April 5, 2014
2014 Meeting of the Minds Conference

Best Practices and Current Issues for Successful Social Norms Interventions Among College Students

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Potential Topics for Discussion

I. What We Currently Know – The Social Norms Model and Evidence

II. Good Data and Good Messages: Do's and Don't's

III. Targeting Subpopulations?

IV. Evaluation Issues

What We Currently Know

- Traditional approaches to reduce problem drinking (health education, health terrorism, and social control) have limited or no effect.
- Grossly exaggerated perceptions of the drinking norms pervade all campuses and subcultures.

Long Tradition of Theory and Research on Peer Influence and Conformity to Peer Norms

But what about
Perceptions of Peer Norms?

What students think are the most common attitudes and behaviors of peers regarding alcohol are often inaccurate.

- **Most students <u>overestimate</u>:**
  1) the permissiveness of peers
  2) how often peers drink
  3) how much peers drink
  4) how frequently peers incur consequences

- **Most students <u>underestimate</u>:**
  1) peer use of protective drinking strategies
  2) peer support for campus alcohol policies

Students' Misperceptions of the Norm for the Number of Drinks Consumed the Last Time Other Students "Partied"/Socialized at Their School

(NCHA Nationwide Data from 72,719 Students Attending 130 Schools, 2000-03)

Source: HW Perkins, M Haines, and R Rice, Journal of Studies on Alcohol, 2005.

Accuracy of Perceived Drinking Norm				
Under-estimate by 3+ Drinks	**Under-estimate by 1-2 Drinks**	**Accurate Estimate**	**Over-estimate by 1-2 Drinks**	**Over-estimate by 3+ Drinks**
3%	**12%**	**14%**	**32%**	**39%**

71% Overestimate Peer Drinking!

What We Currently Know

- Perception of the peer norm is the strongest predictor of personal drinking level compared to all personal, demographic & environmental factors that have been researched.
- Bystanders become more prevalent due to misperceptions of the norm.

Consequences of Misperceptions

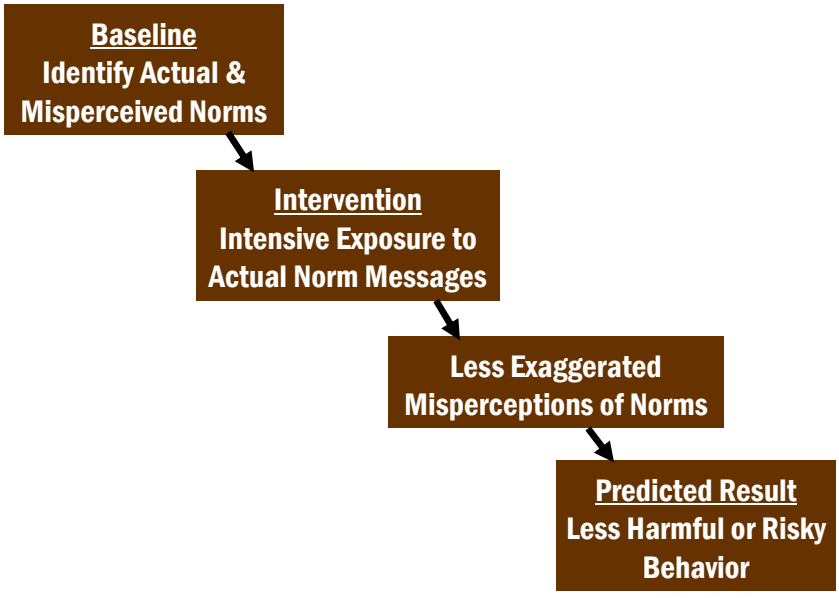
- **Definition of the situation produces a "Reign of Error"**
- **Problem Drinking Increases**
- **Layers of Misperceptions Compound**
- **Opposition is Discouraged from Speaking**
- **Intervention by Others Declines**
- **"Carriers" of Misperception Contribute to the Problem**

***Source*: H. W. Perkins, "Designing Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Programs…," 1997**

Normative Education

Letting more people know that most of their peers drink in moderation helps even more peers make responsible decisions about drinking.

