and a fourth sample (n = 289) was analyzed for replication. Clustering variables were past-month heavy drinking, past-year alcohol problems, incident alcohol use, responsibility for the incident, and aversiveness of the incident. Results: A three-cluster solution was produced in the exploratory analysis and

confirmed in replication and cross-replication analyses. Clusters formed included a "Why Me?" cluster characterized by a pattern of relatively low heavy drinking and alcohol-related problems, very little incident drinking, and low responsibility and aversiveness. A "So What?" cluster was characterized by high heavy drinking and alcohol-related problems, moderate incident drinking and responsibility, and low aversiveness. A "Bad Incident" cluster was characterized by low scores for heavy drinking and problems and high levels of incident drinking, responsibility, and aversiveness. External variables supported the validity of the cluster solution. Conclusions: Mandated students form clinically meaningful profiles on easily measured constructs. Copyright 2008, Alcohol Research Documentation.

College students' norm perception predicts reported use of protective behavioral strategies for alcohol consumption.

Benton SL; Downey RG; Glider PJ; Benton SA. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* 69(6): 859-865, 2008. (42 refs.)

Objective: This study examined whether college students' descriptive norm perceptions of protective behavioral drinking strategies explain variance in use of such strategies, controlling for covariates of students' gender, typical number of drinks, and negative drinking consequences. Method: Derivation ($n = 7,960$; 55.2% women) and replication ($n = 8,534$; 54.5% women) samples of undergraduate students completed the Campus Alcohol Survey in classroom settings. Students estimated how frequently other students used each of nine protective behavioral strategies (PBS) and how frequently they themselves used each strategy. Results: All items assessing norm perception of PBS (NPPBS) had pattern matrix coefficients exceeding .50 on a single factor, and all contributed to the overall scale reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .81$). Hierarchical regression analyses indicated NPPBS explained significant variance in PBS, controlling for covariates, and explained an additional 7% of variance ($p < .001$). A Gender x Scale (PBS, NPPBS) repeated-measures analysis of variance revealed students believed peers used PBS less frequently than they themselves did ($\eta^2(p) = .091$, $p < .001$). Such social distancing was greater in women ($\omega^2(\text{effect}) = .151$, $p < .001$) than in men ($\omega^2(\text{effect}) = .001$, $p < .001$). Conclusions: Consistent with the principle of false uniqueness, whereby individuals regard their own positive characteristics as rare, college students—especially women—underestimate how frequently other students use PBS. Such norm misperception may enhance

students' feelings of competence and self-esteem. The positive relationship between NPPBS and PBS indicates students with high NPPBS are more likely to use the strategies themselves. Copyright 2008, Alcohol Research Documentation.

Alcohol abuse as a rite of passage: The effect of beliefs about alcohol and the college experience on undergraduates' drinking behaviors.

Crawford LA; Novak KB. *Journal of Drug Education* 36(3): 193-212, 2006. (43 refs.)

Qualitative studies of alcohol's ritual influences indicate that college undergraduates who drink heavily tend to view alcohol use as integral to the student role and feel entitled to drink irresponsibly. Our analyses, based on a standardized measure of these beliefs administered to approximately 300 students, confirmed these findings. Among our sample, beliefs about alcohol and the college experience had an effect on levels of alcohol consumption similar in magnitude to that of other variables commonly associated with a risk for heavy drinking. Moreover, the alcohol beliefs index moderated the effects of three risk factors -- gender, high school drinking, and friends' use of alcohol -- on respondents' drinking behaviors. These findings are discussed within the context of the anthropological literature on liminality and rites of passage and with regard to strategies for intervention that address the structural roots of the widespread abuse of alcohol on college campuses. Copyright 2006, Baywood Publishing.

Are all negative consequences truly negative? Assessing variations among college students' perceptions of alcohol related consequences.

Mallett KA; Bachrach RL; Turrisi R. *Addictive Behaviors* 33(10): 1375-1381, 2008. (32 refs.)

