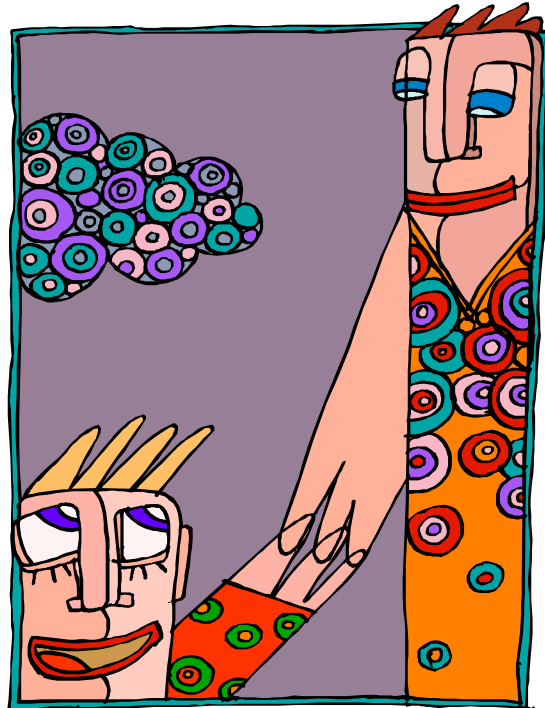
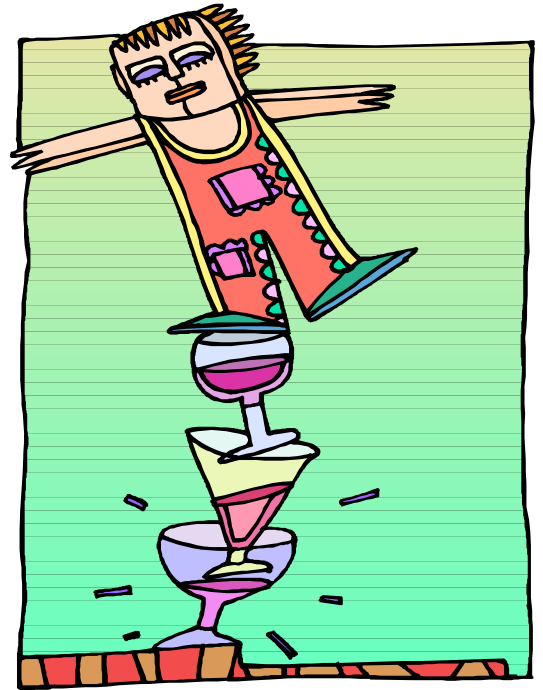
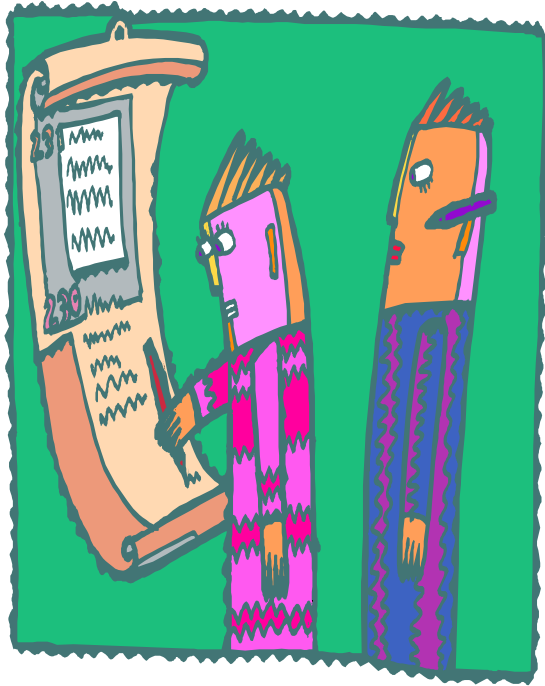


Sarasota County Demonstration Project:



Youth and Alcohol Strategy Workbook

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The Florida Prevention Research Center (FPRC) at the University of South Florida and the Sarasota County Department of Health gratefully acknowledge the cooperation of the following groups of citizens who have been essential in the creation of the key products contained herein:

- The members of the Community Advisory Council (CAC) whose tireless efforts have ensured the successful completion of the initial phases of this community-based prevention marketing project to reduce initiation and continuation of tobacco and alcohol use by Sarasota County's most precious commodity – its children and youth.
- The administrators and teachers in the public, private, alternative, and special schools of Sarasota County, whose vision of the future and commitment to excellence in the education and well-being of youngsters have permitted collection of data that guarantees this county of being on the cutting edge of health promotion and disease prevention endeavors.
- The students of Sarasota County whose patience and participatory spirit contributes much to their own welfare and to that of their peers, and remind us all of their contributions to *our* future as the 21st century unfolds.
- The parents of Sarasota County youth, who by their sacrifice of time to give us their insights, feelings, and critical assessments, provide compelling evidence of the caring and concern that they have for the young people of the county.
- Last, but not least, Sarasota County's citizens-at-large who seek to provide those incredibly important things that we know make a difference in the lives of children and youth, now as well as in the future.



Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	2
Executive Summary	4
Section 1: Research Methods	6
Introduction	7
Research Objectives	8
Research Methods	8
Phase 1: Qualitative Research- Youth	9
Phase 2: Quantitative Research – Youth	12
Phase 3: Qualitative Research – Parents	16
Section 2: Youth Research Findings	20
Introduction	21
Alcohol Consumption	23
Perceived Benefits of Drinking	28
Perceived Costs of Drinking	33
Social Norms	38
Self Efficacy	45
Media	46
Access to Alcoholic Beverages	47
Recommendations for Preventing Underage Drinking	49
Conclusions	54
Section 3: Parent Research Findings	55
Introduction	56
Research Methods	57
Results	60
Section 4: Strategy	86
Preventing Drinking Initiation	87
Reducing Alcohol Consumption	97
Preventing Binge Drinking	104
Supporting Parents	111

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this consumer research was to explore perceptions of alcohol use among 6th-10th grade youth in Sarasota County, Florida. The research was conducted by Sarasota County researchers (youth and adult) and researchers at the University of South Florida Prevention Research Center. The specific study objectives were:

Specific objectives of the research were to identify:

- the factors that motivate Sarasota youth to use alcohol;
- the factors that deter use of alcohol among Sarasota youth;
- effective information channels and spokespersons for preventing alcohol use among Sarasota youth; and
- effective strategies for preventing alcohol use among Sarasota youth.

The study was conducted in three phases. Phases I and II were conducted among 6th through 12th grade youth. The first phase was qualitative research followed by a more standardized survey research phase. In phase I, 206 youth participated in 22 focus groups and 112 individual interviews. The youth were interviewed by eleven Sarasota youth who had been trained to conduct both focus groups and individual interviews.

The second phase of the study focused on using the qualitative research results and literature to develop, pilot, and implement a standardized survey of youth in grades 6 to 10. All public middle and high schools participated in the survey. Among the 13 private schools invited to participate, 9 declined. Of the remaining four, one participated with the other three expressing interest to participate in the future. A total of 113 classes, comprised of 2,407 students were surveyed.

Phase III consisted of qualitative research (focus groups and interviews) with Sarasota County parents of middle and high school youth. Forty-seven parents participated in 6 focus groups and 12 individual interviews. Recruitment of parents provided to be difficult.

Overall, youth do **not** believe it is acceptable for young people to drink alcohol; however, many have tried or are current users. They appear to distinguish between the types of alcohol (e.g., beer, wine, liquor).

Perceived benefits of drinking included coping with problems, having fun, looking mature, and social image. Social image encompasses fitting in, being more popular, and looking cooler.

Perceived costs of drinking included unpleasant taste of alcohol, looking “dumb,” automobile accidents, health problems, and addiction. Some mentioned fear of getting caught by parents, school or the authorities (police).

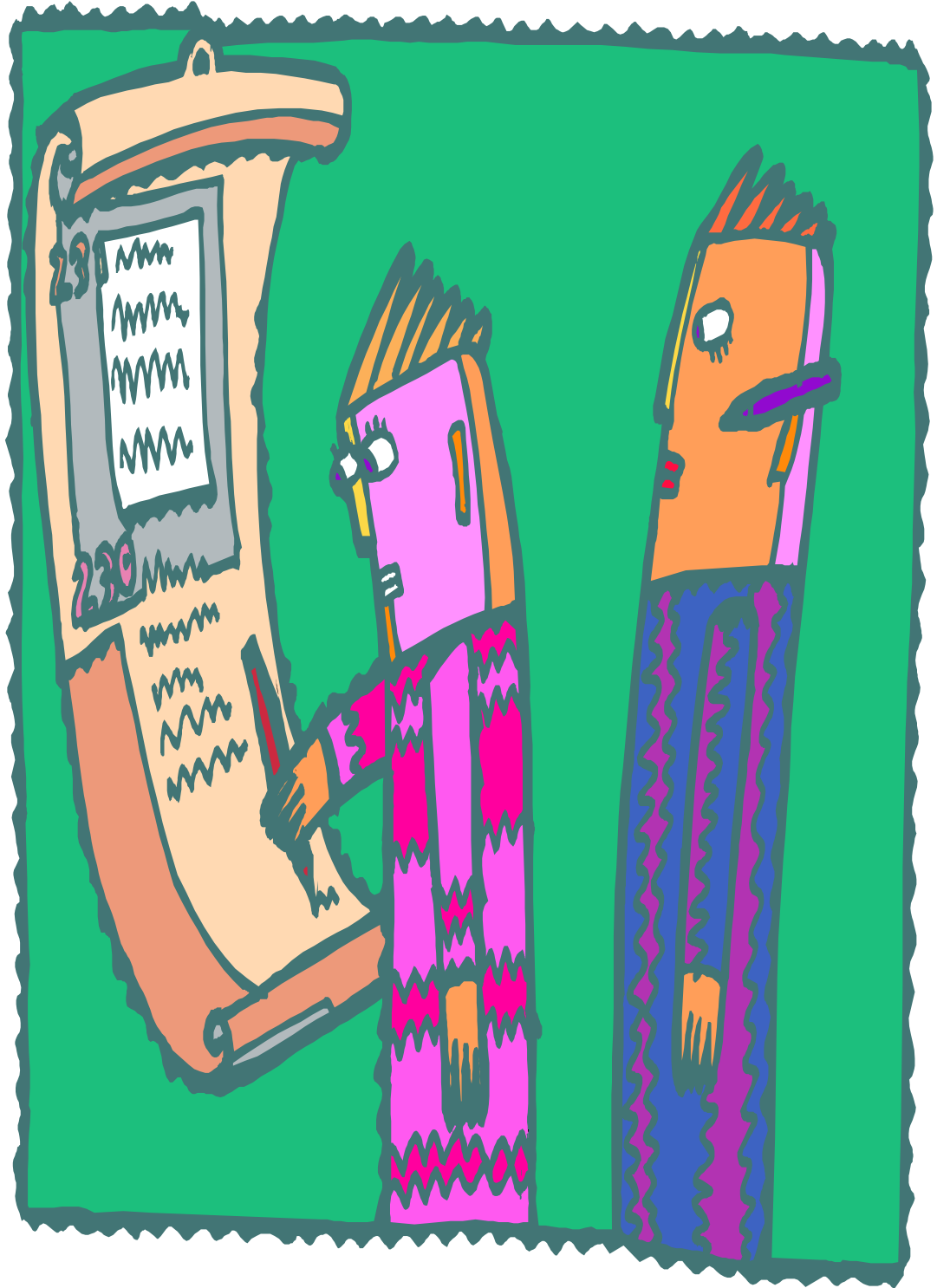
Parents have an important influence on their children's drinking behavior. Youth see their parents as modeling drinking (or in some cases not drinking), and are learning when it is acceptable to drink through their parents. Family structure, sibling influence and behavior, as well as peer influence/peer pressure impact one's decision to initiate drinking or continue to drink.

Gaining access to alcohol appears to be relatively easy for youth in Sarasota County.

Trustworthy spokespersons for providing information about risks of drinking alcohol varied widely among grade levels. Sixth and seventh graders noted a DARE officer/resource officer, number one and two, respectively. Whereas, 9th and 10th graders said that "other kids my age who drink" would be their first choice. Parents, other relatives, friends, and other kids my age were information sources ranked in the top ten by students in all grades.

Youth suggested a wide range of interventions they believe to be effective in preventing underage drinking.

SECTION 1: RESEARCH METHODS



INTRODUCTION



This report will help community members make decisions about how to develop a youth alcohol prevention strategy in Sarasota County

The Sarasota Alcohol Free Youth Demonstration Project is designed to prevent the initiation of drinking among young people in grades 6 through 10. The Florida Prevention Research Center (FPRC) and a collaborative group of 20 community organizations have worked together for approximately two years to select target audiences and conduct consumer research to identify the factors that influence young people’s drinking behavior.

This collaborative group, the Community Advisory Committee (CAC), uses “Community Based Prevention Marketing” (CBPM) to develop prevention programs to prevent disease and disability. Community based prevention marketing (CBPM) is a community-directed social change process that applies marketing theories and techniques to the design, implementation, and evaluation of health promotion and disease prevention programs (Appendix A – CBPM Process Article). CBPM also blends community organization principles and practices, behavioral theories, and marketing concepts and methods into a synergistic framework for directing positive change.

This report describes the results of the consumer research conducted with youth and parents in Sarasota County. The results of the consumer research will help guide strategic decisions for prevention interventions/ strategies initiated by Sarasota County community organizations and government agencies for use in preventing alcohol initiation among Sarasota youth.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES



Quantitative and qualitative research was conducted with 6th through 10th graders to identify information about alcohol use in youth and strategies to prevent initiation and use.

The purpose of this consumer research was to explore perceptions of alcohol use among 6th-10th grade youth in Sarasota County, Florida (hereafter referred to as “Sarasota youth”).

Specific objectives of the research were to identify:

- the factors that motivate Sarasota youth to use alcohol;
- the factors that deter use of alcohol among Sarasota youth;
- effective information channels and spokespersons for preventing alcohol use among Sarasota youth; and
- effective strategies for preventing alcohol use among Sarasota youth.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study was conducted in three phases:

- Phase 1: Qualitative research (focus groups and individual interviews) with Sarasota youth;
- Phase 2: Standardized survey research in Sarasota middle schools and high schools (hereafter referred to as “the survey research”); and
- Phase 3: Qualitative research (focus groups and individual interviews) with parents of Sarasota youth.

PHASE ONE: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH WITH SARASOTA YOUTH

Teams comprised of FPRC youth researchers and FPRC graduate assistants conducted focus groups and interviews with Sarasota County youth going into 5th through 12th grades. Sarasota youth researchers were hired to collect qualitative data because the research team realized that youth rather than adults would be in a better position to obtain high quality information from adolescent participants.



Phase one was qualitative research with the youth. It consisted of training youth, developing a guide, and recruiting study sites and participants.

Training.

FPRC staff, graduate assistants, USF faculty members, and CAC members collaboratively developed a 60-page curriculum guidebook and training agenda for a two-day FPRC youth researcher training session (Appendix B – Youth Training Article and Form to Receive a Copy of Youth Researcher Curriculum). Eleven youth researchers were trained to conduct focus groups and one-on-one, in-depth interviews.

Guide Development.

Focus group and interview guides were developed by FPRC youth researchers, community members and FPRC staff. The guide included questions about youths' perception of drinking, access to alcoholic beverages, potential spokespersons and strategies for preventing alcohol consumption (Appendix C – Alcohol/Tobacco Interview Guide). Questions concerning perceptions of tobacco use also were asked.

Study Sites and Participants.

CAC members and FPRC staff worked collaboratively to select the age ranges for youth included in this study. The CAC developed a list of local community agencies, community leaders, and other community locations appropriate for recruiting youth to participate in the study. Incentives included movie certificates, pizza parties for youth and, in some cases, art supplies for specific programs that had a high number of participants.

Focus groups and interviews were conducted at schools and program sites throughout Sarasota County that were easily accessible to both eligible participants and FPRC Youth Researchers. When possible, only same grade/same gender groups were conducted. However, if



Informed consent was obtained from all youth that participated and their parents. Between July and February 1999, 112 interviews and 22 focus groups were conducted.

there was a shortage of participants, groups were conducted with males and females no more than two grades apart. Focus groups lasted between 30 and 75 minutes.

Individual interviews were semi-structured and lasted approximately 20 to 30 minutes. When possible, interviews were conducted by researchers of the same gender as the interviewee.

Informed Consent. The University of South Florida Institutional Review Board approved all consent forms and procedures (Appendix D – Youth Informed Consent Form). Parents were sent a letter home explaining the project and requested to complete and sign the informed consent form (Appendix E – Sample Parent Letter).

Demographics. Between July 1999 and February 2000, FPRC Youth Researchers conducted 71 interviews and 17 focus groups. Graduate assistants conducted 41 interviews and 5 focus groups (see Table 1 for information on number of interviews and focus groups according to site).

Table 1 Focus Groups and Interviews Conducted by Site		
Research Site	Interviews Conducted	Focus Groups Conducted
Venice Middle School	6	2
Fruitville Boys and Girls Club	17	5
NorthPort Boys and Girls Club	11	2
Girls Inc.	3	3
McBean Boys and Girls Club	5	1
Sarasota Middle School	5	3
McIntosh Middle School	10	4
YMCA	4	2
TRIAD North	20	-
TRIAD South	18	-
Venice High School	13	-
TOTALS	112	22

Two hundred and six youth participated in focus groups and interviews at 11 sites throughout Sarasota County. The majority of participants were white (75%), female (62%), and between the ages of 11 and 13 years (6th to 8th grade) (67%), with a mean age of 12.6 years (see Table 2 for a breakdown of the focus group and interview participants by age and Appendix F for a summary of interviews and focus groups by gender and grade).