The Social Norms Model



Examples of Strategies to Reduce Misperceptions and Strengthen Positive Norms

- **Print media and PSA campaigns**
- **Peer education programs and workshops for targeted risk groups**
- **New student orientation presentations**
- **Counseling interventions**
- **Curriculum infusion**
- **Electronic multimedia**
- **Online Personalized Normative Feedback**

Getting Good Data

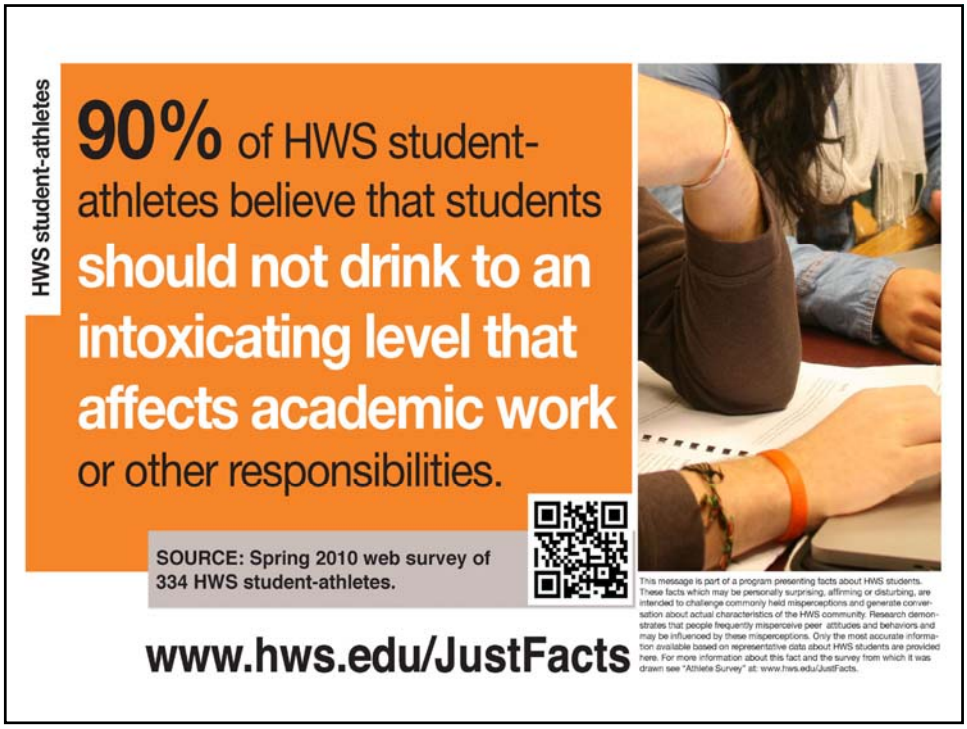
- Sample Size and Frequency
- Representative Sample
- Measures of Injunctive (Attitudinal) Norms
- Measures of Frequency of Use
- Measures of Quantity
- Measures of Negative Consequences

Creating Good Messages

- Majority behavior that is positive
- Include images that identify local population
- Avoid identifying individuals
- Do not display the problem behavior
- Provide the source and make it large enough to make it part of the message
- Avoid overuse of logos and branding

The majority of HWS students (54%) typically consume four or fewer drinks or no drinks with alcohol when partying.
SOURCE: Spring 2011 Survey of all HWS students with 836 respondents, conducted by BIDS 295
www.hws.edu/JustFacts
This message is part of a program presenting facts about HWS students. These facts which may be personally surprising, affirming or disturbing, are intended to challenge commonly held misperceptions and generate conversation about actual characteristics of the HWS community. Research demonstrates that people frequently misperceive peer attitudes and behaviors and may be influenced by these misperceptions. Only the most accurate information available based on representative data about HWS students is provided here. For more information about this fact and the survey from which it was drawn see "BIDS Survey" at: www.hws.edu/JustFacts.

