Evaluation of a social norm campaign: Communicating responsible alcohol use at the University of Montana

Nolan T. Langweil
The University of Montana

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Evaluation of a Social Norm Campaign:
Communicating Responsible Alcohol Use
at The University of Montana

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B.S., Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, 1997

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Masters of Science

The University of Montana
Department of Health and Human Performance
The School of Education Graduate School

May 8, 2000

Approved by:
Chairperson
Dean, Graduate School

5-10-2000
Date
The purpose of this study was to conduct a process evaluation of a social norms campaign being conducted on the University of Montana campus. The study explored if students are seeing, retaining, and believing the message of “Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week.” It also examined where students are seeing the message the most, how many times a week students are seeing the message and why do they or don’t they believe the message. The research used both quantitative and qualitative methods to gather data. Two hundred and ninety-eight phone surveys were used to gather quantitative data, in which a stratified random sample was used to select samples from a list of names and numbers obtained from The University of Montana’s Registrar’s Office. Focus groups were utilized to gather qualitative information about the campaign, such as credibility of the campaign message, why students are or are not believing the campaign message, and recommendations for future “gadgets.” Most UM students (86.9%) had seen the campaign message, 48.3% could recall the message, and 38.6% believed the campaign message. Although there was no significant statistical difference between gender and ability to recall the campaign message, there was a significant statistical difference between gender and believability of the message. Although reported exposure rates were high among UM students, reported believability of the campaign message had mixed results. Location of posters, “gadgets”, and frequency of exposure also had no effect on believability of the message. Despite the fact that reported believability of the campaign had mixed results, students felt it was encouraging that the message was positive. Other research shows that binge drinking among college students decreased gradually over time while such campaigns were being implemented. This process evaluation acknowledges that this was the first year this campaign was implemented, makes recommendations and encourages the program to continue.
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**CHAPTER I**

**Introduction to the Study**

Evaluation is an important component of all health education programs and interventions. It is what helps justify actions taken to benefit individuals and community health. In general, evaluation keeps the program and program planners in check and provides testimony that the program is or is not heading in the intended direction. “All social institutions or subsystems, whether medical, educational, religious, economic, political, are required to provide ‘proof’ of their legitimacy and effectiveness in order to justify society’s continued support” (Suchman, 1967, p.2).

Providing testimony of legitimacy needs to be taken into account when designing programs that address drug and alcohol use. There are few programs of proven effectiveness and the knowledge base is still growing (Muraskin, 1993). Evaluating such programs contributes to the existing knowledge base of effective alcohol reduction programs.

**Background**

In the Summer of 1999, The University of Montana began implementing a campaign addressing student alcohol use. In an effort to curb binge drinking and bring awareness to the issue, a social norms campaign was designed and implemented on campus. The main message of the campaign was “Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week.” This message was based on the results of the College (CORE) survey which showed that 61% of UM students surveyed drank four or less drinks in a week (n=1059), (Stearns, 1999). The CORE Alcohol and Drug survey is a nationally...
standardized instrument administered to more than half a million students on over 800 campuses. It is a self-report questionnaire that examines the use, scope, and consequences of alcohol and other drugs in college settings (Presley, Meilman, & Lyerla, 1995; Perkins, Meilman, Leichliter, Cashin, & Presley, 1999). It was administered on the campus of The University of Montana during the Fall of 1998.

The results of the CORE survey conducted on The University of Montana campus indicated that students attending The University of Montana drink moderately if they choose to drink at all (Stearns, 1999). Other research conducted on other colleges has shown that students overestimate the number of heavy drinkers, underestimate the number of non-drinkers and moderate drinkers, and think that drunkenness is more acceptable than it is among peers (Perkins et al, 1999; Perkins, 1997; Haines and Spear 1996).

Based on the results of the CORE Survey conducted on the University of Montana campus, research, and other campaigns targeting binge drinking being conducted on other college campus (e.g., University of Northern Illinois and Northern Arizona University), health educators in the Health Enhancement Office in the Curry Health Center decided to plan and implement a social norms campaign on The University of Montana Campus. The goal of this campaign was to decrease binge drinking among students at The University of Montana. They designed the message “Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week.” The message and the posters were test marketed. Focus groups were conducted to gather information concerning students opinions, likeness and believability of the selected posters and messages (Mulla, 1999). Posters with the message on it were then strategically placed in residence halls, buildings, and
other areas on campus that see high student traffic. Frisbees, water bottles, dry erase boards and mouse pads (also referred to as “gadgets”), all bearing the message were distributed in the residence halls, given away at events (such as football games and resident activities), and distributed throughout campus (such as throwing frisbees out into the grass areas where students were relaxing between class on sunny days). In addition, table tents (which are free standing flyers bearing the message) were placed on tables in common dwelling areas and accompanied by presentations given by Health Education staff during Freshman orientation. Finally, advertisements were placed in The Kaimin, the university’s daily newspaper.