Brief feedback sessions have been shown to reduce alcohol consumption in college student samples. However, these feedback sessions show mixed results in reducing negative consequences of alcohol consumption. Because the discussion of alcohol consequences is a component of feedback sessions, it was seen as important to evaluate the degree to which college students perceive these consequences as negative. The present study assessed college students' perceptions of positivity-negativity of alcohol related consequences they experienced during the past year. The findings revealed college students' perceptions of positivity-negativity varied depending on the consequence that was assessed. Most consequences were considered negative by greater than 50% of the sample. There were six consequences that were not considered negative by the majority of the sample and

of these, all were considered positive or neutral by greater than at least 50% of the sample. Finally, perceived positivity of the consequences were associated with higher weekly drinking patterns for vomiting, blackouts, regretted sex, late to work/class, skipping an evening meal, and being hungover. Results are discussed in reference to improving brief alcohol interventions for college students. Copyright 2008, Elsevier Science.

Is heavy drinking really associated with attrition from college? The alcohol-attrition paradox.

Martinez JA Sher KJ Wood PK. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors* 22(3): 450-456, 2008. (46 refs.) Student attrition at colleges across the United States poses a significant problem for students and families, higher educational institutions, and the nation's workforce competing in the global economy. Heavy drinking is a highly plausible contributor to the problem. However, there is little evidence that it is a reliable predictor of attrition. Notably, few studies take into account indicators of collegiate engagement that are associated with both heavy drinking and persistence in college. Event-history analysis was used to estimate the effect of heavy drinking on attrition among 3,290 undergraduates at a large midwestern university during a 4-year period, and student attendance at a number of college events was included as covariates. Results showed that heavy drinking did not predict attrition bivariate or after controlling for precollege predictors of academic success. However, after controlling for event attendance (an important indicator of collegiate engagement), heavy drinking was found to predict attrition. These findings underscore the importance of the college context in showing that heavy drinking does in fact predict attrition and in considering, future intervention efforts to decrease attrition and also heavy drinking. Copyright 2008, Educational Publishing Foundation.

Argileh use among college students in the United States: An emerging trend.

Grekin ER; Ayna D. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* 69(3): 472-475, 2008. (21 refs.) Objective: This study examined the prevalence and predictors of argileh (hookah pipe) use among a sample of nonselected college students. Method: Participants were 602 students (24% male; 43% white; mean age = 22.06) at a large, ethnically diverse, urban university. All participants completed an online survey designed to assess various types of substance use. Results: More than 15% of the sample reported having used argileh at least once in their lifetime, exceeding the percentage of students who had tried stimulants,

barbiturates, cocaine, Ecstasy, heroin, or psychedelics. Arab ethnicity and cigarette smoking were the strongest predictors of argileh use; however, a substantial percentage of non-Arabs and nonsmokers also had tried argileh. Conclusions: Findings suggest that, in comparison with other substances, the prevalence of argileh use is high among college students in the United States. Physical health implications of these findings are discussed. Copyright 2008, Alcohol Research Documentation.

The implementation of buprenorphine/naloxone in college health practice.

DeMaria PA; Patkar AA. *Journal of American College Health* 56(4): 391-393, 2008. (19 refs.) Opiate abuse and dependence have become important concerns for college healthcare providers. The passage of the Drug Addiction Treatment Act of 2000 and the approval of the combination buprenorphine/naloxone for office-based treatment of opiate dependence have increased the options available for college students and their health care providers. The authors review the pharmacology of buprenorphine/naloxone and discuss how it can be implemented in college health practice. They also present a case report. Copyright 2008, Heldref Publications.

Normative misperceptions of drinking among college students: A look at the specific contexts of prepartying and drinking games.

