

Selected Studies on Alcohol, Marijuana, and Social Norms and Adolescents

Title: **Preventing alcohol, marijuana, and cigarette use among adolescents: peer pressure resistance training versus establishing conservative norms.**

Authors: [Hansen, W.B.](#); [Graham, J.W.](#)

Source: [Prev.Med.](#), 1991, 20, 3, 414-430, UNITED STATES

Abstract: BACKGROUND. Two strategies for preventing the onset of alcohol abuse, and marijuana and cigarette use were tested in junior high schools in Los Angeles and Orange Counties, California. The first strategy taught skills to refuse substance use offers. The second strategy corrected erroneous normative perceptions about prevalence and acceptability of use among peers and established conservative groups norms regarding use. METHODS. Four experimental conditions were created by randomly assigning schools to receive (a) neither of the experimental curricula (placebo comparison), (b) resistance skill training alone, (c) normative education alone, or (d) both resistance skill training and normative education. Students were pretested prior to the program and post-tested 1 year following delivery of the program. RESULTS. There were main effects of normative education for summary measures of alcohol ($P = 0.0011$), marijuana ($P = 0.0096$), and cigarette smoking ($P = 0.0311$). All individual dichotomous measures of alcohol, marijuana, and tobacco use indicated significant reductions in onset attributable to normative education. There were no significant main effects of resistance skill training. CONCLUSION. These results suggest that establishing conservative norms is an effective strategy for preventing substance use.

Title: **"But Others Do It!": Do Misperceptions of Schoolmate Alcohol and Marijuana Use Predict Subsequent Drug Use Among Young Adolescents?**

Authors: [Juvonen, Jaana](#); [Martino, Steven C.](#); [Ellickson, Phyllis L.](#); [Longshore, Douglas](#)

Source: [J.Appl.Soc.Psychol.](#), 2007, 37, 4, 740-758

Abstract: We examined the effects of perceived prevalence of drug use among same-age peers on adolescents' subsequent drug use. In 7th grade, participants estimated prevalence of alcohol and marijuana use among 7th-grade students in their school, reported own use of these drugs, receipt of offers to use these drugs, and frequency of contact with peers who use these drugs. In 8th grade, participants reported their frequency of alcohol and marijuana use. Although perceived prevalence of drug use predicted subsequent alcohol and marijuana use when controlling for actual prevalence, these effects disappeared once participants' prior levels of drug use and proximal peer contacts were considered. Implications of findings for intervention programs aiming solely to increase accuracy of perceived prevalence estimates are discussed.

URL: <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2007.00183.x>

Title: **Relations between normative beliefs and initiation intentions toward cigarette, alcohol and marijuana.**

Authors: [Olds,R.S.](#); [Thombs,D.L.](#); [Tomasek,J.R.](#)

Source: [Journal of Adolescent Health](#), 2005, 37, 1, 75

Abstract: PURPOSE: To examine the relations between normative beliefs and intentions to initiate cigarette, alcohol, and marijuana use among adolescents reporting no prior use. METHODS: An anonymous questionnaire was administered to 6,594 seventh- to twelfth-grade students in northeast Ohio. Separate analyses were conducted on sub-samples of respondents reporting no prior use of each substance. Within each of these 3 sub-samples, respondents were classified as holding high-risk intentions if they reported that they intended to begin using that particular substance within the next 6 months or were "not sure" of their intentions. Those reporting that they did not intend to start using a substance were classified as holding low-risk intentions. Multivariate logistic regression analyses examined the relations between normative beliefs and intention status (low- vs. high-risk), while accounting for socio-demographic characteristics. RESULTS: Across all 3 substances, normative beliefs were stronger predictors of intention status than socio-demographic variables. Higher levels of perceived acceptability and perceived prevalence were associated with holding high-risk intentions. Normative belief measures assessing close friend and sibling reference groups were much more important in explaining intention status than those assessing other reference groups (e.g., same age peers). CONCLUSIONS: Among adolescents with no prior use, normative beliefs concerning close friends and siblings may play an important role in the catalysis and support of intentions to initiate substance use. These findings challenge the utility of primary prevention strategies that provide normative feedback based on rates of substance use among distal reference groups.

Book Title: **The imaginary lives of peers: Patterns of substance use and misperceptions of norms among secondary school students**

Authors: [Perkins,H.Wesley](#); [Craig,David W.](#)

Source: 2003, 209-223, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, US

Abstract: Reveals the pervasive pattern of misperception regarding peer tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drug norms found among middle school and high school students across the nation. The data were collected in a Web-based survey conducted in 28 schools in 5 states. It is argued that the dramatic potential for introducing the social norms model in secondary education is made apparent by the prevalence of misperceived norms at these earlier age levels.

