INTRODUCTION

The San Diego Intercollegiate Impaired Driving Initiative was a two-year pilot project funded by the California Office of Traffic Safety and administered by the Extension Department of the University of California, San Diego. The project goal was to reduce the incidence of alcohol impaired driving and other alcohol-related consequences among the nearly 50,000 students attending four institutions of higher education located San Diego County: Mesa College, Miramar College, University of California at San Diego, and University of San Diego.

The project was an outgrowth of prevention efforts of the San Diego Area Intercollegiate Consortium for the Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drug Problems. The Consortium, founded in 1988, consists of 15 local colleges and universities.

PROJECT STRUCTURE AND STAFFING

The project was administered by Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Studies the University of California, San Diego. Part-time staff included a project coordinator, project evaluator and campus organizer. Campus mentors at each campuses assisted student team members.

However, students were the core staff of the project. At each campus project funds supported students (20 hours per month) who were organized into five-member teams. Students were actively engaged in all aspects of the project, from program design and data collection to campus organizing and media advocacy. The active participation of students lent credibility to the project because it was a student-driven, peer-oriented effort.

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Student team members attended three half-day training sessions at the start of the project to familiarize them with the goals and objectives of the project and environmental approaches to lowering impaired driving, way to use mass media to support policy goals (media advocacy), and practices to promote the responsible sale and service of alcoholic beverages (RBS). In addition to other background material students received the College Alcohol Risk Assessment
Guide (CARA), a publication developed by UCSD under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) Alcohol and Drug Prevention program. This guide helps individuals at colleges and universities identify and modify environmental risk factors for alcohol problems.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Students commenced program activities in Fall 1994. They structured their activities around the SARA approach -- Scanning, Analysis, Response, and Assessment -- as described in the CARA. This approach provided an overall conceptual model for both understanding and responding to campus-specific environmental factors that contribute to the development of alcohol related-problems, most notably alcohol-impaired driving.

Students followed the SARA approach to achieve the project objectives:
1. To measure and describe the scope and nature of alcohol-related problems within the student populations through surveys and environmental assessments.
2. To reduce the risks associated with the sale and service of alcoholic beverages to San Diego college students through the planned introduction and adoption of responsible beverage service (RBS) policies and practices.
3. To counter the impact of commercial advertising and related promotions for alcoholic beverages, especially the marketing of beer to youthful consumers.

The main goal of the project was to lower the risks associated with alcohol consumption (e.g., injury, arrest), not to prevent college students from drinking alcohol. Following the SARA approach, the project focused on changing student environments, as opposed to more popular prevention responses which focus on changing behaviors of individuals.

SCANNING

Scanning is a way for people to identify potential risk factors and enlist allies to assist in prevention efforts. Through scanning students were able to build a quick profile of their campus and surrounding community environments. Students selected and completed the scanning exercises from the CARA. In some exercises they recorded their own perceptions of risk factors, looked at alcohol availability and promotion, and walked through student neighborhoods. They also spoke with campus and community representatives to get their impressions of problems. During the scanning phase students began to pay more attention to their campus environment and discovered many potential allies, as well as some potential opponents.
ANALYSIS

While scanning gave students a sense for alcohol related issues in their environments, during the analysis phase they refined their initial impressions by collecting information in a more structured or formal way. Students learned what the problems actually were, instead of relying on what they thought they were. Analysis results directed and validated interventions.

Student teams conducted a variety of data collection activities, including student surveys, a common method of determining levels of problems on college campuses. Less common methods from CARA included bulletin board and other media monitoring and price surveys of alcoholic beverages. Using exercises developed by the San Diego County Responsible Hospitality Council (RHC), students also conducted risk assessments at bars.

Student surveys were conducted on each campus in Fall of each program year (1994, 1995). Surveys were used to measure the scope of impaired driving and to assess changes occurring before and after program implementation. A sample of 200 students representative of the undergraduate population at each campus was obtained by selecting undergraduate general education courses. Students administered the survey. In the second project year students approached the same courses for surveys, resulting in 87 percent of classes being surveyed in both years.

Students worked with the RHC to determine which bars and taverns market to college students. They went to establishments and conducted responsible beverage service risk assessments.

Students monitored campus bulletin boards, newspapers, and other media sources for messages (low risk or high risk) pertaining to alcohol use. Students calculated the percent of messages that were alcohol-related as well as the percent of alcohol-related messages which promoted high risk alcohol consumption.

After conducting the initial scanning and analysis activities, students identified problems on their campus and selected priorities. Many of the priorities were common among the campuses, such as alcohol-impaired driving and responsible beverage service, but responses developed by students varied, reflecting differences in campuses.