Data was transcribed, entered into a computer, analyzed for recurring themes and interpreted. Youth researchers assisted with interpretation

Table 2 Percent of Focus Group and Interview Participants by Age		
Age	Number	Percent
10	11	6
11	53	30
12	38	22
13	28	16
14	14	8
15	14	8
16	10	6
17	8	5
19	1	1
Total	177	100

Of the 206 youth interviewed, 136 completed demographic information sheets that asked questions about alcohol initiation and use. Over half of the youth (60%) reported having ever had a drink (other than a few sips), almost 1 in 5 (18%) had their first drink at the age of 9-10 years, and 7% had had an alcoholic drink within the last 30 days.

Data Analysis. Data from focus groups and in-depth interviews were transcribed and entered into a computer. Using special software to analyze qualitative data (*Ethnograph*) the transcripts were read to identify themes. USF staff and community members identified recurring themes and the range of diversity in responses, made summary and interpretive statements, and marked passages worthy of quotation. FPRC youth researchers then reviewed all results and assisted with interpretation.

PHASE TWO: SURVEY RESEARCH WITH SARASOTA YOUTH



Phase 2 included quantitative survey research with the Sarasota youth. A survey was developed to help identify a number of factors related to youth alcohol use in Sarasota. The survey was pilot tested with over 500 youth prior to distribution.

Survey Development. Using other surveys (specifically the Florida Youth Tobacco Survey and the CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Survey), published literature on alcohol and tobacco use and youth, and the qualitative data collected, a 147-item survey was developed to identify the factors that motivate Sarasota youth to use alcohol and tobacco; to identify the factors that deter use of alcohol and tobacco among Sarasota youth; to identify effective information channels and spokespersons for preventing alcohol and tobacco use among Sarasota youth; and, to identify effective strategies for preventing alcohol and tobacco use among Sarasota youth. The final survey (Appendix G) included questions related to demographic background, tobacco behaviors, alcohol behaviors, perceptions of norms related to tobacco and alcohol use, attitudes and beliefs regarding tobacco and alcohol use, parental tobacco and alcohol use, perceived quality of parent child relationships, school connectedness, psychological distress, delinquent behaviors, and involvement in various school and community activities. The CAC approved the content for the final survey.

Pilot Testing Survey. The survey questions were pilot tested with approximately 300 students in grades 6 through 10. Classes selected for pilot testing were **not** included in the survey implementation. The purpose of pilot testing was to make sure that students could read the questions and responses and that the meaning of the questions for youth matched the intentions of the research team.

Informed Consent. Parental passive consent through the Sarasota County Schools was obtained (Appendix H – Passive Consent Letter). Any child whose parent did not want them to participate was excused from the activity. Fewer than 10 students were excluded from survey administration due to lack of parental consent.

Research Participants. The survey was conducted among youth in grades 6 to 10 in Sarasota County. The sample of 6th- 8th grade youth was drawn from the 10 middle schools, exceptional schools, and alternative schools that included at least 1% of the county's 6th- 8th grade public school population. The sample of 9th-10th grade



A total of 16 schools participated in the survey. A total of 113 classes, comprised of 2,407 students were surveyed.

youth was drawn from the four public high schools in Sarasota County. A CAC subcommittee on research and survey design contributed to and approved the sampling process. Information in Appendix I provides a summary of the participating public middle schools and proportion of the target population for each school.

Thirteen private schools with at least 50 students from the target population were invited to participate in the survey research. Among the 13 private schools invited to participate, 9 declined. One of the remaining four schools participated in the research; the remaining three schools expressed a willingness to participate if participation could be postponed until Fall 2000.

Classes were randomly selected until the number of students enrolled in selected classes was approximately 480 students per grade. A random cluster sample of classrooms was selected based on the proportion of Sarasota students in each school. A total of 16 schools participated in the survey research (15 public schools and 1 private school). Within these schools, 113 classes were selected to participate in the survey and 2,407 students within these classes completed the survey. See Appendix J for sampling details.

Table 3 summarizes the characteristics of survey respondents included in the data analysis. Overall, 51% of survey respondents were male; 49% were female. Eighty-one percent of respondents reported their race as white, 7% as black, and 12% as American Indian or Native American, Asian or Pacific Islander, or other. Ten percent of the survey respondents reported being of Hispanic or Latino origin. Students reported their academic performance, with the mean for all responses being “Mostly B’s.”



FPRC staff worked closely with the Director of Pupil Support Services to implement the survey in the school system.

Survey Administration. FPRC staff worked closely with the Sarasota County Schools in administering the survey. FPRC staff members and a Sarasota County School employee (Sherri Reynolds, Pupil Support Services, Director) met with every principal to discuss the project and to determine classroom selection for survey administration. FPRC staff coordinated scheduling of survey administration to accommodate participating schools and teachers. FPRC staff and graduate students administered surveys. Appendix K includes more details regarding survey administration.

Each school designated a survey contact person with whom to work. Following survey administration, school contacts and participating teachers with whom classes were used in the survey received a thank you letter and a short questionnaire about the survey administration process. Teachers and school contact persons received a Wal-Mart merchandise card as an incentive for completing the questionnaire.

Table 3	
Characteristics of Survey Respondents	
Demographics	
Gender	
Males	51%
Females	49%
Race	
White	81%
Black	7%
Other	12%
Hispanic Origin	10%
Grades	Mostly B's
Alcohol Use	
Have you ever had a drink of alcohol (more than a few sips)?	67%
In the past 30 days, have you ever had any alcohol to drink?	33%
In the past year, have you had five or more drinks of alcohol in one day?	25%
Mean age at first drink	10 years

Data Analysis. Surveys were evaluated to determine whether they would be usable for analysis purposes. Two survey questions were included to aid in this evaluation process (G28 and G37). Question G28 asked students about use of a fictional substance (“Black Butterfly”), and G37 asked students to rate the extent to which their survey responses were truthful. Students who reported use of the fictional substance and those who reported that they were truthful half of the time or less were excluded from the analysis. Also, some surveys included enough missing or invalid responses to be unusable for analysis (i.e., greater than 50% responses missing or invalid in



86% of the surveys were included in analysis. Data were analyzed to identify the determinants of alcohol behaviors, segments of the population with differing determinants and those groups at highest risk for the target behavior.

any one section of the survey). These surveys also were excluded from the analysis. Altogether, 86% (2,079) of the surveys administered were included in subsequent analyses.

Frequency distributions, cross tabulations, and logistic regression analyses were performed using SAS statistical software. Audience segmentation analyses were performed using the *AnswerTree 2.1* program produced by SPSS, Inc. The main purpose of the survey data analysis is to identify the determinants of tobacco and alcohol behaviors and to identify population subgroups for whom the determinants of the target behavior may be different and to identify the population subgroups at highest risk with respect to the target behavior. Appendix L includes more details on the survey data analysis.

PHASE THREE: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH WITH SARASOTA PARENTS



Phase three of the research included qualitative research with the parents or guardians of middle and high school youth in Sarasota. Six focus groups and 12 interviews were conducted.

After reviewing the qualitative data it became evident that parents were a potential source of information for youth, as well as role models based on their choice to use or not to use alcohol. Evidence of the impact of parents on youth attitudes is seen in the following quotes:

“My mom drinks wine on some occasions and my dad comes home from work and he’s all hot and sweaty, he’ll take a shower and then sit down and have a beer or something like that.” (6th grade male)

“When the parents are not home, they just go to the house and drink.” (9th grade male)

Target Audience. The community Based Prevention Marketing Community Advisory Committee (CBPM CAC) members, FPRC staff, and University of South Florida graduate students determined that the target audience should be parents or guardians of middle school and high school youth in Sarasota County, as well as some community leaders who work extensively with Sarasota County youth in the age groups of interest. Although the sample was one of convenience, an effort was made to have representation from diverse geographic locations and ethnic backgrounds within the county.

Focus Group Participants. There were six focus groups with 35 participants in all. The participants in two of the focus groups were comprised of Non-Hispanic Whites; participants in two other groups were comprised of primarily blacks; and the participants of two groups were comprised of Hispanics.

Individual Interview Participants. There were 12 interview participants. Of these participants, nine were Non-Hispanic White, and three were Hispanics.

Recruitment. CBPM CAC members and FPRC staff determined the various methods to be used for recruiting participants for focus groups and interviews. Some participants were recruited from the Sarasota County Health and Human Services Business Center through a departmental mailing or by word-of-mouth. Others were recruited through community organizations around the county. For example, participants were recruited through the Laurel Community



Recruitment of parents was very challenging, with many refusing to participate.

Center, St. Martha's Catholic Church, Sarasota County Technical Institute's English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes, Booker Middle School, and the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition. Other participants were acquaintances of CBPM CAC members. It should be noted that recruitment of participants for the study proved more difficult than had been anticipated. For example, one CBPM CAC member contacted 25 friends and neighbors to participate in focus groups, and all refused.

Parent Interview Guide. Researchers used the same questionnaire for focus groups and interviews (Appendix M – Parent Interview Guide). The questionnaire was developed in a four-step process. First, USF graduate students and FPRC staff constructed a draft interview guide. Second, the USF students and CBPM CAC members pretested the interview guide. Third, USF graduate students and FPRC staff revised the interview guide. Fourth, CBPM CAC members finalized the interview guide based on pretesting results.

Informed Consent. The University of South Florida Institutional Review Board approved all consent forms and procedures (Appendix N – Adult Informed Consent Forms).

Handout. CBPM CAC members and FPRC staff developed a handout for participants to provide additional comments and suggestions on an anonymous basis (Appendix O – Parent Comment Form). Three participants returned handouts to the researchers with additional written comments and suggestions about underage drinking (Appendix P – Parents' Suggestions).



Focus groups were conducted in Spanish and English. Interviews were conducted in English. Incentives were provided to encourage participation in the research.

Focus Groups. Focus groups were conducted at four locations that were convenient for the participants. Two of the focus groups were conducted at the Sarasota County Health Department; two were conducted at the Laurel Community Center; one was conducted at St. Martha's Catholic Church; and one was conducted at the Sarasota County Technical Institute. Although some Hispanic participants spoke both English and Spanish, both Hispanic focus groups were conducted primarily in Spanish per the participants' preference.

Moderators and co-moderators included three USF graduate students, an FPRC staff member, the Sarasota Prevention Marketing Coordinator, and two bilingual Hispanic community

leaders from Sarasota. All moderators and co-moderators received training from FPRC staff members on the purpose of the study, the interview guide, and how to conduct focus groups and one-on-one interviews. The Hispanic moderator and co-moderator modified the interview guide and focus group procedures to tailor them more appropriately for the linguistic and cultural norms of the Hispanic participants.

Focus groups were recorded and transcribed, while co-moderators took notes. Participants completed an information form (Appendix Q – Parent Demographic Form) to capture some demographic data. Participants were provided a take-home form (Appendix N) along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope to provide additional comments and suggestions and return to the researchers. Information forms and handouts were translated from English to Spanish for Hispanic participants. Each focus group participant received a \$20 Wal-Mart or K-Mart merchandise card as an incentive and, when available, a brochure entitled “Keeping Youth Drug Free.”

Individual Interviews. Individual interviews were conducted at various locations throughout Sarasota County, depending on what was mutually convenient for the participant and the interviewer. All interviews were conducted in English. Interviewers included three CBPM CAC members, the Sarasota Prevention Marketing Coordinator, and an FPRC staff member. Interviewers were trained by FPRC staff regarding the purpose of the study, the study questionnaire, and how to conduct individual interviews.

Two of the interviews were audiotaped, while the other eleven were recorded by taking written notes only. As with the focus group participants, interview participants completed an information form and were given a handout and self-addressed, stamped envelope to provide the researchers with additional information. Each individual interview participant received a \$10 Wal-Mart gift card as an incentive and, when possible, a brochure entitled “Keeping Youth Drug Free.”

Data Analysis. All audiotapes were transcribed. An independent contractor transcribed the tapes from the four groups conducted in English. An FPRC staff member transcribed the tapes from the two groups conducted in Spanish and from the two interviews. The FPRC staff member typed and translated the co-moderators’ written notes from the two Hispanic focus groups. A native Spanish speaker reviewed translations for accuracy. Participants’

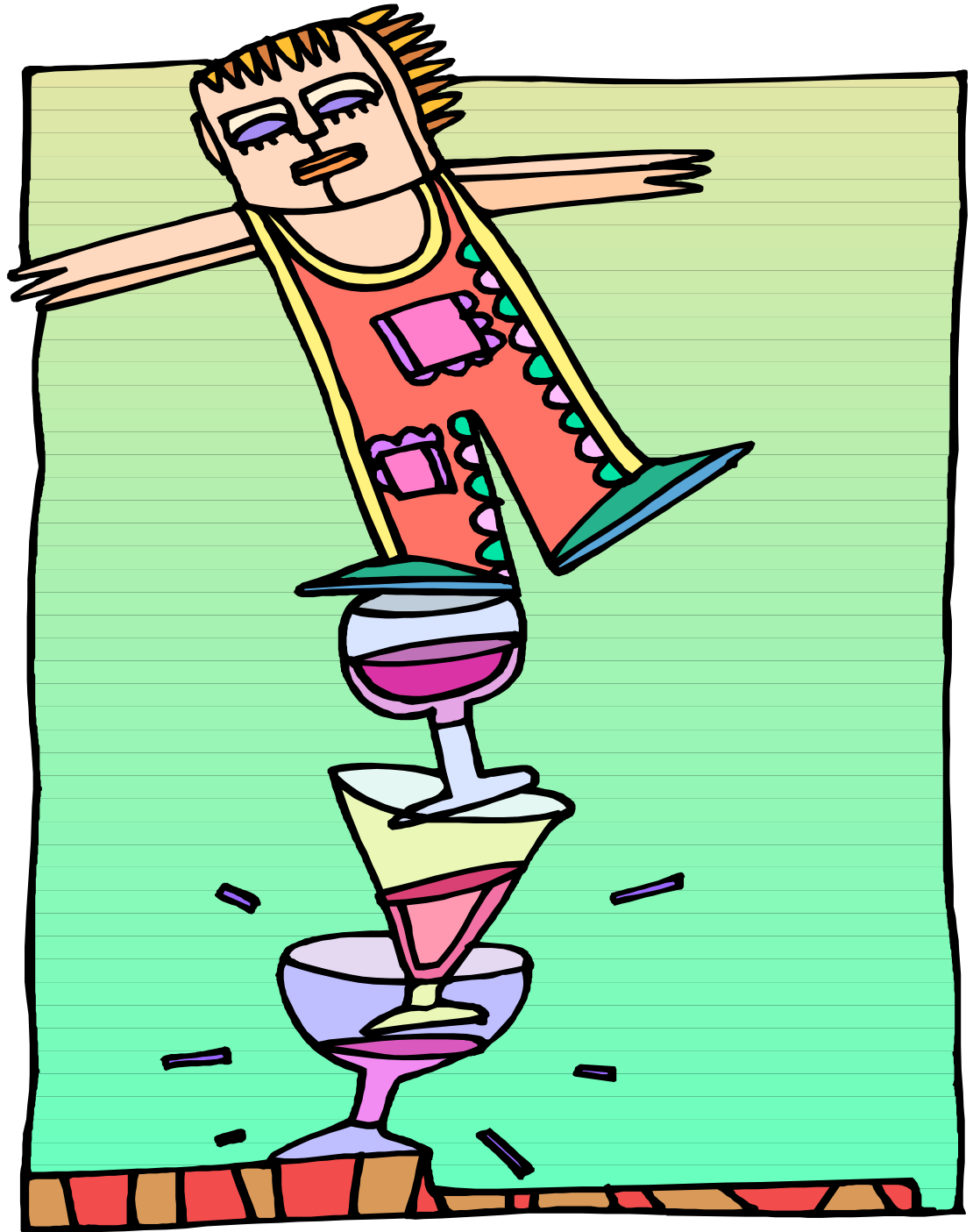


Data was transcribed, coded, entered into a computer, analyzed and interpreted. Spanish data was reviewed by a Spanish speaking translator for accuracy.

responses from the remaining interviews and the returned handouts also were typed.

Subsequently, at least two people read the transcripts and the typed notes from each focus group, interview, and handout. Readers included two USF graduate students, the Sarasota Prevention Marketing Coordinator, and three FPRC staff members. The readers coded the data by looking for themes that emerged and assigning a code word to each theme. Once the data were coded, an FPRC staff member entered the transcripts, notes, and codes into a computer program called *Ethnograph*. With *Ethnograph*, each code and its corresponding passages from the transcripts and notes were printed out. Subsequently, at least two people, including the Sarasota Prevention Marketing Coordinator, an FPRC staff member, and a USF graduate student, read each code and the corresponding passages to determine the main points found within each theme and to identify supporting quotes.

SECTION 2: RESEARCH FINDINGS YOUTH



INTRODUCTION



This chapter includes nine sections intended to summarize the research conducted with the youth. In each section the results will be used to examine the impact each factor has on initiation of alcohol use, recent alcohol use, and binge drinking.

This chapter contains a summary of the research conducted with youth. It includes data collected from focus group, individual interviews and the survey of 6th to 10th graders.

Research results are divided into nine sections:

- 1) A description of drinking rates among youth and their views of underage drinking;
- 2) Youth's perceptions of alcohol beverages;
- 3) Youth's perceptions of the benefits of drinking;
- 4) Youth's perceptions of the costs associated with drinking;
- 5) Social norms and the impact parents, siblings and peers have on drinking attitudes and behavior;
- 6) Youth's perceptions of their abilities to refuse alcohol;
- 7) Youth's perceptions of the role of media in underage drinking;
- 8) How youths gain access to alcoholic beverages; and
- 9) Youth's recommendations for preventing underage drinking.