When asked about their last 30 days...
98% of HWS students have NOT used smokeless tobacco
87% of HWS students have NOT used cigarettes
74% of HWS students have NOT used marijuana
www.hws.edu/JustFacts
This message is part of a program presenting facts about HWS students. These facts which may be personally surprising, affirming or disturbing, are intended to challenge commonly held misperceptions and generate conversation about actual characteristics of the HWS community. Research demonstrates that people frequently misperceive peer attitudes and behaviors and may be influenced by these misperceptions. Only the most accurate information available based on representative data about HWS students is provided here. For more information about this fact and the survey from which it was drawn see "BIDS Survey" at: www.hws.edu/JustFacts.
SOURCE:
Fall 2010 National College Health Assessment Survey conducted anonymously online with 389 HWS respondents.


HWS student-athletes
90% of HWS student-athletes believe that students should not drink to an intoxicating level that affects academic work or other responsibilities.
SOURCE: Spring 2010 web survey of 334 HWS student-athletes.
www.hws.edu/JustFacts
This message is part of a program presenting facts about HWS students. These facts which may be personally surprising, affirming or disturbing, are intended to challenge commonly held misperceptions and generate conversation about actual characteristics of the HWS community. Research demonstrates that people frequently misperceive peer attitudes and behaviors and may be influenced by these misperceptions. Only the most accurate information available based on representative data about HWS students are provided here. For more information about this fact and the survey from which it was drawn see "Athlete Survey" at: www.hws.edu/JustFacts.

What is your protective strategy?
STRATEGY
86% of HWS students usually or always EAT BEFORE OR DURING A PARTY where they may be consuming alcohol or they do not drink at all.
SOURCE
Fall 2010 National College Health Assessment Survey conducted anonymously online with 389 HWS respondents.
www.hws.edu/JustFacts
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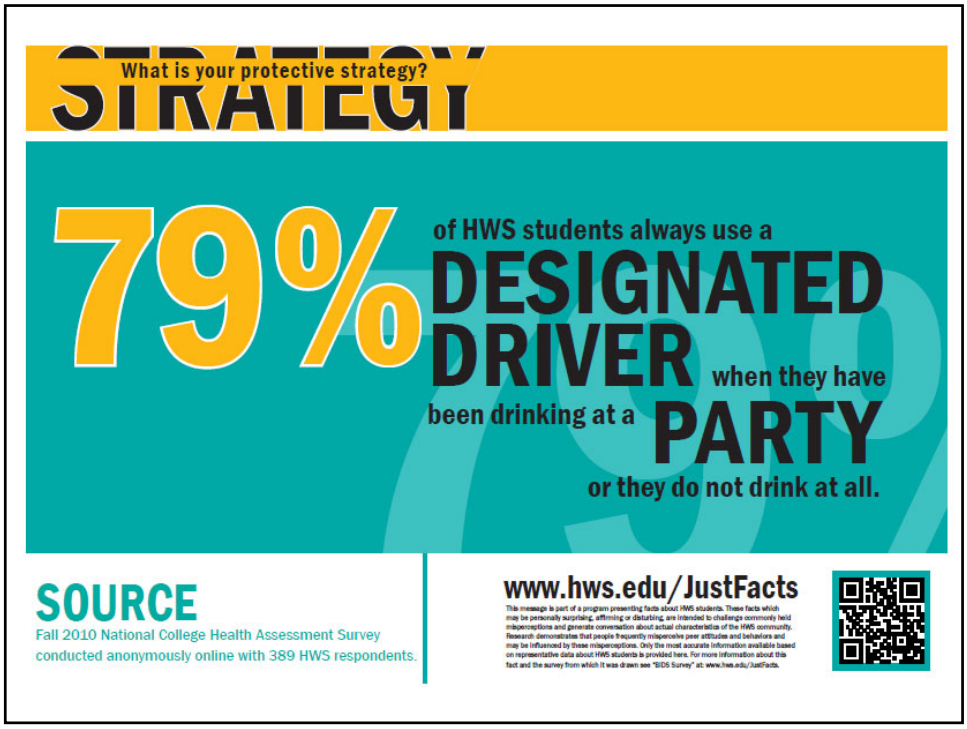
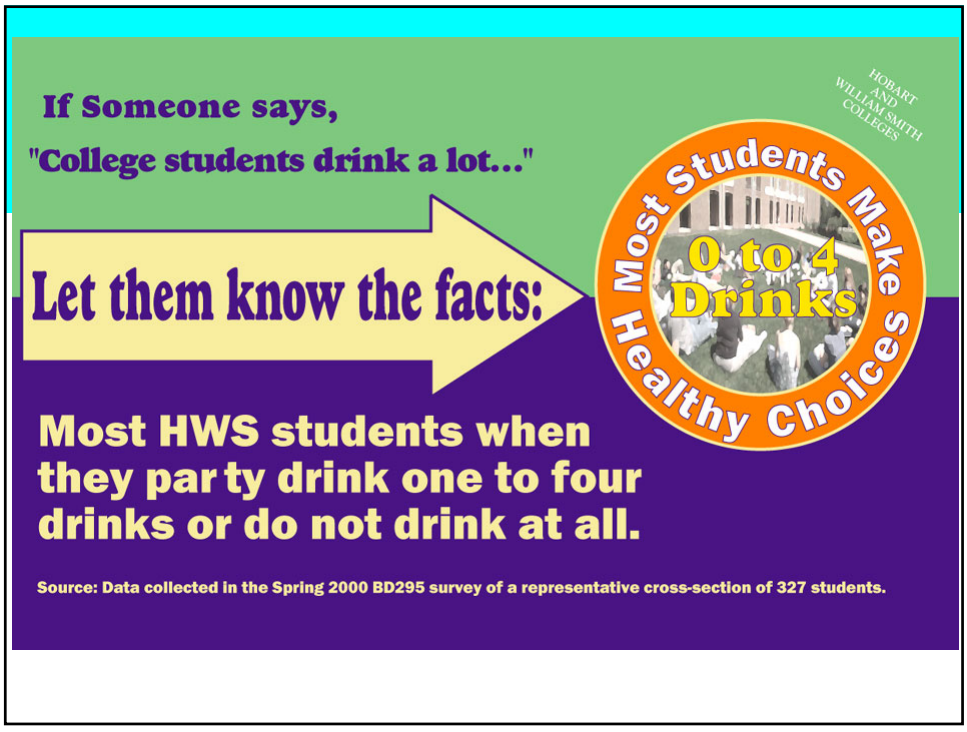

