

Selected Studies for Social Norms and Alcohol and Underage Users

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

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.

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Publication: San Francisco, CA, US

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

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

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.

URL: http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=EJ656996&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=EJ656996

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.

URL: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1054139X05001278>

Title: **Adolescent Alcohol-Related Risk Cognitions: The Roles of Social Norms and Social Networking Sites**

Authors: Litt, D.M. & Stock, M.L.

Source: Psychology of Addictive Behaviors, 2011, Advance online publication. doi: 10.1037/a0024226

Abstract: The present study examined the impact of socially based descriptive norms on willingness to drink alcohol, drinker prototype favorability, affective alcohol attitudes, and perceived vulnerability for alcohol-related consequences within the Prototype Willingness model. Descriptive norms were manipulated by having 189 young adolescents view experimenter-created profile pages from the social networking site Facebook, which either showed older peers drinking or not. The results provided evidence that descriptive norms for alcohol use, as portrayed by Facebook profiles, significantly impact willingness to use, prototypes, attitudes toward use, and perceived vulnerability. A multiple mediation analysis indicated that prototypes, attitudes, and perceptions of use mediated the relationship between the content of the Facebook profile and willingness. These results indicate that adolescents who perceive that alcohol use is normative, as evidenced by Facebook profiles, are at higher risk for cognitions shown to predict alcohol use than adolescents who do not see alcohol use portrayed as frequently on Facebook.

URL: <http://psycnet.apa.org/psycarticles/2011-11461-001.pdf>

The following sites may also be of use to you:

1) 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>

2) 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>

3) The Power of Choice

The Power of Choice is a social norms campaign that has been running since 2001 in the Illinois high school communities of Naperville School District #203 and Indian Prairie School District #204. The Power of Choice campaign targets both students and their parents. The goals of the Power of Choice are to: 1) Support the majority of students who are making healthy choices, 2) Correct misperceptions about underage drinking and tobacco use, 3) Reduce underage drinking and tobacco use, 4) Reinforce positive parenting habits. The website hosts examples of survey results as well as posters, videos, brochures and other useful materials.

<http://www.thepowerofchoice.info/aboutus.htm>

4) Guide to Marketing Social Norms for Health Promotion in Schools and Communities

This comprehensive, step-by-step manual was designed specifically for those who want to use the social norms approach to address school-age and community-wide issues, and it provides both the theoretical and practical information to do so effectively, and with fidelity to the model. As such, it will be a valuable resource for anyone involved in such an effort—be they community members, school administrators and staff, or health promotion professionals.

Download a FREE PDF of the guidebook here:

<http://www.socialnormsresources.org/pdf/Guidebook2.pdf>