Series Title: The social norms approach to preventing school and college age substance abuse: A handbook for educators, counselors, and clinicians.

Publisher: Jossey-Bass

Place of San Francisco, CA, US

Publication:
ISSN/ISBN: 0-7879-6459-X

Title, **Are high school students accurate or clueless in estimating substance use among peers?**

Authors, Primary: [Page,Randy M.](#); [Hammermeister,Jon](#); [Roland,Michelle](#)

Source: [Adolescence](#), 2002, 37, 147, 567(7)

Abstract: The purpose of this study was to assess adolescents' estimations of the prevalence of alcohol and other drug use and to examine the consistency between these estimations and reported use. A survey was administered to 223 students in three northwestern U.S. high schools. Results showed that students in each of the three high schools grossly overestimated the prevalence of substance use when compared to self-reports of use. Still, students were not entirely clueless about the relative normativeness of substance use when comparing estimates and rates of use among the three schools. The school with the highest estimated prevalence of a particular substance use behavior generally also had the highest self-reported use of that same substance. These findings imply the need for high school personnel to provide students with accurate information about the actual prevalence of substance use within each school.

Title: **Program integrity as a moderator of prevention program effectiveness: results for fifth-grade students in the adolescent alcohol prevention trial.**

Authors: [Hansen,W.B.](#); [Graham,J.W.](#); [Wolkenstein,B.H.](#); [Rohrbach,L.A.](#)

Source: [J.Stud.Alcohol](#), 1991, 52, 6, 568-579

Abstract: This study reports the results of a test of the quality of program delivery (program integrity) as a variable that may moderate the effectiveness of alcohol prevention programs. Two theory-based programs, Resistance Training and Normative Education, were delivered to fifth-grade students who were then tested on program relevant mediating variables. Resistance Training was found to improve students' knowledge of peer pressure resistance strategies, their performance on a behavioral assessment of peer pressure resistance skills and the manifestation of their future intentions to drink alcohol. Normative Education was found to improve students' perceptions of a conservative norm regarding alcohol use, facilitated their belief that refusing unwanted offers to drink alcohol could be easily accomplished and reduced their perceptions of the prevalence of alcohol use. Program integrity was measured by program specialists who taught the programs to students and by trained observers. Ratings of program integrity were found to significantly moderate outcomes for three of seven mediating variables. Affected were knowledge of peer pressure resistance strategies, behavioral pressure resistance skills and perceived self-efficacy. These results suggest that the quality of program delivery and reception may play an important moderating function on prevention program effectiveness.

Book Title: **Using social norms to reduce alcohol and tobacco use in two midwestern high schools**

Authors: [Haines, Michael P.](#); [Barker, Gregory P.](#); [Rice, Richard](#)

Source: 2003, 235-244, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, US

Abstract: Describes the intervention conducted at 2 Midwestern high schools using social norms media to significantly reduce cigarette smoking and drinking among 10th grade students during a 2-yr period. This project was unique among social norms interventions in that it used media to change parents' and teachers' perceptions of students as well as the students' perceptions of their peers.

Editors: [Perkins, H. Wesley](#)

Series Title: The social norms approach to preventing school and college age substance abuse: A handbook for educators, counselors, and clinicians.

Publisher: Jossey-Bass

Place of Publication: San Francisco, CA, US

ISSN/ISBN: 0-7879-6459-X

The following sources may also be of use to you:

1) The Majority Report:

The Majority Report is a prevention project that employs the evidence-based social norms approach as part of a multi-faceted strategy to prevent and reduce substance abuse among middle-school and high-school age youth in the Park City, Utah area.

http://www.themajorityreport.com/the_report1.pdf

2) Evanston Township High School's "Strength in Numbers" campaign:

Evanston Township High School has approximately 3,033 students (2000-2001 enrollment figures) and 313 teachers and administrators. In April, 2001, Evanston Township High School (ETHS), in collaboration with the Evanston Substance Abuse Prevention Council, began a social norms marketing campaign targeted primarily at reducing the use of alcohol and tobacco among ETHS students.

<http://www.socialnorms.org/CaseStudies/evanstonhs.php>

3) DeKalb and Sycamore High Schools (DCP/SAFE):

In 1998, DeKalb County (IL), in partnership with the local DeKalb and Sycamore high schools, began an intervention using the social norms approach. Although ultimately targeted at DeKalb and Sycamore high school students, this intervention featured three interrelated normative message campaigns aimed at: 1) Students, 2) Parents, and 3) Teachers.

<http://www.socialnorms.org/CaseStudies/dcpinter.php>