In each section, we use the survey results to examine the impact each factor has on 1) drinking initiation; 2) recent drinking patterns; and/or 3) binge drinking.



Drinking initiation refers to whether or not youth report having “ever had a drink of alcohol (more than a few sips)”.

Recent drinking was defined as a positive response to, “In the past 30 days, have you had any alcohol to drink?”.

Binge drinking refers to whether or not youth say they have “had five or more drinks of alcohol in one day” in the past year.



To help you keep the three drinking behaviors (initiation, recent and binge drinking) in mind, the symbols above will be placed next to survey results throughout the text.

The initial analyses revealed that many of the factors that contribute to explaining whether youth drink alcohol are, themselves, other risk behaviors (e.g., tobacco use, delinquent behaviors) or risk behaviors of significant others (e.g., best friends, parents). Since these behaviors may not be direct intervention targets for programs aimed at preventing drinking, we have focused our subsequent analysis on identifying the factors that best explain youth smoking, among the factors that are promising and realistic intervention targets.

Only statistically significant predictors of each behavior are reported. The findings are highlighted by symbols that represent each behavior. The symbols are provided above, next to each definition, and again in Table 4. In addition, highlights from the qualitative research results are also provided.

While the predictors of ever drinking were assessed among all youth who responded to the survey, the predictors of recent drinking and binge drinking were assessed *only among youth who had already reported ever drinking*. In this way, we were able to understand what factors predict recent and binge drinking above and beyond predictors of ever drinking.

Note: In some tables, frequencies may not equal 100% due to rounding.

ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION




Drinking Behavior



A large proportion of Sarasota youth report that they have already had experience with alcoholic beverages

A large proportion of the youth report they have already consumed alcoholic beverages. As shown in Table 4, nearly half (45%) of 6th grade students report drinking alcohol in the past, with steady increases through 10th grade.

Fifteen percent of 6th grade students report drinking alcohol in the past 30 days, with steady increases across grade levels. Of particular note is the increase in 30-day alcohol use between 8th (32%) and 9th (47%) grades.

Table 4 Drinking Rates By Grade					
	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th
Have Ever Had A Drink of Alcohol EVER DRINKERS 	45%	60%	70%	79%	87%
Have Had A Drink In Last 30 Days RECENT DRINKERS 	15%	21%	32%	47%	49%
Have Had Five or More Drinks in One Day in the Last year BINGE DRINKERS 	7%	11%	25%	37%	46%

The proportion of students who have had five or more drinks in one day at some point in the past 12 months also increases steadily from 6th to 10th grade.



Among those who have initiated drinking, students in grades 9 and 10 are more than twice as likely as 6th graders to have consumed five or more drinks in a given day during the past year.



Among students who have already initiated drinking, youth in grades 9 and 10 are more likely to binge drink than 6th graders. Youth who started drinking later were less likely to binge drink .

Most of the students who have initiated drinking did so before they were 13 years old (Table 5). Eleven percent of the youth report having had their first drink by age 8 and another 11% had started by the time they were 10 years old. Twenty-two percent initiated drinking when they were 12 or 13 years of age, and the remaining students initiated drinking at age 14 or older.

Table 5 How old were you when you had your first drink of alcohol (more than a few sips)?	
I have never had a drink	34%
8 years old or younger	11%
9 years old	4%
10 years old	7%
11 years old	8%
12 years old	11%
13 years old	11%
14 years old or older	14%

When asked about their future plans, relatively few students who have not already initiated drinking plan to do so in the next year. Many do plan, however, to try alcohol at some point in the future.

The table below shows the proportion of non-drinkers who say they intend to drink in the next twelve months and at some time in their lifetimes.

Table 6 Drinking Intentions Among Never-Drinkers By Grade					
	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
Plan to try alcohol in the next twelve months	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%
Plan to try alcohol ever in my lifetime	29%	22%	19%	14%	8%



Youth are mixed in their views about drinking on special occasions or situations. The youth that believe it is acceptable to drink in special situations are also more likely to binge drink.

Beer appears to be the beverage of choice, although wine and liquor are also consumed.

The most commonly mentioned places youth say they plan to drink include parties, weddings and at home. Students are mixed in their views on drinking in special situations; some believe it is OK, while others do not believe it is OK.



The more strongly youth believe that it is okay to drink on special occasions, the more likely they are to have ever used alcohol. Among those who have already initiated drinking, the more strongly youth believe that it is okay to drink on special occasions, the more likely they are to report binge drinking in the past year.

Table 7	
It is OK for kids my age to drink alcohol during special occasions, such as holidays, weddings and family reunions.	
Strongly Disagree	15%
Disagree	22%
Agree	38%
Strongly Agree	25%



Among those who have already initiated drinking, youth who believe that it is OK for kids their age to drink are more likely than those who do not to report binge drinking in the past year.

Table 8	
It is OK for kids my age to drink alcohol*	
Strongly Disagree	30%
Disagree	39%
Agree	23%
Strongly Agree	7%

*Responses among those who have already initiated drinking alcohol.

Student Characteristics Associated with Drinking Behavior



The lower the self reported grades students earn in school, the greater the likelihood they have ever had a drink.



Students who identified themselves as White were over three times less likely to drink than those who self-identified as Black.



Students who identified themselves as White were also half as likely to have ever had a drink of alcohol than those who self-identified in other racial categories.



The more hours per week youth work during the school year, the greater the likelihood they have initiated drinking.



Among those who have initiated drinking alcohol, the more youth were involved in school activities (e.g., band, drama, sports, cheerleading) the less likely they were to report binge drinking in the past year.



Youth involved in school activities are less likely to binge drink than youth who are not involved in such activities.

Table 9 Participation in School Sponsored Activities*	
Never/Rarely (0 – 1 days)	55%
Sometimes (2 days)	16%
A lot of the Time (3-4 days)	10%
Most or All of the Time (5-7 days)	19%

*Responses among those who have already initiated drinking alcohol.

Norms

Most students **do not** believe it is acceptable for young people to consume alcohol. The table below summarizes their responses to the question, "At what age do you think it is OK to drink alcohol?"

Table 10	
Age it is OK to Drink Alcohol	
8 years old or younger	1%
9 to 10 years old	1%
11-12 years old	1%
13-14 years old	4%
15-16 years old	10%
17-18 years old	16%
19-20 years old	9%
21 years of age or older	40%
It is never OK to drink alcohol	17%



In focus groups, youth were asked to differentiate between beer, wine and liquor. Youth generally felt that wine was fancier, liquor was more dangerous and used to get drunk, and beer is for having fun.

In focus groups, youth were asked to differentiate between beer, wine and alcohol. Many youth describe beer and wine as containing less alcohol than liquor. Liquor was viewed as the most dangerous form of alcohol and the type used to get drunk. Wine was associated with special occasions, while beer was considered the beverage of choice when someone wants to have fun.

"Wine is fancier." (7th/8th grade female)

"Wine is more of a thing that you drink at fancy stuff." (6th grade male)

"Liquor is like when people get depressed." (6th grade male)

"Liquor is the strongest and the one that can cause the most problems." (5th/6th grade female)

PERCEIVED BENEFITS OF DRINKING



The youth feel that there are benefits to drinking. Benefits include coping with problems and having fun.

Sarasota County youth associate numerous benefits with drinking alcoholic beverages. These benefits include having fun and helping youth cope with problems.

Coping With Problems

Many focus group participants talked about the use of alcohol to cope with stress and emotional problems. They believe their parents or other adults use alcohol to cope with economic stress, family problems, anger and other unpleasant emotions.

“A lot of people do that because they want to calm down, so they drink or something.” (9th grade female)

“I think it is something you do when you’re depressed and you drink liquor when you’re depressed. Most people drink liquor when they are depressed.” (6th grade male)

“Liquor is like when people get depressed and they just say ‘I need to get drunk’.” (6th grade male)

Some students believe alcohol helps kids their age cope with emotional problems.



Among those who have already initiated drinking, students who believe kids their age use alcohol to cope with emotional problems are significantly more likely than those who do not to report having used alcohol in the past thirty days.

Table 11 Alcohol as a Mechanism for Coping with Emotional Benefits*				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I think drinking alcohol helps kids my age deal with their problems.	6%	21%	39%	34%
I think drinking alcohol helps kids my age deal with being sad or depressed.	11%	28%	36%	25%
I think drinking alcohol helps kids my age feel better when they are upset.	10%	32%	36%	22%
I think drinking alcohol helps kids my age deal with anger.	7%	23%	38%	31%

*Responses among those who have already initiated drinking alcohol.

Having Fun



Approximately 2/3 of youth believe kids their age drink because it is fun. The more strongly youth believe this, the more likely they are to be recent drinkers and binge drinkers.

For some youth, drinking alcohol is a way to have fun. Youth observe their parents and other adults drinking alcohol when they are at parties or having fun with friends. Many expect to drink at high school parties.

“It’s fun to have it when you’re grown up and when you’re having parties and stuff.” (6th grade female)

“It’s just fun, they get all drunk and have a good time together.” (11th grade female)

“Because you gotta have more fun when you’re drunk or drinking.” (8th grade female)

Approximately two-thirds of youth believe kids their age drink alcohol because it is fun.



Among those who have initiated drinking, the more strongly youth agree with the statement “I think kids my age drink because it is fun”, the more likely they are to have consumed alcohol in the past 30 days



Among those who have initiated drinking, the more strongly youth believe drinking is fun, the more likely they are to report binge drinking in the past year.

<u>Table 12</u> I think kids my age drink because it is fun*	
Strongly Disagree	11%
Disagree	20%
Agree	42%
Strongly Agree	27%

*Responses among those who have already initiated drinking alcohol.

Looking Mature



Some youth in the focus groups felt drinking makes them grown up. However, in the survey very few youth thought drinking makes them look more mature.

One aspect of youth's social image that has an unexpected negative relationship with their drinking behavior is the view that drinking makes them look more mature.

Relatively few (12%) of the young people surveyed share the view that drinking makes them look more mature.



Those who believe drinking makes them look more grown up are actually less likely to have ever tried drinking. One possible explanation for this finding is the impact drinking experience has for youth in correcting this myth. Youth who have experienced drinking know that alcohol can make people look and act very immature.

Social Image

Social image is an important issue during adolescence and in general. Focus group discussants talked at length about the importance of fitting in with their peers, being popular and looking cool. They also spoke about their fears of losing friends.

“It’s like you don’t really want to drink, but you have to drink to be popular.” (5th/6th grade female)

“Probably meet new friends that think you’re really cool and all and stuff.” (6th grade female)

Relatively few of the students surveyed, however, believe drinking will enhance their social image.

Table 13 Drinking and Social Image*				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I think drinking alcohol helps kids my age fit it.	5%	19%	42%	34 %
I think drinking alcohol helps my age be more popular.	6%	20%	46%	28%
I think drinking alcohol helps kids my age look cooler	3%	10%	44%	42%

*Responses among those who have already initiated drinking alcohol.



Among students who have already initiated drinking, students who say drinking enhances their social attractiveness are actually less likely to binge drink, perhaps because they realize the impact that over consumption can have on their behavior and how people are perceived by others when they are drunk.

“Actually, I would feel pretty much happy and clean because I know because if you’re clean and sober and you’re looking at them, I’m lucky I’m not doing it and acting pretty stupid and falling all over each other.” (11th grade male)

Other Benefits

Other benefits mentioned in focus groups and individual interviews that are **not** significantly related to drinking behaviors as measured in the Sarasota Youth Survey include:

- curiosity about alcohol and its psycho-physiological affects;
- the desire to get high; and
- defiance of authority or a desire to rebel against parental advice.

As seen in Table 14, students' perceptions of how alcohol tastes change steadily as they grow older.

Table 14 I think alcohol tastes bad by grade level					
	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
Strongly Disagree	10%	13%	18%	20%	22%
Disagree	14%	25%	28%	35%	35%
Agree	24%	20%	29%	22%	20%
Strongly Agree	51%	42%	25%	24%	23%

PERCEIVED COSTS OF DRINKING



The strongest deterrents to drinking include: unpleasant taste, looking dumb, getting addicted and car accidents.

Students describe a variety of costs associated with drinking. The taste of alcohol, the fear of looking dumb and getting addicted, and getting into an automobile accident when drinking are the strongest deterrents.

Unpleasant Taste

Slightly more than half the students surveyed believe alcohol tastes bad.

"I had a sip of my mom's and it tasted really bad." (6th grade female)

"It tastes nasty. Because my dad let me try it to see if I liked it and I hated it. That was when I was really young. So I wouldn't do it again." (7th grade female)

Many youth noted that alcohol use is portrayed in the media.

Youths' perceptions of alcohol's tastes are associated with their drinking behavior.



Youth who agree that alcohol tastes bad are less likely than those who disagree to have initiated drinking.



Among those who have initiated drinking, the stronger they believe alcohol tastes bad, the less likely they are to report recent drinking and binge drinking during the previous year.



The more likely kids agree drinking makes kids their age look dumb, the less likely they are to be recent drinkers or binge drinkers.

Looking “Dumb”

Approximately half the students’ surveyed think drinking makes kids their age look dumb.

“To me I think it’s stupid. I think it just brings you down.”
(10th grade female)

“I just think they’re making a fool of themselves and they’ll be sorry about it later.” (10th grade female)

“Actually I feel pretty much happy and clean because I know ... if you’re clean and sober and you’re looking at them, I’m lucky I’m not doing it and acting pretty stupid. Watching them be all stupid and falling all over each other.” (11th grade male)

Table 15	
I think drinking makes kids my age look dumb.	
Strongly Disagree	11%
Disagree	39%
Agree	27%
Strongly Agree	24%

*Responses among those who have already initiated drinking alcohol.



Among those who have already initiated drinking, the more strongly youth agree with the statement, “ I think drinking makes kids my age look dumb”, the less likely they are to have used alcohol in the past month.



Among those who have already initiated drinking, youth who think drinking makes them look dumb are also more likely to report binge drinking in the past year.

Automobile Accidents

Many focus group discussants mentioned car accidents as a consequence of alcohol consumption. They shared fears that they or their loved ones could be killed. Some mentioned that drunk drivers often kill “innocent people.”

“Getting drunk when you’re driving and getting into a car crash” (6th grade female)

“It always ends up that if somebody drinks, they get into a car and they end up killing somebody that’s innocent including themselves” (7th/8th grade female)

Eighty-six percent of survey respondents believe that kids their age who drink alcohol are more likely to get in an accident.

Table 16 I think that when kids my age drink, they are more likely to get in an accident	
Strongly Disagree	5%
Disagree	10%
Agree	31%
Strongly Agree	54%

The perception that drinking contributes to automobile accidents is significantly associated with young people’s drinking rates.



The more strongly youth believe that kids their age who drink will get in an accident, the less likely they are to have ever used alcohol.

Health Problems

Youth are familiar with many health problems associated with drinking. In focus groups, those mentioned most often include death, cancer, liver disease, pregnancy complications, heart failure, alcohol poisoning, vomiting, feeling bloated, and neurological damage.

“You can get sick with liver disease.” (7th/8th grade female)

“Their brain could get messed up.” (6th grade female)



Youth who agree that drinking causes health problems are more likely to have initiated alcohol use.

Older youth also mentioned hangovers and blackouts as consequences of heavy drinking.

“Hangovers, I guess. Not remembering like what you were doing.” (10th grade male)

Knowledge of alcohol-related health consequences does not, however, deter young people from starting to drink.



In fact, the more strongly survey respondents agree with the statement “I think drinking alcohol can cause serious health problems,” the **more** likely they are to have ever used alcohol. This finding may reflect the knowledge youth gain about alcohol after they start using, (e.g., hangovers) and/or their increased attentiveness among drinkers to messages about alcohol’s long term impact on health.

Addiction



Youth know that alcohol is an addictive substance, and approximately 2/3 think that it is easy to become addicted. The more strongly students agree that it is easy to get addicted, the less likely they are to have initiated drinking.

Most youth know alcohol is an addictive substance and discussed alcoholism or dependence as a possible consequence of drinking.

“They can become alcoholics.” (9th grade male)

“You can get addicted.” (9th grade female)

“I know people can get addicted. My dad’s addicted. You can’t even get him to not drink for a day. He’ll sit there and kick back 2-24 packs in like 8 hours.” (8th grade male)

Approximately two-thirds of the students believe it is easy to become addicted.

<u>Table 17</u> I think it is easy to get addicted to alcohol.	
Strongly Disagree	11%
Disagree	22%
Agree	37%
Strongly Agree	30%



The more strongly students agree with the statement “it is easy to get addicted to alcohol,” the less likely they are to have initiated drinking.

Other Costs

In focus groups, some students say they are afraid of being caught and punished by parents, school authorities or the police. Although many survey respondents agree that kids who take alcohol to school would get caught, their answers to this question are not significantly related to their drinking behavior.

SOCIAL NORMS

Parents

Parents may have an important influence on their children's drinking behavior. They serve as role models, offer advice about drinking, and provide supervision after school and enforce curfews on weekends.



Parents may be an important influence in their children's drinking behaviors. Role modeling, influence, supervision, and relationship with parents are all factors that influence youth drinking.

Modeling

Young people learn about drinking's benefits by watching their parents' drink to have fun, relax and cope with problems at work and home. They also learn about the costs associated with drinking when their parents lose emotional control or get sick after drinking too much.

