

st.cloud community alliance

communities working together to reduce harm and high-risk drinking in our communities





goal

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The primary goal of the coalition is to reduce the incidence of high-risk drinking and its related negative consequences in the St. Cloud Community.

High-risk drinking. [háy r'ísk dr'ínkín] (v.)

1. excessive consumption of alcoholic beverages that increases the risk of experiencing negative consequences not only for those who are drinking but also for the community.

Examples of possible negative effects of high-risk drinking for those who drink include vandalism, property damage, illegal activity, draining of community resources, getting into fights, car accidents, sexual assault, or death from alcohol.

Possible negative consequences from high-risk drinking to the community include:

City Resources

Increased need for police and ER personal and resources

Neighborhoods

Increased noise, trash, vandalism, and property devaluation

Businesses

Disruptive patrons, difficulties recruiting new employees, increased costs for cleaning and security, and legal liabilities

Educational

Negative perceptions (e.g, party school image), difficulties in recruiting high caliber students, poor grades, increased absences, career implications for students, and students' futures

Interpersonal

Impact on love ones and family costs of health care



In addition to addressing individual behaviors, The Alliance recognizes that it is critical that the community takes a collaborative approach to change the campus and community environment in which college students live, learn, and recreate. Research suggests that the environment -- the places, policies, and messages that surround individuals and groups -- have a direct impact on alcohol consumption. Research has also demonstrated that changes in the campus and community environment are best changed by bringing together the many diverse stakeholders of that community -- community leaders, neighbors, hospitality owners, police, students, landlords, administrators, faculty and parents -- who work collaboratively to find effective solutions.

Other communities that have brought individuals together have accomplished goals such as:

- Decreasing underage alcohol use

- Enhancing healthy and safe communities

- Enhancing safe climates for residents, guests, community, and the hospitality industry

- Developing and enhancing the relationship between the community, the hospitality industry, and institutions of higher education

- Improving the quality of life

Ultimately, the coalition will create its objectives and process once formed. It is through the combined experience, expertise, and efforts of all involved that we will be able to best define the process and goals of the coalition.



approach

working together to reduce harm and high-risk drinking in our communities working together

Our collective efforts will focus on a comprehensive approach that includes changing the campus and community environment so that it supports low-risk consumption and/or abstinence and assisting individual students in making better decisions around alcohol consumption. Ultimately, the coalition will create its objectives and process based on a thorough assessment of the current environment, the existing data on current student attitudes and behaviors, and a review of evidence-based strategies and the best practices of other campus-communities. It is through the combined experience, expertise, and efforts of all involved that the Alliance will be able to produce change.



philosophy

Realizing a Shared Responsibility

Responsibility for individual behavior is shared between the individual and the environment
All stakeholders within the community need to share the responsibility for the condition of the environment

Creating an Inclusive Process

All Stakeholders share responsibility, and therefore, have an important place at the table
Focusing on a common vision for an ideal environment leads to healthy communities and partnerships
Community-wide consensus is critical for long-term environmental change

Leading by a Strategic Plan

Goals focus on areas of the environment that need to be addressed based on analysis of the specific environment
Objectives focus on measurable changes of behavior related to that area
Activities focus on specific interventions that show or promise evidence of creating the desired change in the target area

Organizing by Workgroup

Coalition members self-select their workgroup based on interest, responsibility, expertise, and/or resources
Workgroups develop and implement interventions, continue environmental monitoring, and address any issues related to implementation
AD hoc committees are used for interventions that require special experience and/or expertise

purpose

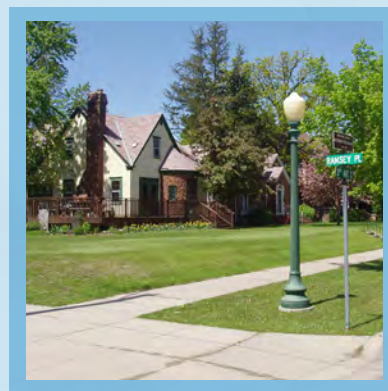
The coalition will create a process where stakeholders are educated around a set of data and different perspectives about a problem. This is important because perspective sharing broadens understanding for all stakeholders and all stakeholders participate in collaborative problem solving with new and/or enhanced understanding of the issues.

general structure

Core Team meets once a month as needed.

Duties: Determine strategic path, monitor progress, address issues and plan coalition next steps.

The coalition as a whole meets monthly or quarterly as needed to conduct strategic planning, monitor progress, provide feedback, confirm decisions, and celebrate successes.



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Coalition members...

