

July 2009

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SPOTLIGHT

A RESOURCE TOOL FOR THE PREVENTION OF
UNDERAGE DRINKING

Off-Campus Partying: A Promising Solution

What if we included the college students living off-campus as well as the neighborhoods in which they live in our prevention efforts to reduce college-related alcohol problems? Researchers recently discovered that by bringing the students and the residents together, the consequences of these off-campus parties were less devastating. Increased party patrols and efforts designed to make college students better residents of the neighborhood proved to be effective in reducing binge drinking. These tactics "get the students to understand that they aren't living in a bubble and are part of a community with norms and expectations about alcohol use and acceptable behavior," stated Robert Saltz, lead researcher. Such tactics will not eliminate these off-campus college parties, but they have been found to reduce the magnitude and severity of them.

Inside this issue:

**Perspective from
The New York
Times**

2

One of Us

3

**What's Happening
in Mississippi?**

4



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Mental Health, Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Well said, New York Times!

July 1, 2009

EDITORIAL

Binge Drinking on Campus

College presidents who have been blaming drinking-age laws for drunkenness at their schools had better look at their own policies. While the amount of binge drinking — downing five or more drinks in a row — remains high at colleges, it has dropped sharply among people of the same age who do not attend college.

Last year, more than 100 college presidents and chancellors called for reconsidering the legal drinking age, which was raised to 21 by all states during the 1980s.

Their reasoning seemed to be that by making it illegal for most college-age students to drink, the laws had inadvertently made it more likely that students would engage in clandestine — and difficult to supervise — binge drinking. There was some talk that the minimum age for drinking should be reduced back to 18.

Now comes new evidence that the age-21 requirement has been generally effective in reducing binge drinking — except among college students. That was the conclusion of a study by researchers at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, published in *The Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*.

The study, based on information collected over a 27-year period by the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, found that binge drinking by men between 18 and 20 years old who did not attend college dropped by more than 30 percent over that period but remained statistically unchanged among similar-aged men on campus. There was no difference between college and noncollege women in the 18- to 20-year age group but a big upsurge in binge drinking by older college women. Just why the college crowd continues to drink so heavily is not clear. Students are less likely to live with parents or spouses who can ride herd on their drinking. Most have older friends who can legally buy alcohol. Fraternities and sororities may also foster irresponsible drinking. Whatever the causes, the solutions almost certainly lie mostly within the colleges — perhaps with better counseling or stronger bans on under-age drinking — not by lowering the legal drinking age.



~One of Us~

Name: Johnny Hansell

Title: Regional Master Trainer (Southern Region MS)

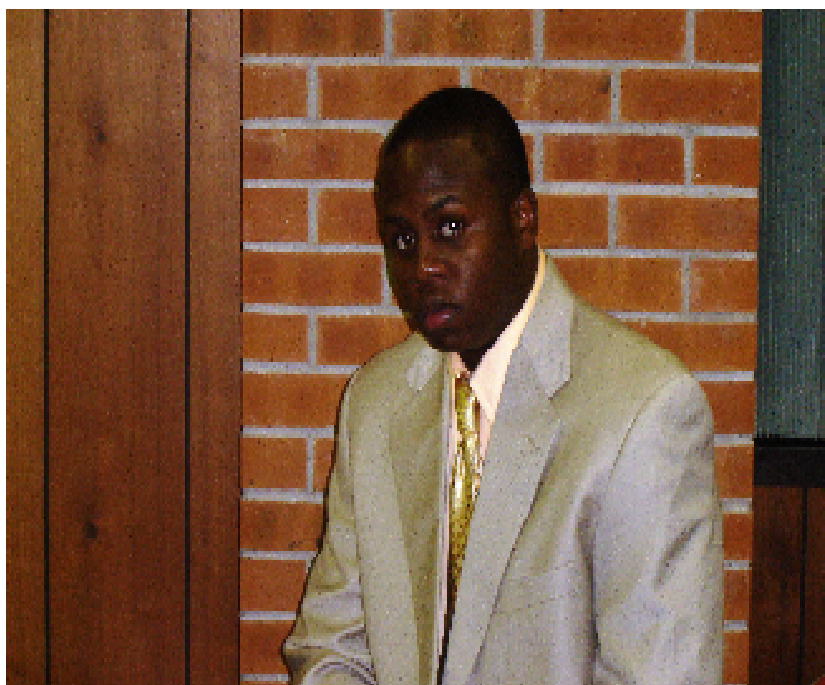
Location: Hattiesburg, MS-DREAM of Hattiesburg, Inc.

The thing you love most about prevention: being a change agent

Favorite place to vacation: Jamaica

On a rainy day, I love to: sleep in and lounge if possible

When I have spare time, I: like to travel, read, and spend time with family and friends



What's Happening in Mississippi?

Attention school personnel!



Invites You to:

“Adolescent Addiction: It’s All about the Brain!”

Presented by Mark Stovall

DMH Adolescent Treatment Services Coordinator

9:30-12:30 July 23rd, Brandon Public Library

Contact Caroline Newkirk at cnewkirk@dreaminc.org to register.



Next meeting:

August 25th, 2009, 10 AM

Region 8 Mental Health Administrative Building

For more information, please contact Caroline Newkirk at cnewkirk@dreaminc.org

Any summer plans in your area? Please let Caroline know so that she can help spread the news!

The 11th Annual National Leadership Conference-- *Beyond Boundaries: Timely Trends and Technology* will be held August 13-14 in Dallas, TX. This conference is hosted by OJJDP/PIRE and focuses on underage drinking.

For more information, please contact Jackie Ledger at jledger@mdps.state.ms.us

A special kudos to Debbie Bates for making the Hot Topics seminars so successful! We hope everyone learned a lot from them and we hope to see you again next year!