"My dad says that it tastes nasty but it just makes him feel relaxed." (6th grade male)

".... when my dad gets really mad he drinks a lot and he gets even madder." (6th grade female)

"I know people can get addicted. My dad's addicted. You can't even get him to not drink for a day. He'll sit there and kick back two 24 packs in like 8 hours" (8th grade male)

Thirty percent of the students say that they have wished that one or both of their parents would drink less. Students also report that about 75% of their mothers and fathers usually drink on special occasions, but only 10% of their mothers and 21% of their fathers drink every day or almost every day.

Parental Influence



Most youth listen to their parents when they give advice about drinking. Few youth report their parents think it is OK for them to drink. Those who think their parents approve are more likely to have initiated drinking.

Most students say that they listen to their parents' advice about drinking.



Among those who have initiated drinking, the more strongly youth agree they listen to their parents' advice about drinking, the less likely they were to report binge drinking.

Table 18 When my parents/guardians give me advice about drinking alcohol, I usually listen to them.*	
Strongly Disagree	7%
Disagree	18%
Agree	47%
Strongly Agree	29%

*Responses among those who have already initiated drinking alcohol.

Only 14% of the student sample agreed with the question, "My parents/guardians think it is OK for me to drink alcohol."

Table 19 My parents/guardians think it is OK for me to drink alcohol	
Strongly Disagree	54%
Disagree	32%
Agree	11%
Strongly Agree	3%

Although the percentages of youth agreeing with this statement are small, youth's perceptions' of their parents' opinions has an important impact on initiation rates.



The more strongly they believe their parents approve, the more likely they have initiated drinking.

Supervision



Most youth are allowed, at least occasionally, to set their own weekend curfews. The more frequently parents allow them to make these decisions, the greater the likelihood that youth have started drinking. Supervision is also a factor in drinking. The more supervision they have after school, the less likely they are to have initiated drinking and to binge drink.

Most youth say they are allowed, at least occasionally, to make decisions about their weekend curfews.

How often do your parents/guardians let you make your own decision about the time you must be home on weekend nights?	
Always	15%
Most of the time	25%
Some of the time	30%
Almost never	15%
Never	15%



The more frequently parents allow their children to make decisions about their weekend curfews, the greater the likelihood that the youth have initiated drinking.

Table 19 On school days, how often do you spend more than an hour without an adult around?	
Always (5 days/week)	45%
Most of the time (4 days/week)	14%
Some of the time (2-3 days/week)	18%
Almost never (1 day/week)	14%
Never (0 days/week)	9%

The amount of time young people spend unsupervised is also related to drinking behavior among youth.



The less frequently youth spend more than an hour after school unsupervised, the less likely they are to have initiated drinking.



Among those who have initiated drinking, the less frequently youth spend more than an hour after school unsupervised, the less likely they are to report binge drinking in the past year.

Relationship with Parents



The majority of youth in the survey feel a mutual closeness with their parents. Students generally feel closer to their mothers than their fathers. Interestingly, among youth who have ever drunk, the stronger their relationship with their mother, the more likely they are to have initiated drinking and to have drunk in the past month.

Most students are pleased with the relationships they have with their parents. When asked how much their parents care about them, 84% of survey respondents say their father cares about them “very much” or “quite a bit.” An even larger proportion of young people (93%) say their mothers care about them “very much” or “quite a bit”

They paint a similar picture when asked to estimate how close they feel to their parents, how satisfied they are with the way they communicate with each parent, and how satisfied overall they are with their relationship with each parent.

Using a composite score of students’ responses to these questions, students generally report having a better quality relationship with their mothers than fathers. However, the findings also point to an unexpected relationship between the mother-child relationship and drinking initiation.



The stronger the relationship with their mothers, the **more** likely youth are to have initiated drinking.



Among students who have initiated drinking, the stronger their relationship with their mothers, the **more** likely they are to have consumed alcohol in the past month.

A comparison of students’ answers to questions about the mother-child relationship and the question about curfews provides clues into this finding. Students who are given freedom in setting curfews rate their relationship with their mothers more positively, but they are also more likely to drink.

Family Structure

Fifty-five percent of the youth surveyed live with both their parents. Others live with one parent, a parent and stepparent or in other types of households.

Table 20 Usual Living Arrangements Among Youth Who Have Already Initiated Drinking*	
Both Parents	55%
Single Parent	22%
Parent and Step Parent	14%
Split time between Parents	7%
Grandparents	2%
Others	1%

*Responses among youth who have already initiated drinking.



Children who split their time between two parents' homes are nearly three times more likely to have started drinking than those who live in the same household with both parents.



Among those who have initiated drinking, those who live with both parents are two times less likely to binge drink than those who live with one parent or with one parent and a step-parent.



The higher youths' estimates of peer drinking, the more likely they are to have ever drank and the more likely they are to have binge drank.

Siblings

Some students say that older siblings are an important source of information about the benefits of drinking and access to alcohol.

"Well, my brother, he's like 18 and he shouldn't be drinking but he has a lot of alcohol in his room so I get messages that it's okay." (9th grade female)

In contrast, some youth have been told by their older siblings that they should not drink.

"She's always told me not to do it." (7th grade male)

When other factors were controlled, however, there were no statistical differences in the drinking behavior of survey respondents whose siblings drank than those with siblings who do not.

Friends and Peers

Friends and peers have a strong influence on youths' behaviors.

Others

Conformity

Conformity is another hallmark of adolescence. Students' estimates of the proportion of their peers who drink is closely tied to the likelihood that they drink themselves.



As youths' perceptions of the percentage of their peers who drink increases, the likelihood that they have initiated drinking increases.



Among youth who have initiated drinking, as youths' perceptions of the percentage of their peers who drink increases, the more likely they are to have binge drank during the past year.

Table 21 I think _____ of the kids my age drink alcohol at least once in a while	
None	7%
Some (less than half)	35%
About half	25%
Most (more than half)	29%
All	4%

Peer Pressure

Some focus group participants talked about the pressures to drink they perceive from friends and other peers. Peers may actively encourage them to drink and show disapproval if they do not. Forms of disapproval include teasing, name-calling, threatening, and not being their friend.



Some focus group participants talked about peer pressure and the influence it has on their drinking behaviors. However, the majority of youth (90%) reported that they are able to say no when offered alcohol.

“And then sometimes you feel like you’re going to lose your best friend if you say no. You really don’t want to lose any of your friends.” (7th/8th grade female)

“Most people feel left out or something.” (7th/8th grade female)

“They call you chicken and tease you. Then your like, I’m not chicken. I’ll drink some. Then they just drink.” (7th/8th grade male)

“And the worst thing is when it’s your best friend and the offer you some and you say no and they just push you into it, or you’re just not their friend anymore.” (6th/7th grade female)

SELF EFFICACY



Saying no was just one type of refusal skill reported by the youth in the focus groups. Other refusal skills included walking away, changing friends, and refusing to ride in their car. Students who are confident in their refusal abilities are less likely to initiate drinking.

The majority of youth reported they are able to say “no” when offered alcohol. Over 90% agreed or strongly agreed with each of the statements below:

“If my best friend offered me alcohol, I would be able to say no.”

“If someone more popular than me offered me alcohol, I would be able to say no.”

“If an older brother or sister offered me alcohol, I would be able to say no.”

Other refusal skills mentioned include walking away, deciding not to hang around with them or be their friend, hanging out with non-drinkers, or deceiving them by pouring out the alcohol:

“I would just find new friends that don’t drink. They wouldn’t be my friends anymore. I’d just find some new friends that don’t drink.”
(5th/6th grade female)

“And if they say ‘Do you want to hang out with us and drink’ you say no.”
(7th grade female)



The more youth agree they are confident in their abilities to refuse alcohol from friends, peers and siblings, the less likely they are to have initiated drinking.

Many students also said they would refuse to ride in a car with someone who had been drinking.

MEDIA



In the qualitative research, youth discussed many examples of how the media portrays people having fun while drinking.

In focus groups, many older youth talked about the impact television, radio, movies, and music have on youth drinking. They pointed to the numerous examples portrayed by the media of people having fun while drinking.

“Because movies, they are usually at this party and they’re drinking and having a good time with their friends.” (9th grade female)

“A lot of music talks about alcohol.” (10th grade male)

ACCESS TO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Most youth reported that it is easy to get alcohol.



Most youth report that it is easy to access alcohol. Access can come from family members, strangers and older friends. When those methods do not work, some youth steal or use fake I.D.'s

Table 22 It would be easy for me to get alcohol if I wanted to.	
Strongly Disagree	16%
Disagree	21%
Agree	32%
Strongly Agree	31%



The more strongly youth agree it is easy to get access to alcohol, the more likely they are to have initiated drinking.

Youth said they were able to obtain alcohol from parents, older siblings, and strangers who they pay to purchase alcohol for them. When those channels are unproductive, then youth may steal alcohol from stores or parents, or they may use fake ID's to purchase alcohol.

"They steal from their parents." (6th grade male)

"If they know somebody older than them who can buy it, they can ask them and give them the money." (6th grade male)

"If their parents have some in their house they might sneak it." (6th grade female)

Older youth also mentioned getting alcohol from older friends and purchasing it from a store where they know the person working.

"Usually older friends that drink." (9th grade male)

"My friend knows someone that works at a gas station up the street from me and he'll give it to us." (8th grade female)

Young people said they drink at home on holidays and at weddings, graduations, picnics, family gatherings, bachelor parties, and parties/adult parties.



Youth report that they drink at special events and gatherings, as well as parties. Youth consume alcohol in a variety of locations where "parents can't find them."

Other places where youth consume alcohol include the park/woods, on side streets, in cars, behind dumpsters, alleys, in vacant houses, behind buildings, in their rooms, school bathrooms, and concerts:

“Somewhere where parents can’t find them.” (6th grade female)

Some youth drink at home when their parents are gone.

“When the parents are not home, they just go to the house and drink.” (9th grade male)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PREVENTING UNDERAGE DRINKING

Sarasota County youth share a variety of opinions about the most appropriate recommendation(s) for an anti-drinking campaign designed for youth. Many students recommend the program advise Sarasota youth to abstain completely. Others feel complete abstinence is an unrealistic goal, especially for high school students. They claim that students would immediately discount and ignore messages telling them to abstain until they are of legal age. They believe the program should recommend moderate, responsible drinking. Although youth offered a variety of definitions for responsible drinking, most students associate responsible drinking with the refusal to drive when intoxicated.

“Responsible drinking is when you know that if you’re going to drink, you’re going to have someone else that could drive you home.” (7th grade female)

SPOKESPERSONS



Most trustworthy sources for information varied by grade.

Focus group discussants mentioned a wide variety of people – parents, older siblings, other relatives, professionals, and those who have experienced alcohol-related consequences – as trustworthy sources of drinking related information. When survey respondents were asked to select from a long list of potential information sources, their answers varied significantly by grade. Parents, other relatives, friends and other kids my age are the only information sources ranked in the top ten by students in all grades.

Table 23					
Whom do you trust the most to give you good information about the risks of drinking alcohol?					
Responses	Top Ten Choices by Grade Level				
	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
DARE officer/resource officer	1	2	-	-	-
A police officer	2	5	-	-	9
Teacher	3	9	-	5	10
Religious leader	-	3	6	8	8
School counselor	4	7	10	9	-
Other kids my age who drink	-	-	2	1	1
Other relatives	5	6	7	10	7
A celebrity	6	1	1	-	-
Parents	7	8	8	6	6
Friends	8	4	4	7	4
Older brothers/sisters	9	-	5	2	3
Other kids my age	10	10	3	4	2
Your doctor	-	-	9	3	5

Student recommendations regarding spokespersons for television and radio advertisements suggest that teachers, resource officers (e.g., DARE officers), religious leaders and other adults would be most effective for reaching 6th and 7th graders, while older students would listen to their peers the most.

Table 24
In a TV or radio advertisement about the risks of drinking alcohol for kids your age, who would most kids listen to?

Responses	Top Five Choices by Grade Level				
	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th
A teacher	1	3	-	-	-
A DARE officer/resource officer	2	2	-	-	-
An adult	3	4	5	-	-
Religious leader	4	1	3	-	-
Other kids my age	-	-	-	2	3
Other kids my age who drink	-	-	1	1	1
Someone who used to drink, but doesn't any more	-	-	-	3	2
A celebrity	-	5	2	4	5
A doctor	5	-	4	5	4

Spokesperson Attributes

Youth were asked to describe the ideal peer relevant to their recent grade. Their responses provide us with information that can be used to 'design' the most credible spokesperson. Attributes possessed by the ideal peer include:

- well dressed (no baggy pants);
- well groomed;
- pretty;
- not a preppie;
- fun;
- has a lot of friends;
- nice;
- plays sports; and,
- has a good sense of humor.

Information Channels

Methods or channels for information placement include billboards, banners, newspapers (front page), City Hall, posters, news, public service announcements, at the end of movies, recreation center, magazines, the internet, and television shows (e.g., Nickelodeon, BET, The Learning Channel):

"I would put them in cool magazines." (5th/6th grade female)

Prevention Strategies

Youth recommended a wide range of activities they believed would be effective in preventing underage drinking. Some youth mentioned established programs, such as the YMCA and Rehabilitation Programs, while others mentioned developing clubs/groups. One discussant stated programs must be interactive. A few indicated the programs should include statistics as well as information regarding the negative consequences and effects of drinking alcohol.

"Tell me like they used to do it and the bad experience they had with it." (10th grade male)

“I might do research on it, like the statistics about the deaths and different things that happen as a result of alcohol abuse.” (10th grade male)

“I would go to like a youth program and talk to them about it. Like the YMCA.” (9th grade male)

Focus group participants also recommend offering a variety of enjoyable “alcohol-free” activities for young people. Activities youth felt would be effective prevention strategies including sports programs, dances, games, day camp, water park/water day, drawing pictures, and pizza parties:

“Dancing, swimming.” (7th grade female)

“You could have gym night.” (7th grade female)

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study are consistent with the findings in the literature regarding drinking behavior and grade level. As the grade level increases so does the prevalence of those who have ever had a drink (ever drinkers), have had a drink in the last 30 days (recent drinkers), and have had five or more drinks in the last year (binge drinkers).

Overall, youth do **not** believe it is acceptable for young people to drink alcohol; however, many have tried or are recent users. They appear to distinguish between the types of alcohol (e.g., beer, wine, liquor).

Perceived benefits of drinking included coping with problems, having fun, looking mature, and social image. Social image encompasses fitting in, being more popular, and looking cooler.

Perceived costs of drinking included unpleasant taste of alcohol, looking “dumb,” automobile accidents, health problems, and addiction. Some mentioned fear of getting caught by parents, school or the authorities (police).

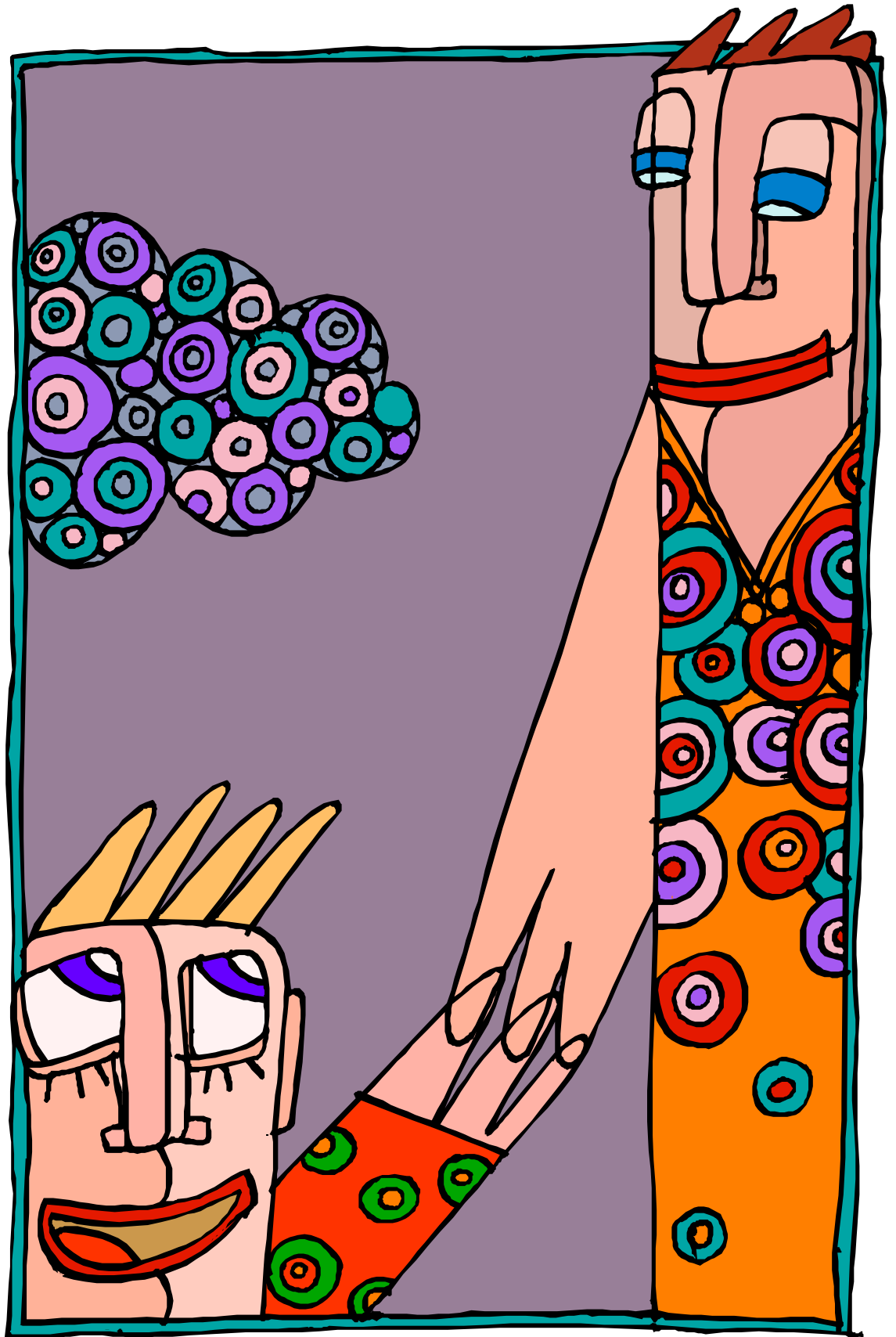
Parents have an important influence on their children’s drinking behavior. Youth see their parents as modeling drinking (or in some cases not drinking), and are learning when it is acceptable to drink through their parents. Family structure, sibling influence and behavior, as well as peer influence/peer pressure impact one’s decision to initiate drinking or continue to drink.

