

Library Watch

on colleges

www.projectcork.org

Winter 2010

Computer-delivered interventions to reduce college student drinking: A meta-analysis. (review).

Carey KB; Scott-Sheldon LAJ; Elliott JC; Bolles JR; Carey MP. *Addiction* 104(11): 1807-1819, 2009. (74 refs.)

Aims: This meta-analysis evaluates the efficacy of computer-delivered interventions (CDIs) to reduce alcohol use among college students. **Methods:** We included 35 manuscripts with 43 separate interventions, and calculated both between-group and within-group effect sizes for alcohol consumption and alcohol-related problems. Effects sizes were calculated for short-term (< 5 weeks) and long-term (\geq 6 weeks) intervals. All studies were coded for study descriptors, participant characteristics and intervention components. **Results:** The effects of CDIs depended on the nature of the comparison condition: CDIs reduced quantity and frequency measures relative to assessment-only controls, but rarely differed from comparison conditions that included alcohol-relevant content. Small-to-medium within-group effect sizes can be expected for CDIs at short- and long-term follow-ups; these changes are less than or equivalent to the within-group effect sizes observed for more intensive interventions. **Conclusions:** CDIs reduce the quantity and frequency of drinking among college students. CDIs are generally equivalent to alternative alcohol-related comparison interventions. Copyright 2009, Society for the Study of Addiction.

The dark side of optimism: Unrealistic optimism about problems with alcohol predicts subsequent negative event experiences.

Dillard AJ; Midboe AM; Klein WMP. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 35(11): 1540-1550, 2009. (64 refs.)

College students were identified who were unrealistically optimistic about the likelihood they would experience severe problems due to alcohol consumption. These individuals were then followed over a 2- year period to determine whether they were more likely to report experiencing a range of alcohol-related negative events. Unlike the majority of studies on unrealistic optimism, this study (a) assessed bias at the individual rather than group level and (b) used a prospective rather than cross-sectional design.

Participants completed measures at four times, each separated by 4-6 months. Findings showed that unrealistic optimism at Time 1 was associated with a greater number of negative events at Times 2, 3, and 4. Similarly, unrealistic optimism at Time 2 was associated with more negative events at Times 3 and 4. In all cases, the relationships were significant when controlling for previous negative events, suggesting the effects of unrealistic optimism can mount over time. Copyright 2009, Sage Publications.

Superior self-regulatory skills in African-American college students: Evidence from alcohol and tobacco use.

Ernst FA; Hogan B; Vallas MA; Cook M; Fuller D. *Journal of Black Studies* 40(2): 337-346, 2009. (36 refs.)

Excessive drinking is more common among Whites (W) than African Americans (AA) on college campuses, but the reasons for this are not clear. The authors investigated demographic and personality factors in a group of 369 W and 202 AA college students, finding that alcohol consumption was significantly less prevalent among AA students (69%) than W students (78%) ($p = .02$) and that binge drinking was significantly less frequent in AA drinkers (42% past month, 60% past year) than W drinkers (56%, 79%) ($p < .00001$). Cigarette smoking was also dramatically less frequent in AA students (5%) than W students (28%) ($p < .00001$). AA students also scored significantly higher on Overcontrolled Hostility ($M = 18.2$, $SEM = 0.40$) than did W students ($M = 15.7$, $SEM = 0.19$) ($p < .00001$). The authors conclude that AA college students are a more self-selected group of high achievers who reveal evidence of superior self-regulatory skills. Copyright 2009, Sage Publications.

Is substance use a team sport? Attraction to team, perceived norms, and alcohol and marijuana use among male and female intercollegiate athletes.

Grossbard J; Hummer J; LaBrie J; Pederson E; Neighbors C. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology* 21(3): 247-261, 2009. (50 refs.)

