

Shifting the Culture: How College Campuses Can Make a Difference

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CATAMOUNT
**RECOVERY
PROGRAM**

THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT



The University of Vermont

Introduction

- 26 SUD; 15 years in higher education
- Unchanging goal – decrease high risk substance use and the negative consequences of this use.
- Comprehensive strategies
- Webinar series will be asking us (HEA) to consider a different perspective



A new approach to an old problem . . .

Explore the concepts of culture, community, language and messaging and how they are continuing to perpetuate the substance using culture so pervasive on college campuses today.

- Challenge status quo
- Lift up other lifestyle choices
- Focus on the positive
- Inspire data collection and consequential shifts



Four, one-hour webinars

- October 24th, 10am: Full overview
- November 17th, 2pm: Culture of the college campus
- January 10th, 10am: The importance of Community and a sense of belonging and feeling valued
- February 21st, 10am: How Language and Messaging contribute to our current state and possible shifts.

Learning Objectives

Culture:

- Understand the ways in which the college environment is experienced as an abstinence-hostile/recovery-hostile environment
- Be able to describe ways in which Bias and stigma are attached to SUDs/Recovery/Substance Free identities
- Consider the impact of the abstinence-hostile/recovery-hostile environment and the bias and stigma potentially impact choices students make towards engaging a substance using lifestyle.
- Be able to name three ways that we perpetuate these environments, biases and stigmas.

Quick Overview – Culture

Developing a collegiate culture that embraces sobriety – what’s the current culture?

- What are the discerning elements of the current college campus culture specific to substance use?
 - Majority of social experiences are organized around substance use.
 - NCHA 2016, 63% of students used alcohol in the last 30 days; perceived use was 94% of students used alcohol in the last 30 days.
 - NCHA 2016, 27% of college students who report that they don’t drink; 37% either don’t drink or hadn’t at the time of the survey
 - Colleges have been labeled “abstinence-hostile” environments. (Cleveland, Harris, & Wiebe, 2010)
 - Bias and stigma are attached to addiction/substance use disorders/recovery as well as to being substance free/non-drinker status.

Learning Objectives

Community

- Be able to identify the various populations on our campuses, and how they do or don't provide community
- Identify the challenges that more marginalized identities experience towards feeling connected (to the larger whole, to even finding one another)
- Name three strategies for the development of community and a feeling of value for marginalized groups.

Quick Overview – Community

Developing a collegiate culture that embraces sobriety

- What communities exist?
- What are the challenges?
- What are the characteristics?
- How do they find one another?

Learning Objectives

Language and Messaging

- Identify three ways that students receive information that reinforces the culture of substance use as the dominant norm on the college campus.
- Understand language that is stigmatizing specific to substance use.
- Name three specific tactics for altering this message on your campus
- Identify important partners in developing a plan for shifting language and messaging to be more inclusive of substance free and recovering students.

Quick Overview

Developing a collegiate culture that embraces sobriety

- Messaging/Language
 - Current messaging and language – intent vs impact
 - From Administrative: prevention, care and concern – pros and cons
 - From Faculty/Staff: hip/educative – pros and cons
 - From Peers: pros and cons
 - “You’re not an alcoholic til you graduate”
 - “I’m such an alcoholic”
 - “F*king junkie”
 - You can’t be an alcoholic . . . [Insert rationalization here]
 - Stigma associated with substance use disorders, recovery and being substance free. How this translates on a college campus.

How to sign up:

Webinars are scheduled throughout the Fall and early Winter.

You are able to register per webinar online:

<http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/3869690/Shifting-the-Culture-How-College-Campuses-can-Make-a-Difference>

Sponsored by: Vermont Youth Treatment Enhancement Program, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs, Vermont Department of Health.



Overarching Goal

I am hopeful that this series will:

1. Encourage each of us and those on our campuses to consider how we perpetuate a culture of substance use on the college campus.
2. Provide lenses for seeing the issues differently
3. Offer concrete tools for shifting the culture.
4. Inspire an investment in research that shows how lifting up these communities can create a culture shift for the whole campus and community.