Represent their constituency's needs, issues, and interests in planning and decision-making at regular meetings

Serve on Work Groups or Ad Hoc Groups to accomplish the specific goals and objectives of the coalition based on their experience, expertise, and areas of interest.

Work Group members meet on a weekly basis as needed to accomplish a specific objective of the strategic plan and to monitor progress across areas of interest. Faculty with specific expertise that may be needed for a specific strategy, for example, might be ad hoc members, involved only for that specific activity.

Project Staff meet the logistical needs of the coalition, providing and maintaining communication channels, data sets, and other resources that enable the coalition to do its work.

Ad Hoc members don't necessarily meet with the coalition or a work group on every occasion, but work on a specific project or ad hoc group requiring their specific constituency, interests, or expertise.





coalition leadership roles

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Chair(s)

A Chair (or a set of co-Chairs) serves as the leader of the coalition in guidance, direction, stakeholder relationships, and organizational representation. Often, these individuals have high public profiles and positive reputations in the community, which serves two critical functions: 1) access to and influence with key stakeholders, and 2) insights and guidance on navigating the politics of the community and the major institutions and determining appropriate strategy. In campus-community coalitions, co-Chairs are preferred as they can equally represent the two main components of the collaborative effort. Therefore, co-Chairs who are at the highest levels of authority in the campus administration and the community's government are best. They also communicate the collaborative nature of the coalition and the notion that the coalition sees the issue as one of shared responsibility between the campus and the community.

Project Director(s)

The Project Directors serve as the administrative leaders of the coalition, doing much of the daily operations of coordinating and facilitating member activities, compiling evaluation data, bringing agenda items to the Core Team and Work Groups, and serve as the liaison with funding sources. The Project Director, along with Project Staff, maintains meeting minutes, coordinates internal and external communication, identifies areas for coalition attention, track the progress of the strategic plan, and coordinates the evaluation of the project.

The Project Directors serve as the “ground sergeants” for the co-Chairs, supplying them with the evidence of needs and evidence of success, solutions and strategies from the current research literature and field experts, and operational materials to keep the co-Chairs informed and able to communicate effectively with stakeholders.

Work Group Leaders

Work Group Leaders facilitate the activities of the coalition's various work groups. Work group leaders are selected based upon their position, expertise, or interests in specific goal areas of the strategic plan. They coordinate with the Project Director to develop agendas for Work Groups and report outcomes and issues to the Core Team and co-Chairs.

building consensus among diverse stakeholders

1. Focus on the vision: An IDEAL ENVIRONMENT
2. Use DATA to separate fact from opinion
3. Help stakeholders share their experiences, not their positions
4. Work from a list of emerging needs across partners; what solutions best meet all these needs?
5. Research how other communities met a similar set of needs through a specific solution, asking, "Could this work here?"
6. Be ready to mediate between disagreements, but recognize debate as healthy.
7. Role-model productive debate and disagreement



community forums

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relationship to the coalition...

Community forums allow a open group of stakeholders from specific arenas or smaller groups to come together around a specific issue. Effective outcomes of a community forum are expanded awareness of the tensions, trade-offs, and perspectives that must be considered in order to find a lasting solution to the problem.

Forums...

Create an information discussion, enable multiple perspectives to be shared in a single setting

Provide community knowledge of issues, tensions, trade-offs, and next steps

Allow for the presentation of relevant data and perspectives from experiences

Create the opportunity to experience issues directly

Result in next steps

The outcome is **“collective insight.”**

common results

common results of coalitions...

- Enhanced understanding among stakeholders
- Enactment of new policies
- Increased support for common needs across the community
- Reduction of high-risk drinking rates and related problems
- Clarity in media coverage and public discussion
- Ongoing community engagement



common characteristics of a successful coalition...



- A comprehensive vision that addresses all segments of the community and community life
- A wide sharing of vision and movement to a shared vision
- A strong core of committed partners from the start
- An inclusive and broad-based membership
- Consensus on the partnership's basic purpose
- Decentralized units encouraging participation and action at a variety of levels
- Shared leadership

common characteristics of an unsuccessful coalition...

- Extensive prevention activities and support for local prevention policies
- Considering the partnership to be a "special project," not a long-lived entity
- Misunderstanding of the basic ground rules of partnership
- Permitting staff to exert too much control
- Allowing partnership identity to be confused with other organizations
- Competitive
- Hidden agendas
- Top-Down leadership
- Failure to keep all members informed appropriately
- Lack of interim rewards





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St. Cloud Community Alliance

www.stcloudcommunityalliance.com

projectordirector@stcloudcommunityalliance.com

(320) 308-4267

*Funding for this brochure made possible by
U.S. Department of Education Grant CFDA#84.184H*