What is your protective strategy?
STRATEGY
79%
of HWS students always use a
DESIGNATED DRIVER
when they have been drinking at a
PARTY
or they do not drink at all.
SOURCE
Fall 2010 National College Health Assessment Survey conducted anonymously online with 389 HWS respondents.
www.hws.edu/JustFacts

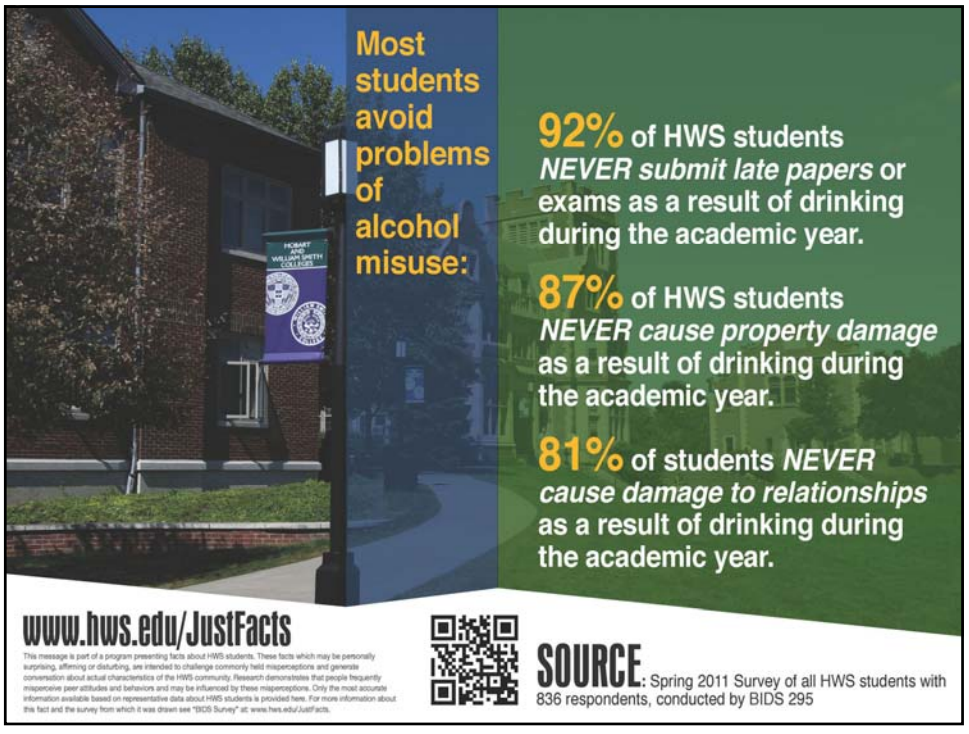

If Someone says,
"College students drink a lot..."
HOBART AND WILLIAM SMITH COLLEGES
Most Students Make Healthy Choices
0 to 4 Drinks
Let them know the facts:
Most HWS students when they party drink one to four drinks or do not drink at all.
Source: Data collected in the Spring 2000 BD295 survey of a representative cross-section of 327 students.

