Research-Based Findings

Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Use and Off-Campus Parties:
• Under-age drinkers are more likely to pregame before attending a party and more pregaming is done before Greek parties.
• Alcohol content per drink at off-campus parties tends to be highest earlier in the semester, partly because students express little concern that heavy drinking at the start of the school year will impact their grades suggesting that early and frequent exams and papers could underscore the impact of attention to school.
• The odds of heavy drinking at an off-campus party are increased by large numbers of partygoers, the use of marijuana and playing drinking games.
• Students who attend fraternity parties are likely to be significantly more intoxicated than at non-Greek off-campus parties; students of any type drink more at fraternity parties than non-fraternity parties. This suggests that it is the fraternity party environment rather than being Greek-affiliated that contributes to higher-risk drinking and related behaviors.

Friends and Off-Campus Parties:
• Off-campus partying is an opportunity for risk- and fun-seeking that’s developmentally expected for younger college students, especially first-years who are focused on establishing friendships and social networks and experimenting with adult behaviors.
  o This underscores the importance of alternative means for finding friends.
  o New students who have the fewest social connections may be especially vulnerable to harm from the party experience.
• Students who binge more frequently feel less confident about using protective behavioral strategies and their strategy use often falls apart when they attend parties in groups.
  o This underscores the value of programming to reinforce protective strategies and practicing how to enact them under the pressure of a party situation.

Harm and Risk Reduction Strategies:
• Being part of a goal-oriented group that doesn’t use alcohol as a primary tool for bonding decreases the odds of attending off-campus parties.
  o This emphasizes the importance of helping students get connected with prosocial groups (a cappella groups, service groups) on campus in the community.
• Offering a breathalyzer test to students as they arrive at a party (baseline) and then rewarding them for keeping their BAC level below .08 (measured at the end of the evening) may significantly reduce over consumption. Monetary prizes could be offered as an incentive.
• Environmental strategies, such as party patrols, Night Ride and social host ordinances, can result in small but significant reductions in risk and harm. However, they require a high level of time and resources and buy-in from multiple partners.

Current Efforts
• Community Health offers staff training programs to Student Affairs professionals to address the full range of AOD impacts, including off-campus parties.
• Community Health offers student training programs for bystander intervention, alcohol serving size assessment, drug interaction, and refusal skills.
Off Campus Parties
Planning Resources: Prevention Education & Harm Reduction

Current Efforts Continued…

• Off-Campus Housing and Neighborhood Relations encourages party registration, conducts an off-campus party survey of student hosts and creates a citation map of houses on the Hill to identify high impact locations. Further dissemination to internal and external audiences should be considered.
• Off-Campus Housing and Neighborhood Relations and CU Student Government offer food and water stations during key weekends on the Hill. This is an opportunity to teach and publicize the value of protective behavioral strategies in an unexpected venue in close proximity to the problematic situation.
• Environmental resources such as Night Ride, social host ordinances, EcoPass, and party patrols.

Future Opportunities

Education and Skill Building:
• Continue to employ online pre-matriculation AOD programming.
• Equip all students with strategies and skills for reducing harm and risk through an AOD skills introduction training program involving student groups, leadership programs and other intact groups. Examples include new student orientation, Greek life, and programming throughout the undergraduate and graduate experience.
• Programming should specifically include harm reduction and refusal skill practice opportunities.
• Support curriculum infusion collaborations on substance use, refusal skills, harm reduction and the social harms of substance use.
• Support an environment in which academic expectations are consistent and rigorous, and the costs of substance use to academic achievement are clear.

Other Opportunities:
• Evaluate the feasibility of a breathalyzer intervention for on and off campus; if approved, pilot for three years
• Evaluate the feasibility of a yearly strengths assessment and interest inventory for students to foster engagement with prosocial university resources.
• Increase coordination and consider expansion of tools and events that improve student connection, such as:
  o Enhance usability of the CU-Boulder Events Calendar
  o Extended Week of Welcome activities
  o Extended and coordinated late night programming
  o Student Organizations and Finance Office website
• Effective environmental strategies such as noise and nuisance violations, party patrols, and landlord notification and responsibility.