Gaining access to alcohol appears to be relatively easy for youth in Sarasota County.

Trustworthy spokespersons for providing information about risks of drinking alcohol varied widely among grade levels. Sixth and seventh graders noted a DARE officer/resource officer, number one and two, respectively. Whereas, 9th and 10th graders said that “other kids my age who drink” would be their first choice. Parents, other relatives, friends, and other kids my age were information sources ranked in the top ten by students in all grades.

Youth suggested a wide range of interventions they believe to be effective in preventing underage drinking.

SECTION 3: PARENT RESEARCH FINDINGS



INTRODUCTION



Based on phase 1 and 2 research it was determined that parents have a great deal of influence on their youth's decision to use alcohol. Little existing research exists regarding this topic, so additional focus groups and interviews were conducted with parents.

Phase 1 and 2 research found that parents of middle school and high school youth have a great deal of influence on their children's decisions about alcohol use (Alfonso et al., 2000). This finding supports other research that has been done in this area. For example, in a study with Hispanic and Non-Hispanic White adolescents, Coombs, Paulson, and Richardson (1990) found that the youth identify more strongly with parents than with peers and that parents have significantly more influence on the youth's decisions to use alcohol and other drugs than peers. Studies have shown that parents-based strategies can be effective and should be included in the prevention of underage drinking (Barnes, Farrell, and Cairns, 1986; Jaccard and Turrissi, 1999; Loveland-Cherry, Ross, and Kaufman, 1999).

A limited amount of research exists on parent attitudes toward underage drinking and prevention. The purposes of the current study were to identify parents' attitudes toward underage drinking in Sarasota County; to identify their perceptions of the benefits and costs of four proposed strategies to prevent underage drinking, their ability to use the strategies, and the social norms surrounding the strategies; to identify effective information channels and spokespersons to communicate messages to parents; to identify any additional strategies for preventing underage drinking; and to identify ways to increase parent involvement in prevention efforts.

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METHODS

Sample

Community-Based Prevention Marketing Community Advisory Committee members, FPRC staff, and University of South Florida graduate students determined the sample of participants for the study. Participants included parents or guardians of middle school and high school youth in Sarasota County, as well as some community leaders who work extensively with Sarasota County youth in those age groups. Although the sample was one of convenience, an effort was made to have representation from diverse geographic locations and ethnic backgrounds within the county.

Focus Group Participants

There were 35 focus group participants. Two of the focus groups were made up of Non-Hispanic Whites; two were made up mostly of African Americans; and two were made up of Hispanics.

Individual Interview Participants

There were 12 interview participants. Of these participants, nine were Non-Hispanic White and three were Hispanic.

Recruitment

Community-Based Prevention Marketing Community Advisory Committee members and FPRC staff determined the various methods to be used for recruiting participants for focus groups and interviews. Some participants were recruited from the Sarasota County Health and Human Services Business Center through a departmental mailing or word of mouth. Others were recruited through community organizations around the county. For example, participants were recruited through the Laurel Community Center, St. Martha's Catholic Church, Sarasota County Technical Institute's English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes, Booker Middle School, and the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition. Other participants were acquaintances of CBPM CAC members. It should be noted that recruitment of participants for the study proved more difficult than had been anticipated. For example, one CBPM CAC member contacted 25 friends and neighbors to participate in focus groups, and none of them participated.

Study Questionnaire

Researchers used the same questionnaire for focus groups and interviews. The questionnaire was developed in a four-step process. First, USF graduate students and FPRC staff constructed a draft questionnaire. Second, the USF students and CBPM CAC members pretested the questionnaire. Third, the USF

students and FPRC staff revised the questionnaire. Fourth, CBPM CAC members revised the questionnaire again.

Handout

Community-Based Prevention Marketing Community Advisory Committee members and FPRC staff developed a handout for participants to provide additional comments and suggestions anonymously.

Focus Groups

Focus groups were conducted at four locations. Two of the focus groups were conducted at the Sarasota County Health Department; two were conducted at the Laurel Community Center; one was conducted at St. Martha's Catholic Church; and one was conducted at the Sarasota County Technical Institute. Although some Hispanic participants spoke both English and Spanish, both Hispanic focus groups were conducted primarily in Spanish as per the participants' preference.

Moderators and co-moderators included three USF graduate students, an FPRC staff member, the Sarasota Prevention Marketing Coordinator, and two bilingual Hispanic community leaders from Sarasota. All moderators and co-moderators received training from FPRC staffs on the purposes of the study, the study questionnaire, and how to conduct focus groups. The Hispanic moderator and co-moderator adjusted the study questionnaire and focus group procedures according to the linguistic and cultural norms of the Hispanic participants.

Focus groups were recorded on audiotape, while co-moderators recorded notes on paper. Participants discussed the study questions as a group, and each person completed an information form to capture some demographic data. Participants were given a handout with a self-addressed, stamped envelope to take home with them, on which they could provide additional comments and suggestions and then mail back to the researchers. The information forms and handouts were translated into Spanish for Hispanic participants. Each focus group participant received a \$20 Wal-Mart or K-Mart gift card as an incentive and, when available, a brochure entitled "Keeping Youth Drug Free."

Individual Interviews

Individual interviews were conducted at various locations throughout Sarasota County, depending on what was most convenient for the participant and the interviewer. All interviews were conducted in English.

Interviewers included three CBPM CAC members, the Sarasota Prevention Marketing Coordinator, and an FPRC staff member. Interviewers were trained by FPRC staffs on the purposes of the study, the study questionnaire, and how to conduct individual interviews.

Two of the interviews were recorded on audiotape, while the other eleven were recorded by taking written notes. As in the focus groups, interview participants completed an information form and were given a handout and self-addressed,

stamped envelope to provide the researchers with additional information. Each individual interview participant received a \$10 Wal-Mart gift card as an incentive and, when possible, a brochure entitled "Keeping Youth Drug Free."

Handouts

Three participants returned handouts to the researchers with additional written comments and suggestions about underage drinking.

Data Analysis

All audiotapes were transcribed. An independent contractor transcribed the tapes from the four groups conducted in English. An FPRC staff member transcribed the tapes from the two groups conducted in Spanish and from the two interviews. The FPRC staff member typed and translated the co-moderators' written notes from the two Hispanic focus groups. A native Spanish speaker reviewed translations for accuracy. Participants' responses from the remaining interviews and the returned handouts were also typed.

A minimum of two people read the transcripts and the typed notes from each focus group, interview, and handout. Readers included two USF graduate students, the Sarasota Prevention Marketing Coordinator, and three FPRC staff members. The readers coded the data by looking for themes that emerged and assigning a code word to each theme. Once the data were coded, an FPRC staff member entered the transcripts, notes, and codes into a computer program called Ethnograph. Using Ethnograph, each code and its corresponding passages from the transcripts and notes were printed out. Then a minimum of two people, including the Sarasota Prevention Marketing Coordinator, an FPRC staff member, and a USF graduate student, read each code and the corresponding passages to determine the main points found within each theme and to find supporting quotes.

RESULTS

Focus groups and individual interviews were conducted with parents in Sarasota County to identify parents' perceptions of alcohol use in Sarasota County, the benefits and costs of various prevention strategies, self efficacy (i.e., their ability to effectively use the strategies), social norms surrounding the strategies, effective information channels and spokespersons to communicate messages to parents, and ways to increase parent involvement in prevention efforts. Parents' responses have been organized into the following themes: (1) general concerns, (2) drinking behavior, (3) parent-based strategies for prevention of underage drinking, (4) other strategies, (5) other promotional recommendations, and (6) caveats for parent-based prevention strategies.

General Concerns

Participants discussed at length their concerns with being parents, including their aspirations for their children, the challenges they face as parents, and what worries them the most.

Parents' Aspirations for their Children

- When asked to discuss their aspirations as parents, they talked about the following dreams they have for their children:
 - Feeling safe and secure
 - Having good physical, mental, and emotional health
 - Having good self esteem and self confidence
 - Getting a good education
 - Feeling that they are cared for by family and community
 - Having positive role models
 - Being happy
 - Having religious faith
 - Having a good relationship with their parents
 - Being independent
 - Having good morals, values, and the ability to make good decisions
 - Having their material needs met

Parents' Challenges and Worries

Safety

- Participants consistently mentioned safety as a challenge they face as parents, as an aspiration they have for their kids, as what comes to mind

when they think of underage drinking, and as a motivator for them to prevent underage drinking.

Last year this community went through a real hard time with three or four accidents with young drivers and stuff, so I always think about that.

There's too many things that can happen when they are drinking. You wake up raped. Or you don't wake up at all.

Parents' concept of safety included such things as:

- Keeping kids safe from crime
- Keeping kids safe from physical harm
- Keeping kids safe from mental and emotional harm
- Keeping kids safe from accidental death or suicide
- Keeping kids safe from car accidents or being hit by a car
- Keeping kids safe from being raped
- Preventing drinking and driving
- Preventing teenage pregnancy
- Keeping schools safe from guns and violence
- Having kids be able to trust the people around them
- Making kids feel secure
- Protecting kids from unfair treatment
- Protecting kids from drugs and alcohol that are available
- Protecting kids from sexually explicit material and messages

Discipline

- The issue of discipline was a major concern for many parents. Parents generally felt that teaching their kids discipline is very important. The idea of discipline included setting and negotiating rules and limits for kids, maintaining control within the home, teaching kids about consequences for their actions, teaching kids responsibility, teaching kids respect, and punishing them.
- Parents sometimes felt they are unable to discipline their children as they would like.

And if you spank him or chastise him, you're behind bars with no questions asked because the kids say it...The parents don't have no say.

Yeah, a lot of parents these days in this century, they feel like, 'Well, I don't want my child to be afraid of me, so I let him do this and that and the other.'

- Many parents felt that teaching kids discipline is an effective way to prevent them from drinking alcohol.

Parents need to hold kids accountable for cleaning their rooms, chores around the house, to help pay for car insurance. If they learn to be

accountable and know it is expected of them, they will be accountable when it comes to drinking.

- Difficulty in balancing the need to discipline children and the desire to teach them independence was also a common theme. As a result, some parents are inconsistent as disciplinarians.

I think the fine line between having control as a parent and also being able to give them their freedom that they need to be able to experience the things that they need to experience to grow into a young adult.

Supervision

- Many parents find it difficult to spend as much time with their kids as they would like. Many worry about the amount of time their kids are left unsupervised.

There's just so much in a day's time with so many kids and so many activities and so much homework and so much everything and working three jobs and everything I do. It's like, how can you stay focused? What is happening to all of our families?

- Many parents felt they are competing with outside influences on their children's lives that could undermine the values they have tried to instill in their children. They are concerned about their kids making the right choices.

Sometimes they choose other role models or other parents that do not have the same values that you do.

So at times it's very challenging when you try to instill those values in your child, and they see their peers doing other things than what I'm trying to instill in my child.

Because there are a lot of things around them that make them think they don't count.

- Many Hispanic parents felt it is more difficult to raise their children in the United States than it would have been in their native countries because of the cultural differences.

Other Issues

- Communicating with children
- Instilling children with a sense of self worth and knowledge that they are loved
- Educating children and teaching them to respect them and other adults
- Developing trust and mutual understanding between parents and kids
- Coping with children's social lives

- Coping with the availability of drugs and alcohol on the streets

Drinking Behavior

Parents discussed their views on behaviors related to alcohol use, including the prevalence and acceptability of drinking in Sarasota County, the norms associated with adult drinking behavior, their personal experiences with alcohol as youth, the norms associated with youth drinking behavior, the influence of peer pressure on drinking behavior, their perceptions of the acceptability of underage drinking, and parents' lack of awareness about underage drinking.

Drinking in Sarasota County

- Most parents in the focus groups were concerned about the level of alcohol consumption by youth and adults in Sarasota County. They felt that drinking is generally an accepted behavior in Sarasota County.

It's okay to do that, so people do it...People don't think it's a problem.

Every function that we have in this town has alcohol. Fourth of July, the Grand Prix races. Everything revolves around alcohol in this town.

- Some parents said that the relaxed, resort-like atmosphere and wealth in the county contribute to alcohol use.

It's sort of relaxed, laid back, party...There's that feeling. And I think the kids sort of just get sucked right into that too.

I mean, you got the big old liquor cabinets in the nice homes.

- There was a general perception that drinking is very common among adults, especially in social situations.

Where we go anymore most people are drinking.

The only time I drink is when I have company. And I seem to have company all the time.

It's part of the lifestyle of a lot of people. It's a socially acceptable adult behavior.

- Some parents felt that it is even an expected behavior for adults, and they feel pressure from other adults to drink.

Yeah, I do get people that are baffled that I don't drink.

It's done got to be like a social thing. And a lot of times I tell them, 'No, I don't want one.' 'Oh, come on, come on.' And I'll take it anyway, even though I know in my heart that I didn't want it.

Even though we try not to drink when we take our kids. Others do not feel the same way...It is hard to be different.

Parents' Experiences As Teenagers

- Most parents were exposed to alcohol when they were growing up, and the majority had initiated drinking as adolescents.

I come from an Italian background, and that was a normal thing with the grandparents to always have wine at the table.

Alcohol was available in my home because we are a culture that we could drink wine, wine is available.

We actually had Freak Night in high school...It was just accepted that you went down to the beach, and there was probably liquor there.

- For most parents, their personal experiences with alcohol as adolescents have influenced the way they handle the subject with their children now.

My parents didn't talk to me. And the minute I had freedom, I just blew loose. So to me, I tell [my son] that, 'This is for your own good.'

Half of my drinking was done in my own neighborhood at so-and-so's house because her mother worked at nights...The supervision, I think, for me was the biggest part because [my parents] truly never questioned what I was doing...So some of the things I do with my daughter... I'm like, 'I know.'

I think anything you put too much emphasis on...That's how I was. Anything my momma told me that was not good, I had to see why it wasn't good.

Underage Drinking

- There was a general perception that drinking is common among kids. When asked to estimate the percentage of youth who drink alcohol, parents estimated between 30% and 100%, with 75% being the most frequent response. Some parents were quick to point out that not all kids drink.
- Parents were generally concerned about the influence of peer pressure in their children's lives. The majority of parents felt that peer pressure is a very strong influence on underage drinking. Many parents felt that drinking is a rite of passage that all kids will be confronted with at some time during adolescence.

It's like still a phase of life, a rite of passage that they are going to either be exposed [to] or be confronted with.

For some reason, they think they have to do that...to be cool. To be accepted.

It's just like the power of their friends is stronger than anything we can possibly do with them. And what we do is like putting plugs in a dam that's about to bust.

- All parents felt that underage drinking is unacceptable if the kids are unsupervised or if it puts them in danger. Many parents felt that it is unacceptable under any circumstances. Others felt that it is acceptable for teenagers to drink if they consume limited amounts in a supervised or controlled environment.
- Parents were divided in their views about whether children should be permitted to taste alcohol. Some parents felt that letting their children taste alcohol is a means of prevention. Other parents felt that letting children taste alcohol would lead to negative consequences.

I've encouraged him to take a sip to see what it tastes like. And he doesn't like it...And I don't really want him to begin to like it.

Then they realize how good it tastes, and then when you are not looking, that's how I think a lot of kids become addicted to drinking because they are drinking it on Christmas and Thanksgiving when everybody is toasting.

- Many parents believed that it is not uncommon for other parents to serve alcohol to kids.

If the kid's going to do it, some of these parents buy it and put it in the house where they have it.

Some parents out there will allow their children to have parties and have alcohol. And then they have this theory that because they are at their home that it's okay.

- Cultural norms and traditions seemed to play a role in determining the situations in which parents viewed underage drinking as acceptable.

We wish it were never acceptable, but there are situations in which it is permitted.

I don't think it's acceptable anytime, except for maybe if you're with your family and it's a holiday and you're having a glass of wine.

The Hispanic male at times tends to take their boys and might end up having them drink a beer with them at maybe, who knows, maybe at the age of 12...They feel that, to them, that's a way that they can teach their sons to be men.

- A few parents identified age 18 as the age at which it is acceptable to drink alcohol.

Maybe when they are over 18. Otherwise, you can get into a lot of trouble.

We would never support any young, youth teenagers drinking or being allowed to do so. Until you become 18, and then you're allowed to try a glass of wine.

Lack of Awareness About Underage Drinking

- The majority of participants felt that they and other parents need to be educated in order to create an awareness of the problem of underage drinking, to create an awareness of the need for parents to help with prevention, and to give parents the skills and information they need in order to help.