This research examined the role of attraction to one's team in predicting alcohol and marijuana use among intercollegiate athletes. Attraction to team and alcohol-

related information were collected via an online survey and marijuana use-related information was gathered in a live setting. We investigated the influence of attraction to one's team above and beyond the influence of gender and perceived norms, and attraction to team as a moderator of these relationships. Attraction to one's team accounted for significant variance in marijuana use, and alcohol-related consequences after controlling for alcohol consumption. Regression analyses revealed significant interactions between gender, attraction to team, and norms in predicting alcohol and marijuana use. Stronger attraction to one's team may increase alcohol use but decrease marijuana use among male athletes, suggesting the importance of attraction to team when developing interventions for athletes. Copyright 2009, Taylor & Francis.

Positive social alcohol outcome expectancies, social anxiety, and hazardous drinking in college students.

Ham LS. *Cognitive Therapy and Research* 33(6): 615-623, 2009. (52 refs.)

Although social anxiety and problematic alcohol use co-occur at alarmingly high rates, the mechanism for this co-occurrence is not well understood. The current study examined the mediating role of positive social alcohol expectancies (i.e., beliefs related to the desirable social effects of drinking) in the relationship between social anxiety and hazardous drinking (i.e., heavy drinking and negative consequences) among an ethnically and racially diverse (87% racial and/or ethnic minority) sample of undergraduate volunteers ($n = 610$; $Mage = 19.1$; 69% women). The results of structural equation modeling analyses (using AMOS 7.0) indicated that social (but not tension reduction, sexual enhancement, positive cognitive changes, or negative affective changes) alcohol outcome expectancies partially mediated the association between social anxiety and hazardous drinking; however, social anxiety had a negative direct effect on hazardous drinking. Findings implicate social alcohol outcome expectancies as a mechanism to target in treatment and prevention among socially anxious students. Copyright 2009, Springer Publishing.

Illicit use of prescription stimulants among college students: Prescription status, motives, theory of planned behaviour, knowledge and self-diagnostic tendencies.

Judson R; Langdon SW. *Psychology, Health and Medicine* 14(1): 97-104, 2009. (22 refs.)

Published studies have reported that illicit prescription stimulant use is increasingly common on college campuses in the United States. The present study

investigates the relationship between prescription status, motives, theory of planned behaviour, knowledge of side effects and self-diagnostic tendencies and illicit use of prescription stimulants among undergraduates ($N = 333$). Prescription holders and non-holders responded to a self-administered online survey. Results revealed that dependent variables were significantly different between illicit users and non-illicit users. Specifically, prescription holders were more likely than non-holders to report illicit use. Illicit users, relative to non-illicit users, reported more motives to use, less concern with ethics and safety of use, greater perception of use as socially acceptable, less perceived control over their behaviour without stimulant aid, more knowledge, and, among non-prescription holders, were more likely to self-diagnose having an attention disorder. This study provides additional insight into students' attitudes, beliefs, knowledge and practices related to prescription stimulant use on campus. Implications for future research and the need for interventions to provide aid to students who are at risk for using stimulant medications illicitly are discussed. Copyright 2009, Taylor & Francis.

Persistence of heavy drinking and ensuing consequences at heavy drinking colleges.

Nelson TF; Xuan ZM; Lee H; Weitzman ER; Wechsler H. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* 70(5): 726-734, 2009. (39 refs.)

Objective: The purpose of this study was to examine drinking levels, related harms, and secondhand effects of alcohol use at heavy drinking colleges between 1993 and 2005 at colleges with high levels of drinking in 1993. Method: Students attending 18 colleges with high levels of heavy episodic drinking (50% of students or more) from the 1993 Harvard School of Public Health College Alcohol Study were surveyed in 2005 ($n = 4,518$). Data collected through mailed and Web-based questionnaires were compared with responses from students at the same schools in 1993, 1997, 1999, and 2001 ($N = 13,254$) using time trend analyses. Results : Overall, levels of alcohol consumption, experience of problems, and levels of secondhand effects remained high among students attending heavy drinking colleges. More than four of five students at these schools drank alcohol (range: 85%-88%), and more than half engaged in heavy episodic drinking (range: 53%-58%). The stability of drinking behavior occurred among subgroups of students as well, The few statistically significant changes occurred mainly between 1993 and 1997. A decline in driving after any drinking between 1997 and 2005 was observed, but no similar decline was found

in two other measures of drinking and driving. Conclusions: Heavy drinking and associated problems continue unabated, with few exceptions, at colleges that are most in need of intervention: those with high levels of heavy episodic drinking. Addressing student alcohol use at heavy drinking colleges may require stronger, more consistent, and more comprehensive approaches, with increased emphasis on the alcohol environment. Copyright 2009, Alcohol Research Documentation.