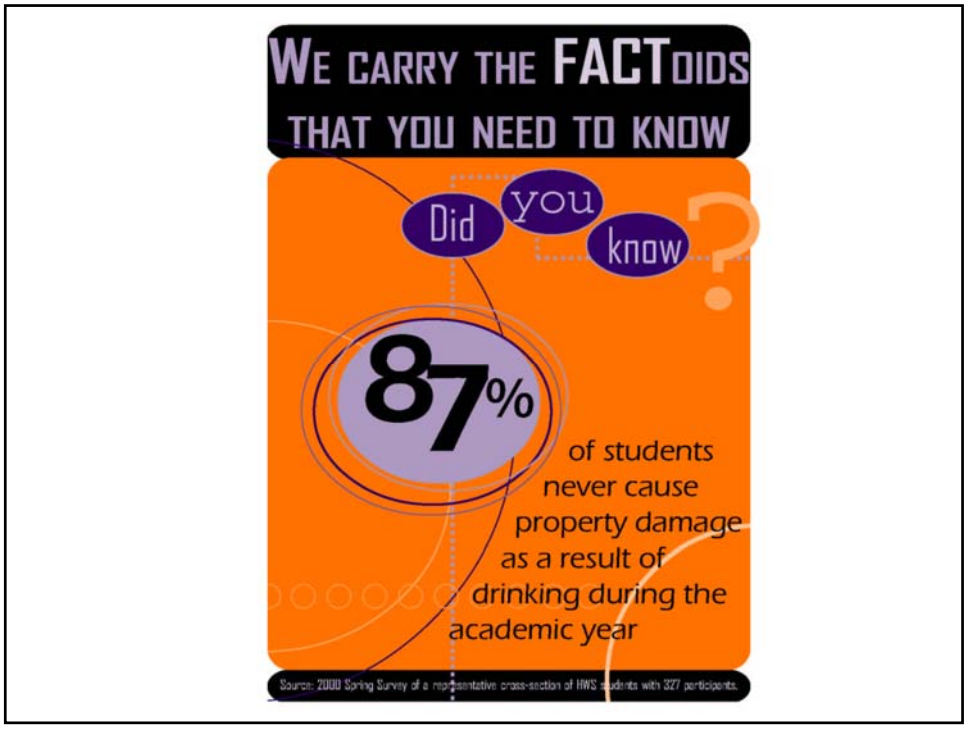
Get the Facts

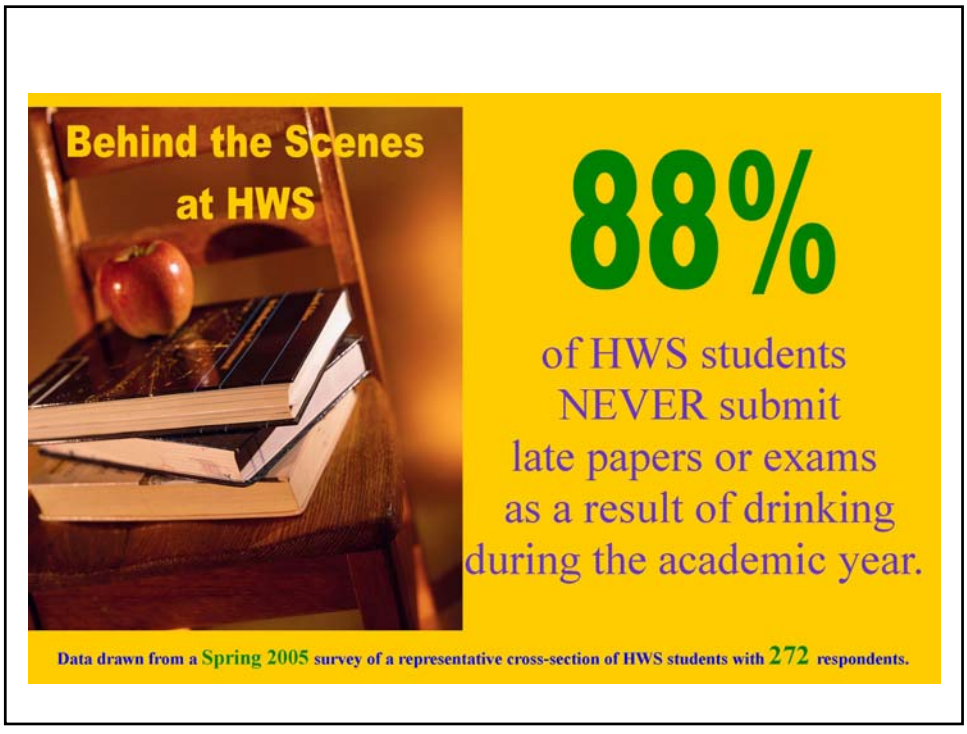
Get the facts

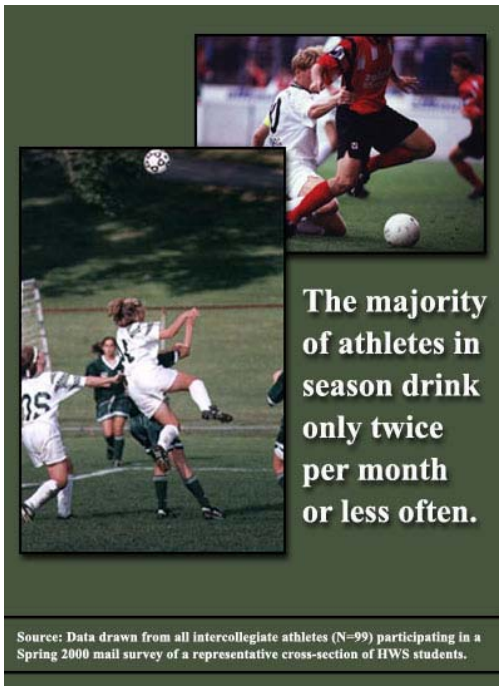
HWS students typically drink alcohol once a week or less.

Source: Data collected in the Spring 2000 BD295 survey of a representative cross-section of 327 students.