Participants suggested that education of parents include the following:

- Consequences of underage drinking
- Extent of underage drinking in Sarasota County
- Information and skills to use prevention strategies effectively with their kids
- Vocabulary the kids use to talk about issues related to alcohol
- How to work with the community

Parent-Based Strategies for Prevention of Underage Drinking

Parents discussed several strategies in which they are the driving force behind the prevention of underage drinking. The first four strategies (i.e., talking with kids about alcohol, modeling behavior, supervising, and limiting access to alcohol) were supplied by the researchers so that parents could provide their opinions on the benefits and costs of each and their self efficacy (i.e., their ability to use a given strategy). During the course of the research, parents suggested several additional strategies that they believe could be effective.

Talking with Kids About Alcohol

- All parents agreed that talking with their kids is a valuable prevention strategy, and all had talked, or at least had attempted to talk, with their kids about alcohol.

Examples of talking about alcohol that parents provided included:

- Explaining parents' beliefs about underage drinking
- Telling their kids the negative consequences of drinking
- Pointing out examples of people who have had problems because of alcohol
- Sharing their own experiences with alcohol
- Teaching them what responsible drinking means
- Telling their kids that underage drinking is illegal and teaching them to follow the law
- Asking their kids about their beliefs and drinking habits

- Asking their kids about their friends' beliefs and drinking habits

Perceived Benefits

- Talking with kids about alcohol was viewed by almost all parents as effective, particularly when used in conjunction with supervision, parent involvement, or modeling. Even parents who questioned its effectiveness still believed that it was a 'wonderful approach.'
- Many parents liked educating their children about the effects of alcohol and about appropriate alcohol use. They hope to protect them from dangers associated with alcohol use and abuse.

I explain to them the extent of the damage my alcoholism caused, the destruction of the family, how it was a source of disintegration for the family.

I think you should make children aware of the dangers...and that there will be a time in their life when they're going to try it if they want to try it, but that they're conscious enough to know the pros and cons of the consequences.

- Many parents liked communication as a way to enhance relationships with their kids.

What you're looking for is, you're looking in the words that you tell them, you're looking at trust.

I know what they think because they tell me how they feel when they're with people who are drinking.

Costs

- The majority of parents did not identify any problems with talking to their kids about alcohol. The most common barrier mentioned was time and energy: parents have limited opportunities for relaxed exchanges with children because both they and their children have so many competing demands.

Self Efficacy

- Some parents found it easy to talk to their kids about alcohol, while others questioned their abilities to communicate with children effectively.

That is the easiest for me as well...Education-slash-talking, for me.

I can talk a blue streak, and it's like, 'Are they listening or zoning me out, tuning me out?'

[One of the biggest challenges is] communication, getting them to understand what I am trying to get across to them. Kids do not care and are selective in what they listen to.

Parents have to have the tools to know what to do, how to talk to them.

Recommendations

Recommendations for making it easier for parents to talk to their kids included:

- Starting the communication process with their children at a very young age
- Talking with their child's friends
- Knowing their child's attention span
- Waiting until their child initiates a conversation
- Using movies or commercials on television as a springboard for a conversation
- Having a mental health professional facilitate family discussions

Modeling Behavior for Kids

- The majority of parents felt strongly that role models are important because children imitate the behavior they see around them.

Children learn from what they see their parents doing.

Yeah, you have to be responsible about how you drink around your children, or not to drink around your children. They'll thrive on your example, or die by it.

Don't say, 'Do as I say and not as I do.' You can't.

- Many of the participants reported that they strive to model appropriate behavior for their own children and those around them. Some parents felt that other family members and adults could be equally influential as role models for their kids.

You've got to have the whole family involved, not just you...[My son] saw my mother with a drink and Mom said, 'No,...you can't have this until you are an adult...'...Right then and there his first thought of alcohol is, 'Ooh, when I get to be older I can drink this.'

Well, I think it's important that if you don't think you're a good role model, then you find good role models for your kids.

- Some participants believe that in the patriarchal Hispanic culture, it is often more important for the father to model the behavior than the mother.

I see it in the majority of the people that I know that it's more that the father should set the example for the kids because, as she says, she's not going to tell her son, 'Don't drink,' when the father is there with a beer in his hand all the time.

Perceived Benefits

- Many parents thought that modeling is the most effective strategy for preventing underage drinking.

[The most effective strategy is] modeling because other strategies are not effective if you're not modeling. You can't ask someone to do what you are unable to do.

- Some parents said they like modeling because they believe that as kids grow up, they will fall back on the behavior they saw as a child in order to cope with problems.

Yeah, because when you're under stress, you're going to fall back on what you saw and knew as a child.

- Most parents said that modeling reinforces the messages they give their kids about not drinking.

And if I'm not being a role model, then how can I teach my child to do it if I'm not practicing what I preach?

- Many parents said they like modeling because it sets a standard of behavior for the kids.

It sets a standard and establishes certain rules and regulations in your household.

Costs

- Although modeling was recognized as effective, it was also viewed as one of the most difficult strategies for parents to use. Some parents felt that modeling behavior was no guarantee that kids would not drink and that it did not have an immediate effect on kid's drinking behavior.

[The most difficult is] modeling because it challenges a parent's own values and behavior to the core, and behaviors are hard to change.

The only thing with modeling behavior is, unfortunately, I think that it may take a while for that to catch on. It may not help with the very young. It may be something that they look back on and use as an older teen [more] than they do maybe as a younger teen.

- Some parents did not want to have abstain from drinking alcohol.

Then you have to be good all the time.

I just feel like I'm grown and I can do that. I've worked hard and they done got on my nerves and I can do that.

Self Efficacy

- Some parents had already successfully changed their behavior to become good role models for their kids.

But what happened was we had two children, and we thought it over that we would not drink anymore because we had children, and we wanted to give them the benefit of the doubt.

- Some parents said they have no problem modeling behavior.

It wasn't hard for me. I don't know about other parents.

It's not hard for me to do it.

- Others thought it is a good idea, but they choose not to use it as a strategy or couldn't because their spouse would not cooperate.

As long as they see what their father is doing, you don't have control over how to get their attention.

- Some parents mentioned that peer pressure and social and cultural norms contribute to the difficulty of modeling behavior for their kids.

Even though we try not to drink when we take our kids. Others do not feel the same way...It is hard to be different.

Because all they do is see us sit around talking, socializing, but we're drinking beer. So I don't want them to grow up thinking, 'Well, this is how you socialize.'

Supervision

- Parents generally felt that supervision of their kids is very important in preventing them from drinking alcohol.

Parents provided numerous examples of what supervision means to them, including:

- Knowing what their child is doing at all times: where the child is, what the child is doing, and whom the child is with
- Knowing the parents of their child's friends
- Talking with the parents of their child's friends if their child is going to their house or spending the night
- Knowing their child's friends
- Directly supervising the kids' activities
- Having kids come over to their house instead of letting their child go to others' houses
- Deciding who their child can be with
- Taking and picking up their child from school and other places
- Smelling their child's breath

- Staying up until their child comes home to see what state they are in

Benefits

- The majority of parents felt that supervision is an effective prevention strategy. A few parents suggested supervision as a way to limit their child's access to alcohol.
- Supervision was seen as a part of parenthood and the responsibility of protecting one's child from harm.

That's your job to say who your child should be around and who your child should not be around. You have to do that.

I feel better if I know where they are and what they are doing. That is my responsibility as a parent.

You gotta know when your kid goes over to Suzy's house whether Suzy's parents think it's okay to drink. And if you don't know that, then you don't have control.

- Some parents felt that supervision helps them to establish good relationships with their kids.

It continues to establish a positive relationship between your children and yourself.

She is not afraid to talk to me.

- Parents also mentioned supervision as a way to establish discipline and let kids learn how to make good decisions.

If you say, 'What time are you coming home?' and you take note of how they come home and what state they're in when they get home, they know that they don't have the opportunity.

Parents can serve as a backup and give feedback, letting kids make mistakes, but in a controlled environment.

Costs

- Parents generally agreed that supervision takes a lot of time and effort.

Like you said, the supervision of the home they're in, and that takes a lot of work... That's the most work for a parent.

Too many kids and not enough Mom to go around.

- Parents also mentioned that kids may feel the parents are invading their privacy, being overprotective, or do not trust their children.

It has its ups and down because, you know, a child will always feel that you're invading in their privacy.

That makes him feel that the trust that you instill in him is not there.

- Parents also mentioned the monetary and career sacrifices that must be made to supervise their children.

I actually quit my job there because I felt that I could not be on top of him when I was working. And I started cleaning houses so I could have my own schedule so I could be there.

And we spend more than we can afford on computer stuff for him so that he will have all this stuff other kids want to play with so they'll come over to our house so I can supervise who he is with. And we're going broke.

Self Efficacy

- Although some parents report that they find supervision easy, most felt that it is difficult to do well. In a world with such diverse opinions, it takes courage to talk with other parents about their views on drinking and how they supervise their children.

Because no matter how well you think you know that other parent, you don't know what that other parent's going to do. I have had parents cover up for my daughter.

- Several parents said that it gets more difficult to supervise as kids get older.

This is the tricky part when they get older because you want [to know] what is going on but not get into their business.

Social Norms

- A few participants felt that other parents do not care about supervising their own kids.

Some of these kids leave home at 8:00 in the morning and they go home when this building closes at 9:00...What do you think your child is doing for 12 hours when you don't know where they are?

The parents do not pay attention to their children, and they let them go to parties without knowing whom they're with, and the parents do not know what time their children come home.

- A few participants also felt that other parents do not want to be told about their children's behavior.

Now you can't just act neighborly, go and say, 'I saw Joe in the road drinking a beer or smoking a cigarette today.' You'll get cussed out.

- One parent discussed the difference in cultural norms regarding supervision. She feels the Hispanic culture in which she grew up was more conducive to supervision than the US culture.

Our dances were with chaperones, and the parents sat away from the young crowd, but there were always adults around. And we didn't mind, we danced and we partied and we had a lot of fun...Direct supervision of youth groups [is the most difficult strategy] because America is a society that has allowed youth organizations to create parties without supervision. That's not part of the upbringing of the cultural component of it.

Recommendations

Recommendations for making supervision easier included:

- Doing things as a family
- Starting supervision at a young age so the kids become accustomed to it
- Having parties in the household that include both kids and adults
- Having joint events with their children's friends' families
- Supervising when the kids are unaware

Limiting Access to Alcohol

- Parents knew of several ways in which youth can access alcohol, including:
 - Stealing it from the refrigerator or liquor cabinet at home
 - Having older kids buy it for them
 - Having adults buy it for them
 - Having their parents provide it to them
 - From public/community functions such as concerts
 - Buying it with fake IDs
 - Learning other ways from the Internet

Benefits

- The majority of parents felt that limiting access to alcohol was part of the solution but that it was not an effective strategy by itself. Some parents liked limiting access to alcohol because it serves as a barrier between supply and demand.

Any barrier between the supply and the user has the potential to keep SOME kids from drinking it.

[I like it because there is] no easy access.

Self Efficacy

- Most parents who believed in limiting access to alcohol in the home feel that they are able to do so.

We don't keep alcohol in the house very often, but when it is,...it's accountable...And if I go in the refrigerator and I see that there was five there and now there's four, there's a problem.

To me, the easiest one of those to me would be limiting access. Because that's something I can choose to do that doesn't involve other people... That's something I can do on my own.

I don't drink, so not having it in my house, I don't have a problem with it.

- Some parents felt that it is difficult for them to limit kids' access to alcohol because the parents want it in the house for themselves.

[What makes it difficult is my] own personal preference.

Limiting access [is difficult] because a lot of parents drink, and they want it for themselves.

- However, almost all parents felt that it is unrealistic to expect that they could limit their children's access to alcohol completely.

If they want it, I mean, it's easy. It's not that difficult to have access to those things.

How do you limit it? It's everywhere.

I don't see how you can monitor it. I try...And I really feel that I am a pretty strict parent at home, but they find ways.

Recommendations

Suggestions for what parents can do to limit children's access to alcohol included:

- Not having alcohol in the house
- Only having alcohol for special occasions
- Keeping it high above, out of reach or locking it up in the house
- Knowing what they have and keeping track of it
- Knowing the parents of their child's friends, how they feel about underage drinking, and how accessible alcohol is in their house
- Confronting store owners who sell alcohol to kids with fake IDs
- Uniting with other parents in a campaign to get stores to be stricter about selling to kids with fake IDs
- Getting police to enforce laws to keep stores from selling alcohol to minors
- Supporting existing programs to keep kids from drinking
- Talking with their kids about alcohol (e.g., telling them that the alcohol is not for them, showing them the consequences of drinking, teaching them respect for personal property)
- Supervising their kids (e.g., knowing where their children are and whom they are with)

Educating Youth

Benefits

- The majority of parents felt that educating youth about alcohol is an integral part of prevention. It was discussed in relation to many other strategies, including talking with kids, modeling behavior, supervision, structuring kids' time, community, treatment centers, school, media, policy, and other recommendations. Most parents felt that education of children about alcohol should start at a young age and be constantly reiterated. Age recommendations for starting school-based programs ranged from 3 to 8 years old. Education within the home was suggested to start as early as birth.

Examples of educating youth included:

- Teaching kids the negative consequences of drinking and driving
- Teaching kids the physiological damage caused by drinking
- Teaching kids what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior
- Teaching kids to decipher messages about alcohol in the media that make it seem appealing
- Teaching kids to make choices in their lives
- Teaching kids to do things in moderation

Recommendations

Parents had many suggestions for educating their children:

- Having an expert come to the school or church and have an information session with the kids
- Watching movies on television with their kids and talking about what happens to the characters because of drinking
- Talking with them
- Modeling appropriate behavior for them
- Having MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) mothers show videos of the consequences of drinking to students after sports events before they go out to celebrate
- Showing them the wrecked cars from drinking and driving accidents
- Having kids volunteer in a hospital where they would see families having to deal with the trauma of a drunk driving accident
- Having programs in schools that teach kids to make choices
- Having programs in schools that teach kids the effects of drinking alcohol
- Taking them to a treatment center
- "Scared Stiff"

Structuring Kids' Time

- Another recommendation that many parents suggested to help prevent underage drinking was to structure kids' time.

Examples of structuring included:

- Keeping kids active
- Giving them something to focus on (e.g., a hobby)
- Controlling how kids spend their time
- Controlling where kids go to school
- Involving them in positive social activities (e.g., extracurricular school activities, sports, scouting, after school programs, clubs, organization-sponsored weekend activities, and church)
- Providing them with challenging ways to spend their time

Benefits

- Parents generally conceived of structuring their kids' time as a way to supervise and keep them out of trouble.

Yeah, that they don't have a lot of down time, time they can get into trouble. It's down time. Once you come home, they're not doing that stuff anymore.

- A few parents mentioned that activities in which kids do things for other people increase kids' self esteem.

Because they not only have fun but they do other things for other people, which I think helps them to feel good about themselves when you are doing stuff for other people.

- Some parents felt they could influence who their kids spend time with by influencing the school they attend and activities in which they participate.

I think sometimes when they are within a group of peers that are all thinking the same, then they have a tendency not to want to go out and do other things like that.

Costs

- Several parents mentioned that the price of activities can be prohibitive.

Now it seems like you have to have a couple hundred dollars for your child to participate in a sport.

Yeah, who can afford that? Every time you go somewhere, it costs you for your family to go there, then you can't go.

- Others mentioned the time and energy required to create and maintain activities in which kids can participate. Many parents mentioned that their schedules prevent them from structuring their kids' time.

Our church consciously started a youth group about eight years ago...It's been a lot of work for the parents.

And you have to be available to drive them back and forth and back and forth.

Self Efficacy

- Parents generally felt that there is a lack of structured activities and places for their kids to go, particularly for high school students.

And after school programs for children after they get out of middle school are pretty hard to find that would be anything that would be challenging enough.

There doesn't seem to be any place where the kids are allowed to assemble.

- Some parents felt they could not structure their kids' time because their kids are too old.

If you wait to the age where they are a preteen, it's too late. 'It's not cool, I don't want to do it, it's too hot outside, I'm lazy.'

And they don't want to be in the after school program when they are that age. There's no way.

Recommendations

Recommendations for making structuring time a more viable strategy included:

- Making after school programs more challenging, fun, and cool for kids
- Getting the school board to pay for transportation for kids to go to after school activities
- Scheduling activities during hours when parents are available
- Paying parents to create and maintain activities for kids so they do not have to take money away from their own families to do it
- Having separate activities for boys and girls
- Having activities where the parents and kids can do things together

Other Strategies

Faith

- Faith-based activities were suggested as a way to provide role modeling and supervision for kids and to structure kids' time.

Well, another thing that we promote is church activity. And that has a lot to do with role modeling and supervising and all those things.

God's Kids-God's Way

- Faith-based organizations were suggested as places for parents to have a forum to discuss issues related to underage drinking, for getting information to

parents, for recruiting other parents to get involved in preventing underage drinking, and for finding a spokesperson to communicate messages to parents.

We have the luxury of having our Sunday school classes revolve all around parents of teenagers. And these are some of the topics that we talk about.

- While participants from all ethnic backgrounds mentioned faith-based strategies, it should be noted that the church serves as a social glue in the Hispanic community.

Community-Based Strategies

- While parents generally felt that prevention of underage drinking must start within the home, they also felt the community as a whole must support parents' efforts. Many parents stressed the need for community-based strategies involving parents, kids, businesses, county politicians, schools, and community organizations working together.

Where I've seen it the most effective is...where a lot of them come together and say, 'This is the image, this is the message we want to promote, and how are we going to promote it on all levels, whether that be at the school, or with counseling, or with public health, whether it's in business.'

You've got to change the community norms. And you've got to figure out a creative way of doing that. And it can't be a Band-Aid thing.

