

Excellence in Prevention – descriptions of the prevention programs and strategies with the greatest evidence of success

Name of Program/Strategy: Party Intervention Patrols

Report Contents

1. Overview and description
 2. Implementation considerations (if available)
 3. Descriptive information
 4. Outcomes
 5. Cost effectiveness report (Washington State Institute of Public Policy – if available)
 6. Washington State results (from Performance Based Prevention System (PBPS) – if available)
 7. Who is using this program/strategy
 8. Study populations
 9. Quality of studies
 10. Readiness for Dissemination
 11. Costs (if available)
 12. Contacts for more information
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1. Overview and description

Another major way that underage drinkers gain access to alcohol is at parties (e.g., Wagenaar et al., 1993). Party patrols are a local enforcement strategy in which police arrive at a social event in which alcohol is being served and check the age identifications of party participants. Under- age drinking parties frequently involve large groups and are commonly held in a home, an outdoor area, or other public location such as a hotel room. Party patrols are a recommended strategy to address underage drinking parties (Little & Bishop, 1998; Stewart, 1999). Parties are frequently cited as one of the settings at highest risk for youth alcohol consumption and related problems, and have been linked to impaired driving, sexual assaults, violence, property damage, and to the initiation of alcohol use of younger adolescents by older adolescents (Mayer, Forster, Murray, & Wagenaar, 1998; Schwartz & Little, 1997; Wagenaar et al., 1993). Decreased sales to older minors, in turn, are expected to reduce availability of alcohol to younger adolescents. Without these special patrols law enforcement agencies sometimes do not have enough manpower to thoroughly investigate under- age drinking parties. They cannot always trace who provided the alcohol or other drugs to minors.

1

Excellence in Prevention is a project of Oregon Addiction and Mental Health Services and Washington Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery. Information is drawn from many sources, including the National Registry for Effective Prevention Programs (NREPP), sponsored by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

Excellence in Prevention – descriptions of the prevention programs and strategies with the greatest evidence of success

Party patrols involve police entering locations where parties are in progress. The police can use noise or nuisance ordinances as a basis for entering a party to observe if underage drinking is taking place. In party patrol strategies, police are enlisted, as a part of their regular patrol duties, to routinely: (a) enter premises where parties that may involve underage drinking are underway, (b) respond to complaints from the public about noisy teenage parties where alcohol use is suspected, and (c) check, as part of regular weekend patrols, open areas and other venues where teen parties are known to occur. When underage drinking is discovered, the drinkers can be cited as well as the person who supplied the alcohol. Even when it is not possible to cite the person who supplied the alcohol, awareness of increased police activity in this regard can act as a deterrent and can express community concerns regarding the unacceptability of providing alcohol to minors. As with other environmental interventions, public awareness and media attention is important to increase the deterrence effect of this strategy. There is some evidence that this technique is effective.

2. Implementation considerations (if available)

3. Descriptive information

Areas of Interest	Substance abuse prevention
Outcomes	
Outcome Categories	Alcohol
Ages	
Gender	Male Female
Races/Ethnicities	American Indian or Alaska Native Asian Black or African American Hispanic or Latino White Race/ethnicity unspecified
Settings	
Geographic Locations	Urban Suburban Rural and/or frontier Tribal

Excellence in Prevention – descriptions of the prevention programs and strategies with the greatest evidence of success

Implementation History	
NIH Funding/CER Studies	
Adaptations	
Adverse Effects	
IOM Prevention Categories	Universal

4. Outcomes

Scientific Evidence

One example of a specific utilization of strong local enforcement of provision of alcohol to underage persons is in Omaha, Nebraska. Under local ordinance, anyone who provides or procures alcohol for minors is committing a Class I misdemeanor, punishable by up to one year in jail, up to a \$1,000 fine, or both. PRIDE-Omaha, Inc. is assisting law enforcement agencies in conducting the MIP Party Patrols. Funding for the patrols is provided through special grants from the local drug prevention coalition.

Oregon implemented a weekend drunk driving and party patrol program that has law enforcement officers working with schools to identify in advance the anticipated location of teen parties, which the officers then patrol. An unpublished evaluation of this program revealed that arrests of youth for possession of alcohol increased from 60 to 1,000 individuals in one year with a corresponding decrease of 35 percent in underage drunk driving accidents (Little & Bishop, 1998; Radecki, 1995).

Party Intervention Patrols were conducted in Pierce County, Washington between April 2010 and May 2011 as a strategy to reduce underage drinking (Cunningham, 2011). This approach combined the arrest of youth in possession of alcohol with a counseling session conducted by a chemical dependency professional that included screening to assess the risk level of alcohol and other drug use and a brief intervention. Additionally, parents or other responsible adults of arrested youth participated in a parent-to-parent meeting, similar to a brief intervention and received a packet of resources from trained parent volunteers. Evidence found included: (1) The Party Intervention Patrols increased the youth perceptions of potential harm if they drank alcohol regularly, (2) youth beliefs that “it is wrong for someone their age to drink alcohol regularly”, and (3) a belief that “youth would be caught if they drank alcohol”. Additionally, youth reported in follow-up interviews that they had not gone to parties after the Party Intervention Patrols or had reduced the number of parties they attended and reduced the amount of alcohol they drank when they did go to a party. Parents reported (1) increased supervision of their children’s behavior in the future by monitoring the amount of alcohol in their home and by keeping track of where their children were when not at home, and (2) increased talking with their children about the legal and health risks of underage drinking.

5. Cost effectiveness report (Washington State Institute of Public Policy – if available)

6. Washington State results (from Performance Based Prevention System (PBPS) – if available)

Excellence in Prevention – descriptions of the prevention programs and strategies with the greatest evidence of success

7. Who is using this program/strategy

Washington Counties	Oregon Counties

8. Study populations

9. Quality of studies

The documents below were reviewed for Quality of Research. The research point of contact can provide information regarding the studies reviewed and the availability of additional materials, including those from more recent studies that may have been conducted.

References

Cunningham, Bruce (2011). An Evaluation of Party Intervention Patrols held in Pierce County, Washington from April 20, 2010 to May 31, 2011. Puget Sound Educational Service District. Report prepared for the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services Health and Recovery Services Administration, Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery. Under DSHS Contract # 1065-89366, July.

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Mayer, R. R., Forster, J. L., Murray, D. M., & Wagenaar, A. C. (1998). Social settings and situations of underage drinking. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 59(2), 207-215.

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Schwartz, R. H., & Little, D. L. (1997). Let's party tonight: Drinking patterns and breath alcohol values at high school parties. *Family Medicine*, 29(5), 326-331.

Wagenaar, A. C., Finnegan, J. R., Wolfson, M., Anstine, P. S., Williams, C. L., & Perry, C. L. (1993). Where and how adolescents obtain alcoholic beverages. *Public Health Reports*, 108(4), 459-464.

10. Readiness for Dissemination

11. Costs (if available)

12. Contacts