Unsafe at any house? Attendees' perceptions of microlevel environmental traits and personal safety at fraternity and nonfraternity parties.

Menning CL. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 24(10): 1714-1734, 2009. (41 refs.)

Although there has been considerable empirical attention to the problem of dangers posed by certain college party environments, little attention has been given to attendees' perceptions of possible danger cues in party environments, how such perceptions may be linked to concern for personal safety, or variations in perceptions of personal safety at party environments according to gender or party type (i.e., fraternity vs. nonfraternity). This study uses analyses of survey data to explore these issues. The findings suggest that (a) fraternity parties exhibit traits that may indicate greater danger; (b) some of these traits are linked to attendees' perceptions of personal safety; (c) men and women draw on different cues in making assessments of personal safety, but women feel no more threatened than men; and (d) the amount of alcohol consumed by other party attendees is not associated with perceptions of personal safety. Implications for theory and campus policy are discussed. Copyright 2009, Sage Publications.

Alcohol price and intoxication in college bars.

O'Mara RJ; Thombs DL; Wagenaar AC; Rossheim ME; Merves ML; Hou W et al. *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research* 33(11): 1973-1980, 2009. (24 refs.)

Background: Many population studies find that alcohol prices are inversely related to alcohol consumption and alcohol-related problems, including among college students and young adults. Yet, little is known about the "micro-level" effects of alcohol price on the behavior of individual consumers in natural drinking settings such as college bars. Therefore, we assessed patron's cost per gram of ethanol consumed at on-premise drinking establishments and its association with intoxication upon leaving an establishment. Methods: On 4 consecutive nights during April 2008, data were collected from 804 patrons exiting 7 on-premise establishments in a bar district located

adjacent to a large university campus in the southeastern United States. Anonymous interview and survey data were collected as well as breath alcohol concentration (BrAC) readings. We calculated each patron's expenditures per unit of ethanol consumed based on self-reported information regarding the type, size, number, and cost of consumed drinks. Results: A multivariable model revealed that a 10-cent increase in cost per gram of ethanol at on-premise establishments was associated with a 30% reduction in the risk of exiting an establishment intoxicated (i.e., BrAC \geq 0.08 g/210 l). Conclusions: The results are consistent with economic theory and population-level research regarding the price elasticity of alcoholic beverages, which show that increases in alcohol prices are accompanied by less alcohol consumption. These findings suggest that stricter regulation of the drink discounting practices of on-premise drinking establishments would be an effective strategy for reducing the intoxication levels of exiting patrons. Copyright 2009, Research Society on Alcoholism.

Selection and socialization of risky drinking during the college transition: The importance of microenvironments associated with specific living units.

Park A; Sher KJ; Krull JL. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors* 23(3): 404-414, 2009. (43 refs.)

Risky drinking among college students differs as a function of living types, with living at Greek houses as a major risk factor. Both self-selection based on prior drinking and socialization through living environments have been shown to account for this association. However, it is not clear whether selection and socialization processes occur as a function of specific living units within living types. Multilevel models using a prospective sample of incoming college students (N = 2,392) demonstrated that (1) precollege drinking based selection into specific living units occurred within both fraternity houses and residence halls (beyond selection into the Greek system in general) and (2) socialization of extremely risky drinking among certain fraternity houses was greater than other houses (beyond greater socialization of living at fraternity houses than residence halls in general). Living unit-level precollege correlates (i.e., college attendance motives and cigarette use) and college correlates (i.e., peer drinking norms and alcohol availability) accounted for most of the selection and socialization effects. These findings highlight the importance of micro-environments associated with specific living units in risky drinking during the college transition. Copyright 2009, Educational Publishing Group.