- Parents mentioned some organizations that are currently involved in prevention efforts and some services they provide to the community:
 - Jewish Family Services – Education and counseling for kids as an alternative to school suspension
 - Teen Source – Teen theater group that performs educational plays for a variety of audiences
 - YMCA – Teen Scene parties for youth twice a month in an alcohol/tobacco/drug-free environment; annual high school graduation party where kids stay all night
 - Alcoholics Anonymous, Alanon, and Alateen – Support and counseling services for alcoholics, recovering alcoholics, and their family members; education for the public about alcohol and alcoholism
 - First Step – Education about drugs and alcohol for parents and kids
- Other community-based strategies that parents suggested included:
 - Places for the youth to hang out and have fun in an alcohol-free environment, preferably supervised by adults
 - Community events, games, and activities in which the whole family can participate
 - Free or inexpensive activities that everyone can afford
 - Dramas in the community presented by kids

- A “safe house” for kids with alcohol or drug problems, in which trained parents would be paid to work with the kids, and the kids would be paid to work as tutors for younger children
- Big Brother/Big Sister and other mentoring programs
- Volunteer opportunities for the youth
- Community policies to discourage the sale and advertisement of alcohol at community events and sporting events
- Changes in business practices to make it easier for parents to be involved in their children’s lives and to participate in community events
- Additional efforts within the Hispanic community through the Hispanic American Alliance

Treatment Centers and Professional Counseling

- Several parents suggested treatment centers and professional counseling as methods of prevention and intervention. Parents felt the treatment centers and counselors could provide various counseling services as well as education to kids about the effects of alcohol.
 - Some parents discussed these as an alternative to school suspension, in which case a child caught for drug, alcohol, or tobacco use at school would be sent to mandatory counseling for the amount of time she or he would have been suspended from school.
 - Another strategy mentioned was to take kids to a treatment center to learn about the effects of alcohol.
- Some parents suggested that a law be passed to make treatment centers lower their prices so that more people can afford them. Another recommendation was to get funding through grants for non-profit organizations to offer counseling services to students, either in the schools or separately.

School-Based Programs

- Several parents felt that schools contribute to the lack of discipline because they do not hold kids accountable for their behavior and because they interfere with what the parents are trying to teach their children. Schools were also criticized for the early dismissal of classes that contributes to difficulty in supervising them.
- Many parents felt that schools could educate kids about alcohol through programs on the consequences of drinking, programs about making choices in their lives, and through placing wrecked cars in front of the schools from drunk driving accidents. Some parents suggested starting alcohol education in the schools in Kindergarten or First Grade.
- Schools were often mentioned in terms of providing supervision and structure for kids’ time through after school programs, clubs, sports, band, etc. One parent proposed having mandatory after school programs. Some parents

suggested that after school programs need to be fun, challenging, cool, and affordable.

- Many participants suggested educating parents through the schools. Strategies to do this included having alcohol-related presentations at parent meetings, providing forums for parents to discuss alcohol-related issues, having elementary school children talk to their parents about what they were learning about alcohol, and having kids take alcohol-related information home for their parents to sign and return.
- Some parents discussed having schools provide alcohol counseling instead of suspension for kids caught drinking, smoking, or exhibiting other inappropriate behavior.
- A few parents said there should be an evaluation to find out what current alcohol education programs exist in the schools and why they are not working.
- Most parents thought that schools need more money for teachers and programs to improve the quality of children's education and prevention of underage drinking.

Media

- Many parents felt the prevalence of alcohol in advertisements, music, television shows, and movies contributes to the perception of drinking as a social norm. The media were criticized for making drinking look glamorous and fun and teaching kids how to break rules.
- Most parents discussed the media in terms of how it could be used in a campaign to prevent underage drinking. For example, some Hispanic parents suggested advertising in the Hispanic community's newspapers and magazines, radio, and television stations.
- Some parents discussed ways in which the media could help to change the perception of drinking as a social norm. A few parents suggested reducing or prohibiting advertisements for alcohol on television. One suggested eliminating prevention messages from television completely.

Other Promotional Recommendations

Policy

- Parents made suggestions for policies at all levels of local and state government. Some policy suggestions were related to schools, community, treatment centers, and media. Other policies included:
 - Stricter laws for underage drinking and the sale of alcohol to minors
 - Harsher punishments for underage drinking and for enabling the sale of alcohol to minors
 - Lowering or eliminating the legal drinking age

- Prohibiting the sale of alcohol in general

Spokespersons

- Participants were asked whom they thought would be a good spokesperson to communicate prevention messages to parents. Almost all participants recommended that the spokesperson have experience in dealing with alcohol use and underage drinking.
- Several parents thought that other parents would make the best spokespersons, particularly if the spokesperson has been through problems with underage drinking with their own children. One parent preferred to have a parent who has successfully raised their kids to not abuse alcohol.
- Several parents suggested that a teenager would be the best spokesperson to communicate with parents, particularly a teen who has experience with underage drinking or who has suffered negative consequences, such as being involved in a drunk driving accident.

That would hit us more so than hearing it from a peer because we now don't see someone else's child, we see our own child...And we don't want our child to go through what this individual has gone through, so we tend to set things in motion.

The teens. Because they can say to you, 'I know what your child is doing because I'm there.'

- Some parents said that experts such as university professors, counselors, psychologists, or other professionals who work in the field of drug and alcohol abuse would make good spokespersons. It was particularly important to many of the Hispanic parents that the spokesperson have some kind of credential.
- Many Hispanic parents felt that a religious leader (e.g., Padre Celestino from St. Martha's Catholic Church in Sarasota) would be an effective spokesperson to communicate messages about underage drinking to them.
- Other spokespersons recommended by participants to communicate with parents included:
 - Recovering alcoholic adult
 - Celebrities (e.g., country musician Tim McGraw)
 - Dynamic speaker
 - People who have to deal with children's problems (e.g., teachers, school counselors, pastors, judges)
 - Wife or husband of an alcoholic

Information Channels

- Recommended information channels included:
 - Television and radio

- Parent meetings at school, work, church or neighborhood associations
 - Small discussion groups
- Some parents suggested having their children bring messages to them (i.e., educating the children in school so they will start a conversation with their parents at home and teach their parents).
 - Some Hispanic participants felt that bilingual/bicultural Hispanic parents could be reached through mainstream channels. For Hispanic parents who speak primarily Spanish in the home, recommended information channels included:
 - Public service announcements in Spanish on SNN-Channel 6 and Univisión
 - Pamphlets written in Spanish
 - Spanish speaking parent groups (e.g., church discussion groups, or gatherings similar to a “Tupperware party” in which a small group would meet in someone’s home and a bilingual/bicultural health educator or neighbor would bring educational materials and lead a discussion)
 - Most Hispanic participants emphasized the importance of having promotional messages that include Hispanic cultural values. Some of these values include the importance of family and the importance of *respeto* (i.e., respect for life, adults, policies).
 - Other recommended information channels to reach parents included:
 - Community organizations (e.g., Hispanic American Alliance, Alcoholics Anonymous)
 - Youth groups who take information to churches, schools, and criminal detention centers
 - Hospitals
 - Other forms of media
 - Many parents felt that having kids bring home literature from school for parents to read was an ineffective channel.

Caveats for Parent-Based Prevention Strategies

While the majority of parents may believe in preventing underage drinking, some caveats should be kept in mind when considering strategies based on parent efforts. The first caveat is the proven difficulty of getting parents to actively involve themselves in prevention efforts. The second is the lack of consensus among parents about the effects of various strategies.

Parent Involvement

- Parents acknowledged that parent involvement is essential to the success of the prevention strategies they discussed. However, most parents felt that getting parents, including themselves at times, more involved in their kids’ lives and in the community is extremely difficult.

You can't get parents involved across the board. And it's not economic, it's not color, it's not anything. You just can't get parents to be involved.

- Parents identified several barriers that they feel prevent themselves or other parents from getting involved in their children's lives or in community activities:
 - Parents do not have enough time and energy because of competing demands
 - Parents do not care enough about their children; they are not willing to make sacrifices for their kids
 - Activities are not held at times that working parents can attend
 - Parents do not realize that their children need them
 - Parents will not come to some organizational meetings because of the organization's political agenda
 - Parents have not seen any results from participating in things in the past
 - Linguistic barriers for Hispanic and other non-English speaking parents

Recommendations

Recommendations for increasing parent involvement included:

- Bringing the agenda to an already existing meeting instead of creating another meeting for parents to go to
- Parents getting other parents do things through "leg work" and "word of mouth"
- Educating parents about the statistics on underage drinking, the need for them to be involved in prevention, etc.
- Improving the school system and school programs so that parents will want to be a part of them
- Offering transportation to meetings
- Offering incentives to parents (e.g., money, food, insurance discounts, or other rebates)
- Ordering parents to spend documented time with their child if their child is brought into the court system
- Having activities in the workplace
- Having meetings after church services
- Having activities at more parent friendly times (e.g., after dinner)
- Arranging neighborhood meetings or tenant meetings
- Having meetings at the schools
- Not having meetings at the schools
- Asking parents to come and educate each other and debate the issues
- Not making parents feel forced to do it
- Making business practices more family friendly so that parents can spend more time with their kids
- Having programs and activities in Spanish that are culturally sensitive
- Making the results of programs, studies, and other community efforts known to the public
- Publicizing successful efforts in an attempt to get others to join in
- Looking for what other communities have done in the past to get parents involved

Lack of Consensus

- Some parents felt that various prevention strategies discussed could have unintended consequences. Though they were in the minority, their concerns should be noted when choosing strategies. Areas of disagreement included talking with kids about alcohol, educating youth, modeling behavior, limiting access, and structuring kids' time.

- One parent worried about the impact that talking about alcohol would have on her relationship with her son.

At that time I think it put a strain on me and my son's relationship. It's hard for a parent to tell their kids what to do because you turn around and you're contradicting everything that you're telling them to do.

- One parent felt that educating kids about alcohol is counterproductive because it would entice them, not deter them.

- One parent reported that, because drinking is considered a masculine behavior within the Hispanic culture, a Hispanic male might feel that he were sacrificing a part of his masculine image if he did not drink.

It's something that Hispanic males, not all Hispanic males, but that's in the culture... They feel that... [drinking is] a way to teach their sons to be men.

- A few parents mentioned that having a negative role model could actually have a positive effect.

- A few parents felt that trying to limit kids' access would increase their curiosity and make them want it more.

The more you keep it away from them, they going to find out, 'Well, why is she keeping this from me? I want to know what it is.'

You can try to limit your child's access to alcohol,... I feel that you're still going to put that curiosity in them... if you try to limit it.

- A few parents also felt that limiting their kids' access would prevent them from learning how to make choices and deal with situations related to alcohol.

I want my children to see everything. Because that's the real world that we living in... So the only way you know how to deal with things unless you are put dead in that spot and you have to deal with it.

- A few parents mentioned that activities involving only the youth take away time that parents can spend with their kids.

Make it a family fun day where you can bring the parent and the child and do something together instead of sending your children and you stay home.

- A few parents mentioned that trying to structure their children's time can cause conflicts with their children, especially if the children think the activities are nerdy.

Even my daughter now is having a fit because I want her in an after school program.

They don't want to be taken care of anymore. 'You don't trust me.'

SECTION 4: STRATEGY



Primary Target Audience

By ninth grade, 79% of youth have initiated drinking, suggesting that the program should focus its efforts to reduce drinking initiation among middle school students, with special emphasis on those in 6th grade.

Table 25 Drinking Initiation					
	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
Have Ever Had A Drink of Alcohol	45%	60%	70%	79%	87%

Secondary Target Audiences

Middle school students look to a variety of sources for trustworthy information on alcohol:

- Parents
- Other relatives
- Teachers and school counselors
- Police officers
- Religious leaders

Behavioral Objectives

Specific behaviors promoted by the marketing plan for each target

Primary target audience: middle school students

- Do not start drinking
- Others

Secondary target audiences

- Encourage kids not to start drinking
- Others



Factors That Influence Drinking Initiation Among Youth

Community Based Preventing Marketing is data driven. Consumer research is used to identify the factors that have the greatest impact on alcohol initiation. In this project, data was analyzed to identify the factors that distinguish young people who have initiated drinking from those who have not. The marketing plan to prevent drinking initiation should address the factors summarized in Table 26.

Table 26.	
Factors Associated With Ever Using Alcohol	
Factor	Result
<i>Race</i>	<i>Blacks are nearly three times as likely as whites to have ever used alcohol; nonwhites are over two times as likely as whites to have ever used alcohol.</i>
<i>Usual grades in school</i>	<i>The lower the grades usually earned in school, the greater the likelihood that a student has ever used alcohol.</i>
<i>Family structure</i>	<i>Youth whose living arrangements are divided between mothers' and fathers' homes are nearly three times as likely as youth who live with both parents to have ever used alcohol.</i>
<i>Perceptions regarding quality of relationship with mother</i>	<i>Youths' who perceive their relationships with their mothers as very strong are more likely to have initiated drinking than those who perceive it less positively.</i>
<i>Unsupervised time after school</i>	<i>The more frequently youth spend more than an hour after school without an adult, the greater the likelihood that they have ever used alcohol.</i>
<i>Decisions about weekend curfew</i>	<i>The more frequently parents allow youth to make their own decisions about weekend curfews, the greater the likelihood that youth have ever used alcohol.</i>

Table 26.**Factors Associated With Ever Using Alcohol**

Factor	Result
<i>Employment during school year</i>	<i>The more hours per week youth work during the school year, the greater the likelihood that they have ever used alcohol.</i>
<i>Norms -- % kids drink</i>	<i>The larger the estimated proportion of kids who drink alcohol, the more likely a young person is to initiate drinking.</i>
<i>Parental beliefs about youth alcohol use</i>	<i>The more strongly youth believe their parents think it is OK to drink alcohol, the more likely they are to initiate drinking.</i>
<i>Belief that kids who drink look more mature</i>	<i>The more strongly youth believe that kids who drink alcohol look more mature than kids who don't drink, the less likely they are to initiate drinking.</i>
<i>Belief that drinking can cause serious health problems</i>	<i>The more strongly youth believe that drinking can cause serious health problems, the more likely they are to have ever had a drink.</i>
<i>Belief that drinking makes kids more likely to get in an accident</i>	<i>The more strongly youth believe that drinking makes kids more likely to get in an accident, the less likely they are to initiate drinking.</i>
<i>Belief that it is easy to get addicted to alcohol</i>	<i>The more strongly youth believe that it is easy to get addicted to alcohol, the less likely they are to have ever used alcohol.</i>
<i>Belief that alcohol tastes bad</i>	<i>The more strongly youth believe that alcohol tastes bad, the less likely they are to initiate drinking.</i>
<i>Beliefs about access to alcohol</i>	<i>The easier youth believe it is to obtain alcohol, the more likely they are to have ever used alcohol.</i>
<i>Self efficacy – refusing alcohol</i>	<i>The more strongly youth believe they would be able to refuse alcohol from others, the less likely they are to initiate drinking.</i>

Social Norms

Key Findings

Student estimates of the proportion of their peers who drink are closely associated with the likelihood that they have initiated drinking. The higher their estimate of peer drinking, the more likely they are to have initiated drinking.

The majority of youth believe that at least half of their peers drink.

Marketing Questions

What can be done to convince middle school students that they are not the only ones abstaining from alcohol?

Would publication of Sarasota youth drinking rates encourage more youth to initiate drinking?

Notes

Self Efficacy

Key Findings

Students who are confident in their abilities to refuse alcohol from friends, peers and siblings are less likely to initiate drinking.

The majority of youth report they are able to say “no” when offered alcohol. Over 90% agreed with each of the statements below:

“If my best friend offered me alcohol, I would be able to say no”

“If someone more popular than me offered me alcohol, I would be able to say no”

“If an older brother or sister offered me alcohol, I would be able to say no”.

Other refusal skills students use include: walking away; deciding not to hang around with kids who drink; stop being friends with kids who insist they drink; hang out exclusively with non-drinkers; pouring out the alcohol:

Marketing Questions

What can be done to enhance middle school students' refusal skills?

What other skills are needed to prevent drinking initiation among middle school students?

Notes

Access to Alcoholic Beverages

Key Findings

Youth who believe it is easy to get alcohol are more likely to have initiated drinking.

- Most youth say that it is easy to get alcohol.

Table 27 It would be easy for me to get alcohol if I wanted to.	
Strongly Disagree	16%
Disagree	21%
Agree	32%
Strongly Agree	31%

Youth said they are able to obtain alcohol from parents, older siblings, and strangers who they pay to purchase to buy alcohol for them. When those channels are unproductive, then youth may steal alcohol from stores or parents, or they may use fake ID's to purchase alcohol.

Many discussants say their first contact with alcohol was during one of these special occasions and was given to them by a parent.

Older youth also get alcohol from older friends and purchase it from stores where they know the person working.

Marketing Questions

What can be done to make it more difficult for young people to get alcoholic beverages:

from home?

from retail outlets?

from friends?

from siblings?

Notes

Parental Influence

Key Findings

Parents have an important impact on drinking initiation.

Perceptions of parental approval. The more strongly youth believe their parents think it is acceptable for them to drink, the more likely they are to initiate drinking.

Curfews. The more frequently parents allow youth to set their weekend curfews, the greater the likelihood they are to start drinking.

Maternal-Child Relationship. Youth who perceive their relationships with their mother as very positive are more likely to have initiated drinking than those who rate it more moderately. In part this finding reflects the relationship between whether parents allow their children freedom in selecting friends and the maternal-child relationship. Youth who are allowed to select their social companions rate the relationship they have with their mothers higher; they are also more likely to drink.