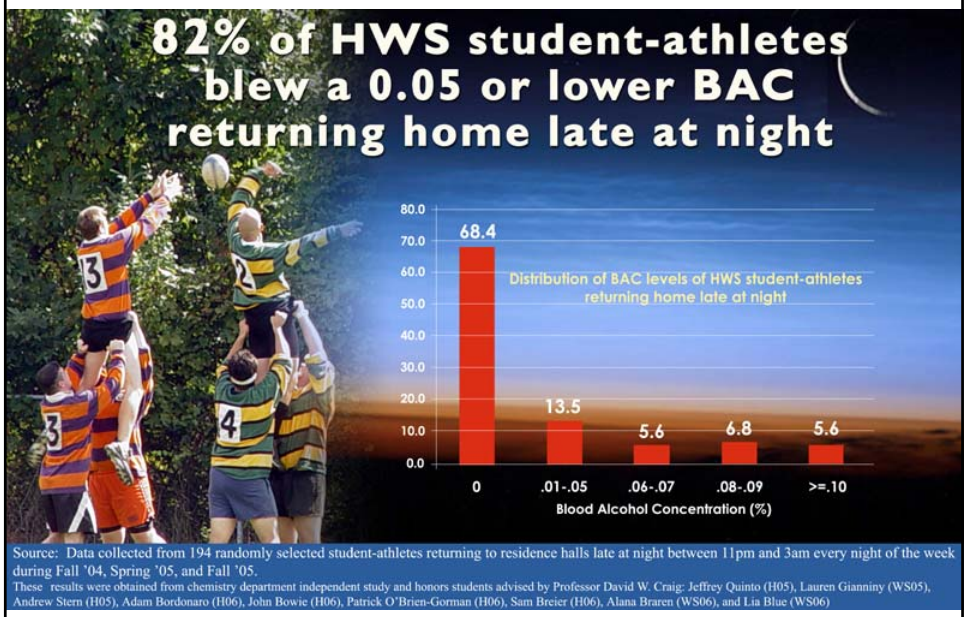



WE CARRY THE FACTOIDS
THAT YOU NEED TO KNOW
Did you know?
87%
of students never cause property damage as a result of drinking during the academic year
Source: 2000 Spring Survey of a representative cross-section of HWS students with 327 participants.


Behind the Scenes at HWS
88%
of HWS students NEVER submit late papers or exams as a result of drinking during the academic year.
Data drawn from a Spring 2005 survey of a representative cross-section of HWS students with 272 respondents.


The majority of athletes in season drink only twice per month or less often.
Source: Data drawn from all intercollegiate athletes (N=99) participating in a Spring 2000 mail survey of a representative cross-section of HWS students.

Did you know that...
7 out of 10 HWS student-athletes (70%) believe one should never use tobacco
Source: Fall 2005 Web survey of all HWS student-athletes with 369 respondents (79% of all student-athletes on campus).


82% of HWS student-athletes blew a 0.05 or lower BAC returning home late at night
Distribution of BAC levels of HWS student-athletes returning home late at night
80.0
70.0
60.0
50.0
40.0
30.0
20.0
10.0
0.0
68.4
13.5
5.6
6.8
5.6
0
.01-.05
.06-.07
.08-.09
>=.10
Blood Alcohol Concentration (%)
Source: Data collected from 194 randomly selected student-athletes returning to residence halls late at night between 11pm and 3am every night of the week during Fall '04, Spring '05, and Fall '05.
These results were obtained from chemistry department independent study and honors students advised by Professor David W. Craig: Jeffrey Quinto (H05), Lauren Gianniny (WS05), Andrew Stern (H05), Adam Bordonaro (H06), John Bowie (H06), Patrick O'Brien-Gorman (H06), Sam Breier (H06), Alana Braren (WS06), and Lia Blue (WS06)

82% of HWS student-athletes never injure themselves or others as a result of alcohol consumption during the academic term.
Source: Data drawn from a November 2001 survey of 414 HWS student-athletes (86% of all athletes on campus).

Most HWS Student-Athletes

Source: November 2006 web survey of 345 HWS student-athletes (71% of all intercollegiate athletes on campus).

When is the Social Norms Approach Most Effective?

- **Clear positive norm messages**
- **Credible data**
- **Absence of competing scare messages**
- **Dosage is high (ongoing and intense social marketing of actual norms)**
- **Synergistic strategies**
- **Broad student population receives message in addition to any high-risk target groups**

Source: H. W. Perkins (ed), The Social Norms Approach to Preventing School and College Age Substance Abuse , 2003

Research on Effects of Perceived Norms and Social Norms Intervention Programs

- Multi-site cross-sectional studies
- Longitudinal panel studies
- Brief intervention experiments using random assignment
- Longitudinal pre/post case studies of school populations
- Experiments with experimental and control counties
- Experiments with experimental and control classroom interventions
- Longitudinal experiments randomly assigning institutions to experimental and control conditions