Alcohol use among university students in Sweden measured by an electronic screening instrument.

Andersson A; Wirehn AB; Olvander C; Ekman DS; Bendtsen P. *BMC Public Health* 9(article 229), 2009. (23 refs.)

Background: Electronic-based alcohol screening and brief interventions for university students with problem drinking behaviours forms an important means by which to identify risky drinkers. Methods: In this study an e-SBI project was implemented to assess drinking patterns, and to provide personalised feedback about alcohol consumption and related health problems, to students in a Swedish university. In this study, third semester university students (n = 2858) from all faculties (colleges) at the University were invited to participate in e-SBI screenings. This study employed a randomised controlled trial, with respondents having a equal chance of being assigned to a limited, or full-feedback response. Results: The study shows that high risk drinkers tend to underestimate their own consumption compared to others, and that these high risk drinkers experience more negative consequences after alcohol intake, than other respondents. There was a strong belief, for both high-and low-risk drinkers, that alcohol helped celebrations be more festive. This study also confirms findings from other study locations that while males drank more than females in our study population; females reached the same peak alcohol blood concentrations as males. Conclusion: Obtaining clear and current information on drinking patterns demonstrated by university students can help public health officials, university administration, and local health care providers develop appropriate prevention and treatment strategies. Copyright 2009, BioMed Central.

Does drinking lead to sex? Daily alcohol-sex behaviors and expectancies among college students.

Patrick ME; Maggs JL. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors* 23(3): 472-481, 2009. (61 refs.)

A within-person multilevel approach was used to model the links between alcohol use and sexual behavior among first-year college students, using up to 14 days of data for each person with occasions (Level 1, N = 2879 days) nested within people (Level 2, N = 218 people; 51.4% male). Between-persons (Level 2) effects were gender, relationship status, person means of alcohol use, and alcohol-sex expectancies for sexual affect and sexual drive. Within-person (Level 1) effects were weekend days, number of drinks

consumed, and the interaction between drinks consumed and alcohol-sex expectancies. Independent of average alcohol use, consuming more drinks on a given day was associated with a greater likelihood of oral sex and with experiencing more positive consequences of sex that day. Significant Alcohol Use X Alcohol-Sex Expectancies interactions were found for oral sex and total sex behaviors, indicating that individuals with more positive expectancies were more likely to have sex after drinking. The negative association between drinks and condom use was at a trend level of significance. Results support the potential for promoting sexual health by focusing on cross-behavior expectancies among late adolescents. Copyright 2009, Educational Publishing Group.

Alcohol management strategies of college students with diabetes.

Ravert RD. *Patient Education and Counseling* 77(1): 97-102, 2009. (38 refs.)

Objective: Alcohol management strategies of college undergraduates with diabetes were Studied in order to identify which strategies were associated with decreased alcohol consumption and consequences. Methods: Data came from 450 undergraduates with diabetes who were among 90,000 students from 123 postsecondary institutions who completed the Spring, 2006 National College Health Assessment. Results: A majority of respondents (68.0%) reported alcohol use in the previous month, with 41.8% consuming five or more drinks in one sitting during the previous 2 weeks. High alcohol management strategy use in the past year was associated with fewer heavy drinking episodes and fewer alcohol-related consequences. Two strategies, avoiding drinking games and pacing one's drinking, were especially strong predictors of reduced consumption and consequences, and were More common among older students. Conclusion: Developing effective strategies to manage alcohol intake is especially important for students with diabetes due to short- and long-term hazards of excessive drinking. Practical implications: Alcohol use is a common aspect of college culture and may hold perceived social benefits for students. Healthcare clinicians should help students with diabetes to identify alcohol management strategies that are perceived as effective and feasible. Avoiding drinking games and pacing drinks appear to be strategies especially worthy of promotion. Copyright 2009, Elsevier Science.