Pedersen ER; Labrie JW. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* 69(3): 406-411, 2008. (32 refs.) Objective: In the collegiate context, misperceptions of student drinking norms are among the most salient predictors of heavy drinking. Despite overall overestimations of peer alcohol use, misperceptions of context-specific behaviors have been infrequently studied. The present study examines students' perceptions of the high-risk behaviors of prepartying and drinking games and investigates the relationship between perceived and actual behaviors. Method: A sample of 524 college students completed an online assessment of actual and perceived alcohol use related to prepartying and drinking games. Quantity and frequency of overall drinking, prepartying, and drinking games were assessed for perceptions of all students at the university, as well as for male and female students separately. Questions also assessed participants' overall drinking, prepartying, and drinking game behaviors. Results: Participants significantly overestimated the prepartying and drinking game behaviors of all students, male students, and female students at their university. For men, perceptions of same-sex prepartying quantity and

drinking game frequency and quantity were associated with actual behavior. For women, perceptions of both same-sex and othersex prepartying quantity were associated with actual behavior. Conclusions: These findings provide preliminary support for the association between context-specific perceived norms and actual prepartying and drinking game behaviors. Addressing these same-sex and opposite-sex norms during interventions may help students reduce their own engagement in these risky behaviors. Copyright 2008, Alcohol Research Documentation.

Willingness among college students to help a smoker quit.

Thomas JL; Gerber TA; Brockman TA; Patten CA; Schroeder DR; Offord KP. *Journal of American College Health* 56(3): 273-279, 2008. (53 refs.)

Objective: Between February and March 2003, the authors examined college students' willingness to help a student quit and assessed demographic and psychosocial characteristics associated with willingness to help. Participants: Survey respondents were 701 college students (474 women, 227 men) aged 18 to 24 years who indicated there was someone close to them whom they thought should quit smoking. Methods: Respondents completed measures of willingness to help. The authors used multivariate logistic regression analysis to examine respondent characteristics associated with willingness to help. Results: About half (54%; n = 381) reported that they "definitely would" be interested in helping this smoker quit. Characteristics associated with willingness to help were lower levels of perceived stress, being a non-tobacco user, concern for a boyfriend, girlfriend, or spouse who smoked, and more severe levels of distress caused by this person's smoking. Conclusions: A high percentage of college students are willing to help a smoker. Copyright 2008, Heldref .

Risk for excessive alcohol use and drinking-related problems in college student athletes.

Yusko DA; Buckman JF; White HR; Pandina RJ. *Addictive Behaviors* 33(12): 1546-1556, 2008. (65 refs.)

College student athletes engage in frequent episodes of heavy drinking and are prone to negative consequences resulting from such use. This study sought to identify risk and protective factors associated with student-athlete drinking and determine if student-

athlete risk factors differed from those of non-athletes. Athletes compared to non-athletes reported more exaggerated perceptions of peer heavy drinking and lower sensation seeking and coping and enhancement motives for drinking, suggesting a risk profile distinct from non-athletes. In the overall sample, higher sensation seeking, overestimation of peer heavy drinking, non-use of protective behaviors while drinking, and higher enhancement and coping drinking motives were associated with greater frequency of heavy episodic drinking and more negative drinking consequences. In athletes compared to non-athletes, sensation seeking was more strongly associated with heavy episodic drinking and drinking to cope was more strongly associated with negative alcohol-related consequences. Overall, the results suggest that already proven brief intervention strategies, with minor adaptations related to the roles of sensation seeking and drinking to cope, may be helpful for student athletes. Copyright 2008, Elsevier Science.

Alcohol, tobacco, illicit drugs, and performance enhancers: A comparison of use by college student athletes and nonathletes.

Yusko DA; Buckman JF; White HR; Pandina RJ. *Journal of American College Health* 56(3): 281-289, 2008. (31 refs.)

Objective: The authors compared the prevalence and pattern of substance use in undergraduate student athletes and nonathletes from 2005-2006. Participants: Authors collected data from male (n = 418) and female (n = 475) student athletes and nonathletes from 2005-2006. Methods: The authors administered self-report questionnaires to assess prevalence, quantity, and frequency of alcohol and drug use, and to determine patterns of student athletes' alcohol and drug use during their athletic season versus out of season. Results: Male student athletes were at high risk for heavy drinking and performance-enhancing drug use. Considerable in-season versus out-of-season substance use fluctuations were identified in male and female student athletes. Conclusions: Additional, and possibly alternative, factors are involved in a student athlete's decision-making process regarding drug and alcohol use, which suggests that the development of prevention programs that are specifically designed to meet the unique needs of the college student athlete may be beneficial. Copyright 2008, Heldref Publications.