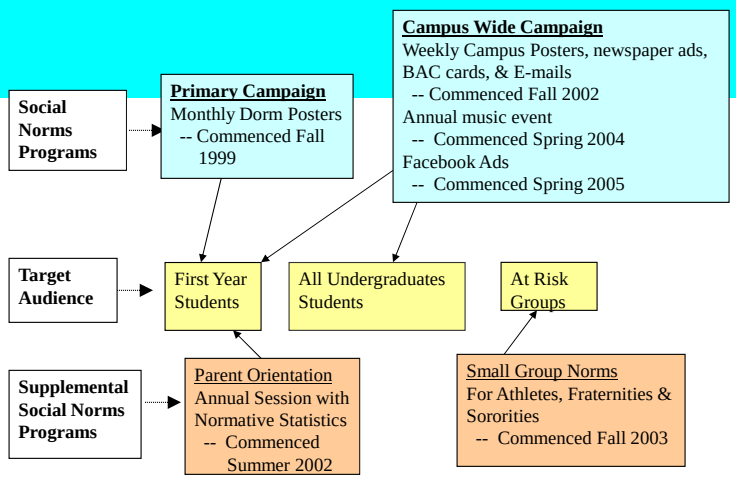
Heavy Drinking Reductions at Five Diverse Institutions Initiating a Social Norms Approach

(2 Year Rates of Change)

- **Hobart & Wm. Smith Colleges, NY -21%**
- **University of Arizona -21%**
- **Western Washington University -20%**
- **Rowan University, NJ -20%**
- **Northern Illinois University -18%**

Source: H. W. Perkins (ed.), The Social Norms Approach to Preventing School and College Age Substance Abuse, 2003.

Social Norms Marketing Programs at the University of Virginia



Source: James Turner, H. Wesley Perkins, and Jennifer Bauerle, "Declining Negative Consequences Related to Alcohol Misuse Among Students Exposed to a Social Norms Marketing Intervention on a College Campus," Journal of American College Health 2008.

Six Years of Declining Negative Consequences Related to Alcohol Misuse Among Students Exposed to a Social Norms Intervention at U of Virginia

Source: J Turner, H W Perkins, J Bauerle, Journal of American College Health, 2008

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
% No Consequences	33	38	44	46	48	51
% Multiple Consequences	44	40	36	34	31	26

Not All Results From the Field Are Consistently Positive:

What does a lack of impact reflect?

Model Outcome of Social Norms Approach

Time 1 <u>Baseline</u>	Time 2 <u>Intervention</u>		<u>Predicted Result</u>
Identify Actual & Misperceived Norms	Provide Intensive Exposure to Actual Norm Messages →	Less Exaggerated Misperceptions of Norms →	Less Harmful or Risky Behavior
YES	YES	YES	YES

Source: H. Wesley Perkins, 2001

Possible Outcomes of Social Norms Approach

Time 1 Baseline	Time 2 Intervention		Predicted Result
Identify Actual & Misperceived Norms	Provide Intensive Exposure to Actual Norm Messages	→ Less Exaggerated Misperceptions of Norms →	Less Harmful or Risky Behavior

YES **NO**

Not enough dosage or synergistic strategies to generate sufficient message awareness

Source: H. Wesley Perkins, 2001

Possible Outcomes of Social Norms Approach

Time 1 Baseline	Time 2 Intervention		Predicted Result
Identify Actual & Misperceived Norms	Provide Intensive Exposure to Actual Norm Messages	→ Less Exaggerated Misperceptions of Norms →	Less Harmful or Risky Behavior

YES **YES** **NO**

Confusing or Counter Messages

Source: H. Wesley Perkins, 2001

Possible Outcomes of Social Norms Approach

Time 1 Baseline	Time 2 Intervention		Predicted Result
Identify Actual & Misperceived Norms	Provide Intensive Exposure to Actual Norm Messages →	Less Exaggerated Misperceptions of Norms →	Less Harmful or Risky Behavior
YES	YES	YES But only for a targeted subgroup	NO

Source: H. Wesley Perkins, 2001

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