RESPONSE

Student teams planned activities and events based on their assessment of potential intervention points. They also worked on some combined activities based on common problems. Teams
conducted three types of interventions: responsible beverage service, media advocacy, and policy.

All four teams cited a lack of RBS in student drinking environments as a problem contributing to alcohol-impaired driving, but due to variations among the campuses, they approached the problem differently.

Mesa CARES (Creating an Alcohol Responsible Environment for Students) focused on the promotion of high risk consumption by bars and taverns, as identified in the bulletin board analysis. They attempted to change the campus bulletin board posting policy to prohibit the posting of ads promoting high risk alcohol consumption.

Based on survey results, Mesa CARES also chose to address the frequent violations of existing laws related to alcohol sales and service reported by students. Team members believed that many students were not fully aware of the laws related to alcohol sales and service. They made 13 classroom presentations on California laws related to purchasing and selling alcohol.

Miramar's Project PARTEE (Promoting Alcohol Responsibility Through Environment and Education) worked with students, faculty members, and administrators to improve responsible beverage service policies and practices. Project PARTEE held a RBS training on the first day of alcohol awareness month. In order to increase attendance, several faculty members gave students extra credit for attending the training.

The UCSD CRASH Team (Creating Responsible Alcohol Services and Habitats) felt that the fraternity and sorority system was an important target for RBS training. Team members developed a workshop on event planning which they presented to fraternity and sorority leaders (e.g., presidents, social chairs). They developed an in-depth training covering RBS skills such as refusing service to an obviously intoxicated individual, duties of a sober monitor, and other event management skills.

The University of San Diego Impaired Driving Initiative (USD IDI) conducted RBS training at an event planning fair. The team also met with the fraternity advisor to discuss potential methods for increasing RBS policies and practices at fraternities and sororities. Students conducted a survey of similar campuses to find out about other programs, obtained their rules and guidelines, gathered information on the legal issues, organized a coalition of fraternity members interested in the issue, and assisted fraternities develop and implement RBS strategies in their chapters.
The project also gave students an opportunity to work on multi-campus committees. The students formed all-campus RBS and Media Advocacy committees. The committee completed risk assessments of several bars and taverns which market to college students. They then met with owners and managers to discuss ways to become more responsible.

ASSESSMENT

Student teams conducted assessment activities in Fall 1995. In addition to replicating the students survey described above, students also replicated some analysis exercises. In general, the surveys found significant changes in student observation over the course of the project. Students reported increased observation of refusing service to intoxicated patrons, stopping alcohol service early and limits on per person purchases were noted at most schools. Increased campus identification requirements and use of designated bartenders at parties were noted by community college students.

Reduction in the attractiveness of alcohol was assessed by survey questions concerning the importance of alcohol in various social situations and the belief about whether alcohol should be available on campus. The few changes noted were small and inconsistent. This may be partly the result of relatively low scores on these items on the pretest.

PROGRESS IN MEETING PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Objective 1:
To measure and describe the scope and nature of impaired driving within student populations of each of the four pilot institutions through surveys of, at minimum, 800 students. As noted above, baseline surveys were completed in Fall, 1994. The second wave of surveys was completed in Fall 1995.

Objective 2:
To reduce the risk associated with the sale and service of alcoholic beverages to San Diego college students through the planned introduction and ultimately permanent adoption of responsible beverage service (RBS) policies and practices. Project activities will increase by at least one implementation of risk-reduction factors at campus-related social events from baseline to project conclusion as measured by student surveys described in Objective 1. Significant changes in student observation of RBS practices were reported over the project. Students reported increased observation of refusing service to intoxicated patrons, stopping alcohol service early and limits on per person purchases were noted at most schools.
Objective 3:
To counter the impact of commercial advertising and related promotions for alcoholic beverages, especially marketing of beer to youthful consumers as a necessary adjunct for social success and acceptance. Project activities will result in a 15 percent decrease in the perceived attractiveness of drinking from baseline to project conclusion as measured by the student surveys described in Objective 1. Reduction in the attractiveness of alcohol was measured by survey questions concerning the importance of alcohol in various social situations and the belief about whether alcohol should be available on campus. Few changes were noted in these measures.

The overall project was successful at developing a cadre of trained students with interest in impacting alcohol problems through changing campus norms and environments. These students showed that with some direction they are capable of developing and implementing innovative and relevant alcohol prevention programs. The behavioral result of these intervention are still to be determined.

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