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Effects of Youth Assets on Adolescent Alcohol, Tobacco, Marijuana Use, and Sexual Behavior.....23-40

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Alcohol, tobacco, marijuana use, and sexual behaviors are consistently reported by high school students in the United States and can contribute to reduced quality of life. Empirical research finds that many assets may act as a protective factor for adolescent risk behaviors. As such, the purpose of this study was to examine the associations of youth assets and adolescent engagement in alcohol, cigarette, marijuana use, and sexual behavior among students 14-18 years in a rural state.

METHODS: Participants consisted of a random sample of 834 students aged 14-18 years attending two public school districts in rural Tennessee. A survey that assessed behaviors, knowledge, and youth assets was administered to these students during the spring of the school year.

RESULTS: Analysis found that a large percentage of students had engaged in alcohol, tobacco, marijuana use, and sexual behaviors. Additionally, it was discovered that some youth assets such as future aspirations, parental expectations, and positive peer influence were associated with a lower prevalence of adolescent substance use and sexual behavior. Furthermore, assets seem to be more protective in this sample of 14-18 year olds for past 30 days behavior compared to ever having used a substance (i.e. alcohol, tobacco, marijuana) or ever having had sexual intercourse.

CONCLUSIONS: The results suggest that substance use and sexual behaviors among adolescents vary by youth asset. As such, it is important to realize that interventions designed to reduce alcohol, tobacco, marijuana use, and sexual behavior using an asset development framework needs to be tailored.

Keywords: ATOD, sexual behavior, youth assets, adolescents, rural

Are Students Drinking Hand Over Fifth? Understanding Participant Demographics in Order to Curb a Dangerous Practice.....41-60

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ABSTRACT

High-risk drinking remains an issue on college campuses. Limited research focuses on drinking associated with single events where students are encouraged to drink a predetermined amount of alcohol. Fourth-year undergraduate students (N=1,205) completed a survey about motivation, behaviors and perceptions surrounding participation in a practice where some students attempt to consume a fifth of liquor (750 ml) on the day of the last home football game. Results revealed 18.0% of fourth-year students participated, predominately Greek-affiliated males. Of those who self-reported consuming a fifth, 75.4% consumed at least 6 more drinks than they do on a typical Saturday night. Motivating factors for participation included challenge, tradition, and sociability. As students generally underestimated participation rates, social norms marketing approaches may not be effective.

Comparing Greek-Affiliated Students and Student-Athletes: An Examination of the Behavior-Intention Link, Reasons for Drinking, and Alcohol-Related Consequences.....61-81
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ABSTRACT

While affiliation with Greek fraternities/sororities and intercollegiate athletic teams is associated with heavier drinking (Meilman et al., 1999), few studies have compared reasons for drinking among these groups. A sample of 1,541 students, identifying as either Greeks or athletes, completed an online survey. Athletes were significantly higher than Greeks on conformity reason for drinking. Tests of independent correlations indicated the magnitude of the past behavior to intention link was considerably stronger for Greeks. Greeks experienced significantly more social problems from drinking. Several group by gender ANOVA models found significant main effects with highest drinking rates, usually among Greek males, and lowest among female athletes. Understanding these specific group differences informs recommendations for group-specific and tailored educational interventions, which are discussed.

Keywords: college drinking, intentions, Greek affiliation, college student athletes