Supervision. The more frequently youth are allowed to spend an hour or more after school unsupervised, the more likely they are to initiate drinking.

- Although parents believe communication is an effective strategy for preventing underage drinking, some question their ability to do it effectively. They do not believe their children are listening to them and do not know the best methods for reaching their kids on subjects such as alcohol.
- The majority of parents feel supervision is important and see it as part of their responsibilities as parents to protect their child from harm. The major barriers to supervising kids are the time and effort to manage competing demands, courage to talk with other parents about how they handle alcohol, and fears supervision will be seen as an invasion of privacy and undermine their relationship with their children.
- A comparison of youth and parent comments show that parents do not have to stop drinking completely to be effective in communicating their disapproval of underage drinking to their children.

Marketing Questions

What can be done to help parents model moderate and responsible drinking for their children?

What can be done to help parents limit their children's access to alcohol?

What else can be done to help parents supervise their children?

What else can be done to help parents talk about alcohol more effectively with their kids?

Notes

Perceived Benefits and Costs Of Drinking

Key Findings

Maturity. The only benefit significantly associated with drinking initiation is the perception that drinking makes youth appear more mature. The more strongly youth agree that drinking makes you look more mature, the less likely the youth was to have initiated drinking.

Alcohol-related health problems. The more strongly youth believe that drinking can cause serious health problems, the more likely they are to have ever had a drink.

Accidents. The more strongly youth believe that drinking makes kids more likely to get in an accident, the less likely they are to have ever used alcohol

Addiction. The more strongly youth believe that it is easy to get addicted to alcohol, the less likely they are to have ever used alcohol.

Alcohol Tastes Bad. The more strongly youth believe that alcohol tastes bad, the less likely they are to have ever used alcohol.

Marketing Questions

What can be done to reinforce the view that alcohol tastes bad?

What can be done to reinforce young people's recognition of how easy it is to get addicted to alcohol?

What can be done to reinforce their fears about alcohol-related automobile accidents?

What else can be done to raise the "price" of drinking?

What should be done to ensure that program messages do not reinforce the view that drinking makes youth look mature?

Notes

Special Populations

Key Findings

The three subgroups at greatest risk of alcohol use are described in Table 28 below.

TABLE 28	
SEGMENTS AT GREATEST RISK OF ALCOHOL USE	
SEGMENT	CHARACTERISTICS
Segment #1 (7% of the population) 92% of the youth in this population segment have ever used alcohol.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have never smoked cigarettes • Have low self efficacy to refuse offers of alcohol • Do not believe that alcohol tastes bad
Segment #2 (18% of population) 94% of the youth in this population segment have ever used alcohol.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have smoked cigarettes • Hold strong belief that it is OK for kids to drink on special occasions
Segment #3 (23% of population) 99% of the youth in this population segment have ever used alcohol.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have smoked cigarettes • Hold moderate belief that it is OK for kids to drink on special occasions

Other students at increased risk:

- usually earn low grades
- work at a paid job during the school year
- do not live with both of their parents

Marketing Questions

What should be done to reach these special populations?

Notes



Primary Target Audience

Fifteen percent of 6th grade students reported using alcohol in the past 30 days, with steady increases across grade levels.

The large increase in 30-day alcohol use between 8th (32%) and 9th (47%) grades suggests that program efforts to reduce alcohol consumption among those who have already initiated drinking should focus on this transition period. Of course, 10th graders will also benefit from these prevention efforts as well.

	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th
Have Had A Drink In Last 30 Days	15%	21%	32%	47%	49%

Secondary Target Audiences

Eighth and ninth grade students look to a variety of sources for trustworthy information on alcohol. Unfortunately, the people ranked highest - celebrities, friends, and other peers - are unlikely to encourage youth to stop drinking. Two information sources ranked in the top five that could be recruited to assist with reducing underage drinking are:

- people who used to drink but have stopped
- physicians

Other possible program partners include:

- parents
- school personnel
- bars and other retail outlets

Behavioral Objectives

Specific behaviors promoted by the marketing plan for each target

Primary target audience: 8th – 10th graders

- Wait until you are old enough to drink
- Others

Secondary target audiences

- Encourage kids to wait until they are old enough
- Others



Factors That Influence Recent Drinking Patterns

Among youth who have already initiated drinking, those who have consumed alcohol in the past 30 days were compared with those who did not. A marketing plan designed to reduce alcohol consumption among the initiated should address the factors summarized in Table 30

Table 30	
Factors Associated With Using Alcohol Within the Past 30 Days	
Factor	Result
<i>Perceptions regarding quality of relationship with mother</i>	<i>The higher youths' perceived relationships with their mothers, the greater the likelihood that they have used alcohol within the past 30 days.</i>
<i>Listening to parental advice about drinking alcohol</i>	<i>The more strongly youth believe that they usually listen to their parents' advice about drinking alcohol, the lower the likelihood that they have used alcohol within the past 30 days.</i>
<i>Belief that drinking makes kids look dumb</i>	<i>The more strongly youth believe that drinking makes kids look dumb, the less likely they are to have used alcohol within the past 30 days.</i>
<i>Belief that drinking alcohol is fun</i>	<i>The more strongly youth believe that drinking is fun, the more likely they are to have used alcohol within the past 30 days.</i>
<i>Emotional benefits</i>	<i>The more strongly youth believe that drinking provides emotional benefits, the more likely they are to have used alcohol within the past 30 days.</i>
<i>Belief that alcohol tastes bad.</i>	<i>The more strongly youth agree that alcohol tastes bad, the less likely they are to have used alcohol within the past 30 days.</i>

Perceived Benefits of Drinking

Key Findings

Fun. Approximately two-thirds of youth believe kids their age drink alcohol because it is fun. Among those who have started drinking, the more strongly they agreed with this statement, the more likely they are to have used alcohol in the past 30 days.

Coping Mechanism. Students who agree that alcohol helps kids cope with problems and deal with their emotions are significantly more likely than those who do not to report having used alcohol in the past 30 days.

Parents. Young people learn about drinking's benefits by watching their parents' drink to have fun, relax and cope with problems. They also learn about the costs associated with drinking when their parents lose emotional control after drinking too much.

Table 31 Alcohol As A Mechanism for Coping with Emotional Benefits				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I think drinking alcohol helps kids my age deal with their problems	6%	21%	39%	34%
I think drinking alcohol helps kids my age deal with being sad or depressed	11%	28%	36%	25%
I think drinking alcohol helps kids my age feel better when they are upset	10%	32%	36%	22%
I think drinking alcohol helps kids my age deal with anger	7%	23%	38%	31%

**Percentages do not equal 100% because youth that circled more than one response are omitted.*

Marketing Questions

What can be done to provide youth with other ways to have fun besides drinking?

What can be done to make drinking appear less enjoyable?

What can be done to counter the view that alcohol is a good way to cope with anger, depression, stress and other problems?

Notes

Perceived Costs of Drinking

Key Findings

Makes You Look Dumb. Approximately half the students surveyed think drinking makes kids their age look dumb. The more strongly youth agree with this statement, the less likely they are to have used alcohol within the past month.

Alcohol Tastes Bad. Slightly more than half the students surveyed believe alcohol tastes bad. Among those who have initiated drinking, the stronger the belief alcohol tastes bad the less likely youth are to have had a drink in the last month.

Marketing Questions

What can be done to reinforce the view that drinking makes kids look dumb?

What else can be done to reinforce young people's view that alcohol tastes bad?

Notes

Parental Advice

Key Findings

Youth who report that they usually listen to their parents' advice about alcohol are less likely to have had a drink in the past 30 days.

Only 14% of the student sample agreed with the question, " My parents/guardians think it is OK for me to drink alcohol".

Strongly Disagree	54%
Disagree	31%
Agree	11%
Strongly Agree	3%

Although parents believe communication is an effective strategy for preventing underage drinking, some question their ability to do it effectively. They do not believe their children are listening to them and do not know the best methods for reaching their kids on subjects such as alcohol.

Marketing Questions

What else can be done to encourage parents to communicate their disapproval of underage drinking to their children?

What can be done to encourage youth to listen to their parents advice about alcohol?

What can be done to align parents with youths' trusted spokespersons (i.e., people who have stopped drinking)?

Notes

Special Populations

Key Findings

The four subgroups at greatest risk of smoking are described in Table 33 below.

TABLE 33 SEGMENTS AT GREATEST RISK OF SMOKING	
SEGMENT	CHARACTERISTICS
Segment #1 (5% of the population) 70% of the youth in this population segment have used alcohol within the past 30 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not binge drank in past year • Believe it is OK for kids to drink as long as they don't drink & drive • Hold strong belief that alcohol does not taste bad
Segment #2 (9% of the population) 80% of the youth in this population segment have used alcohol within the past 30 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Binge drank in past year • Have not smoked in past 30 days • Best friend drinks • Have low self efficacy for refusing offers of alcohol
Segment #3 (6% of the population) 76% of the youth in this population segment have used alcohol within the past 30 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Binge drank in past year • Smoked in past 30 days • Do not believe it is OK for kids to drink alcohol
Segment #4 (11% of the population) 96% of the youth in this population segment have used alcohol within the past 30 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Binge drank in past year • Smoked in past 30 days • Believe it is OK for kids to drink alcohol

Marketing Questions

What should be done to reach these special populations?

Notes



PREVENTING BINGE DRINKING

Primary Target Audience

The proportion of students who have had five or more drinks in one day at some point in the past 12 months increases steadily from 6th to 10th grade. After adjusting for other determinants of binge drinking, students in grades 9th and 10th grades are more than twice as likely as 6th graders to binge drink.

	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th
Have Had Five or More Drinks in One Day	7%	11%	25%	37%	46%

Secondary Target Audiences

High school students look to a variety of sources for trustworthy information on alcohol:

- peers, especially those who drink
- people who have stopped drinking
- physicians
- celebrities

Other possible program partners include:

- parents
- school personnel
- bars and other retail outlets

Behavioral Objectives

Specific behaviors promoted by the marketing plan for each target

Primary target audience: high school students

- If you drink, do so moderately/sensibly
- Others

Secondary target audiences

- Encourage kids not to binge drinking
- Others



Factors That Influence Binge Drinking Among Youth

Among youth who have already initiated drinking, those who reported having consumed five or more alcoholic drinks in a single day within the past year were compared with those who had not. The marketing plan to prevent binge drinking initiation should address the factors summarized in Table 34.

Table 34	
Factors Associated With Having 5+ Drinks in One Day During Past Year	
Factor	Result
<i>Grade level</i>	<i>Youth who are in 9th or 10th grade are more than twice as likely as youth in 6th grade to have binge drank in the past year.</i>
<i>Family Structure</i>	<i>Youth who live with one parent or with one parent and a stepparent are nearly twice as likely to have binge drank in the past year.</i>
<i>Unsupervised time after school</i>	<i>The more frequently youth spend more than an hour after school without an adult around, the greater the likelihood that they have ever binge drank in the past year..</i>
<i>Involvement in school activities</i>	<i>The more frequently youth are involved in school activities, the less likely they are to have binge drank in the past year.</i>
<i>Norms -- % kids drink</i>	<i>The larger the proportion of kids believed to drink alcohol, the more likely a young person is to have binge drank in the past year.</i>

Table 34

Factors Associated With Having 5+ Drinks in One Day During Past Year

Factor	Result
<i>Social image benefits of drinking</i>	<i>The more strongly youth believe that drinking improves their social image (helps them fit in), the less likely they are to have binge drank in the past year.</i>
<i>Belief that drinking makes kids look dumb</i>	<i>The more strongly youth believe that drinking makes kids look dumb, the less likely they are to have binge drank in the past year.</i>
<i>Belief that drinking is fun</i>	<i>The more strongly youth believe that drinking is fun, the more likely they are to have binge drank in the past year.</i>
<i>Belief that alcohol tastes bad</i>	<i>The more strongly youth believe that alcohol tastes bad, the less likely they are to have binge drank in the past year.</i>
<i>Belief that it is OK for kids to drink</i>	<i>The more strongly youth believe that it is OK for kids to drink, the more likely they are to have binge drank in the past year.</i>

Perceived Benefits and Costs

Key Findings

Fun. Among youth who have started drinking, the more strongly they agreed that kids their age drink alcohol because it is fun, the more likely they are to binge drink. Approximately two-thirds of youth believe kids their age drink alcohol because it is fun.

Social image. Relatively few youth believe drinking will enhance their social image, however, those that do are significantly *less* likely to binge drink. This relationship may reflect the impact that over consumption can have on youth's behavior and how people are perceived by others when they are drunk.

Table 35 Drinking and Social Image				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I think drinking alcohol helps kids my age fit it.	5%	19%	42%	34 %
I think drinking alcohol helps my age be more popular.	6%	20%	46%	28%
I think drinking alcohol helps kids my age look cooler	3%	10%	44%	42%

Looking dumb. The more strongly youth agree that drinking makes kids look dumb, the less likely they are to binge drink.

Alcohol Tastes Bad. Slightly more than half the students surveyed believe alcohol tastes bad. Among those who have initiated drinking, the stronger the attitude that alcohol tastes bad the less likely youth are to have had a drink in the last month.

Social Norms

Key Findings

The stronger young people's belief that it is acceptable for kids to drink, the more likely they are to binge drink.

Marketing Questions

What can be done to alter youth's norms about drinking?

How can they be convinced that it is not acceptable for them to drink in high school?

Notes

Special Populations

Key Findings

The three subgroups at greatest risk of smoking are described in Table 36 below.

TABLE 36	
SEGMENTS AT GREATEST RISK OF SMOKING	
SEGMENT	CHARACTERISTICS
Segment #1 (6% of the population) 67% of the youth in this population segment have binge drank in the past year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have not used marijuana in the past year • Best friend drinks • Do not believe drinking alcohol makes kids look dumb • Holds strong belief that kids drink alcohol because it is fun
Segment #2 (5% of the population) 59% of the youth in this population segment have binge drank in the past year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have used marijuana in the past year • Best friend drinks • Do not believe it is OK for kids to drink alcohol as long as they don't drink & drive
Segment #3 (17% of the population) 86% of the youth in this population segment have binge drank in the past year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have used marijuana in the past year • Best friend drinks • Believe it is OK for kids to drink alcohol as long as they don't drink & drive

Marketing Questions

What should be done to reach these special populations?

Notes

SUPPORTING PARENTS

Primary Audience

Parents of 6th to 10th Graders

Secondary Audiences

Teachers

Doctors

Religious Leaders

Others

Behavioral Objectives

Primary target audience: parents

Model Moderate, Responsible Drinking

Supervise Your Children

Talk with Children About Alcohol

Limit Your Children's Access to Alcohol

Key Findings

Factors That Influence Parents' Prevention Behaviors

Modeling. Many parents think that modeling is the most effective prevention strategy for preventing underage drinking. Some parents said they like modeling because they believe that as kids grow up, they will fall back on the behavior they saw as a child in order to cope with problems.

Although modeling is recognized as effective, it is also viewed as one of the most difficult strategies for parents to use. Some parents feel that modeling behavior is no guarantee that kids will not drink and do not have an immediate effect on kid's drinking behavior.

Some parents do not want to have to abstain from drinking alcohol.

Supervision. The majority of parents feel supervision is important and see it as part of their responsibilities as parents to protect their child from harm. The major barriers to supervising kids are the time and effort to manage competing demands, courage to talk with other parents about how they handle alcohol and fears supervision will be seen as an invasion of privacy and undermine their relationship with their children.

Although some parents report that they find supervision easy, most feel that it is difficult to do well. In a world with such diverse opinions, it takes courage to talk with other parents about their views on drinking and how they supervise their children. It is especially difficult to supervise older children.

Because drinking is considered a masculine behavior within the Hispanic culture, a Hispanic male might feel that he were sacrificing a part of his masculine image if he did not drink.

Limiting Access. The majority of parents feel that limiting access to alcohol is part of the solution but that it is not an effective strategy by itself. Some parents like limiting access to alcohol because it serves as a barrier between supply and demand.

A few parents feel that trying to limit kids' access would increase their curiosity and make them want it more.

A few parents also feel that limiting their kids' access will prevent them from learning how to make choices and deal with situations related to alcohol.

Most parents feel they could limit but not eliminate access to alcohol.

Recommendations

Suggestions for what parents can do to limit children's access to alcohol included:

- Not having alcohol in the house
- Only having alcohol for special occasions
- Keeping it high above, out of reach or locking it up in the house
- Knowing what they have and keeping track of it
- Knowing the parents of their child's friends, how they feel about underage drinking, and how accessible alcohol is in their house
- Confronting store owners who sell alcohol to kids with fake IDs
- Uniting with other parents in a campaign to get stores to be stricter about selling to kids with fake IDs
- Getting police to enforce laws to keep stores from selling alcohol to minors
- Supporting existing programs to keep kids from drinking
- Talking with their kids about alcohol (e.g., telling them that the alcohol is not for them, showing them the consequences of drinking, teaching them respect for personal property)

- Supervising their kids (e.g., knowing where their children are and whom they are with)

Talking With Their Children. Although parents believe communication is an effective strategy for preventing underage drinking, some question their ability to do it effectively. They do not believe their children are listening to them and do not know the best methods for reaching their kids on subjects such as alcohol.

A comparison of youth and parent comments shows that parents do not have to stop drinking completely to be effective in communicating their disapproval of underage drinking to their children.

Marketing Questions

What can be done to help parents model moderate and responsible drinking for their children?

What can be done to help parents limit their children's access to alcohol?

What else can be done to help parents supervise their children?

What else can be done to help parents talk about alcohol more effectively with their kids?

Notes



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