As of February 8, 2000, 1,449 frisbees, 1,515 water bottles, 488 mouse pads, and 466 message boards had been distributed to students. Furthermore, 477 posters had been put up around campus and monitored on a bi-weekly basis. Finally, 31 ads had been placed in The Kaimin.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to conduct a process evaluation of a social norms campaign being implemented at The University of Montana by the Health Enhancement Office of the Curry Health Center. This study explored whether UM students were seeing, retaining, and believing the message of “Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week.” The information from the evaluation will be used by the program planners and administrators to improve the effectiveness of the campaign.
Research Questions

Results for each research question were reported for the following categories: (a) General population, (b) Freshmen, (c) Sophomores, (d) Juniors, (e) Seniors, (f) students who live on-campus, and (g) students who live off campus.

1. What proportion of UM students have seen the message "Most UM students choose to have 0 to 4 drinks in a week"?

2. What proportion of UM students can recall the number of alcoholic drinks most UM students drink in a week as stated in the campaign message?

3. Through what medium have UM students reported seeing the "Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week" message most often?

4. Where have UM students reported seeing the message of "Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week" most often?

5. How often do UM students report seeing the "Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week" message?

6. Do UM students report believing the "Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week" message?

Justification of the Study

"The greatest challenge to the goal of finding solutions to the problem of drug abuse is the current lack of evaluation evidence to demonstrate the success of individual programs. This failure to document results represents a great loss to this developing field where reliable evidence of success could guide so many efforts." (U.S. General
Accounting Office, 1992, in Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, 1998, p.1). It is important for health education programs to document, whenever possible, which interventions have worked and which interventions have not. Part of determining the success or failure of an intervention program includes evaluating the process through which the program was conducted. Such evaluation helps determine if the impact and outcome of the program were due to a good or bad idea, or the effective or ineffective implementation of the idea by program planners. For example, if the program had an unsuccessful outcome, was this because the program was a hollow idea or because it was not carried out properly? "The reality is that actual programs look different from ideal program plans. The evaluation challenge is to assist identified decision makers in determining how far from the ideal plan the program can deviate, and in what ways can it deviate, while still meeting fundamental criteria" (Patton, 1978, p. 162).

The data gathered from this study will be used by the program planners and administrators to determine if there is a need to change the program and if so, pinpoint where the change is needed. Evaluating health education programs adds credibility to the interventions as well as credibility to health education in general (Sarvela & McDermott, 1993; Green, Kreuter, Deeds, & Partridge, 1980). In addition, it is hoped that this program evaluation can be used as a reference model for future process evaluations as well as contribute to the knowledge base of evaluating social norms campaigns.

**Delimitations & Limitations**

The following are delimitations that were considered for this evaluation study:

1. The evaluation will be delimited to process evaluation data.
2. The evaluation will be delimited to only those students who attend classes on The University of Montana campus.

3. The evaluation will be delimited to information gathered from focus groups and phone surveys.

4. The surveys will be delimited to a random sample of students who have telephones in their homes.

5. The surveys will be delimited to only those students who's names are included on the enrollment list obtained from the registrars office.

The following are limitations that were considered for this evaluation study:

1. The surveys are self-report. Sample participants were assured that the surveys were confidential and anonymous. However, standard instructions concerning confidentiality and anonymity do not reduce response bias (Werch, 1990; Embree & Whitehead, 1993).

2. Data is limited to the student’s ability to recall the information asked of them. The survey and focus group questions were designed to be as simple and precise as possible. Research has shown that recall can be enhanced if questions are fairly general in nature rather than detailed (Harrell, 1985; Embree & Whitehead, 1993).

3. There is the possibility of researcher bias when using qualitative methods in research. This limitation will be addressed by employing two assistants to observe and take notes.
### Definitions of Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Binge Drinking</strong></td>
<td>Consumption of five or more drinks in a row (Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, 1994).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formative Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>An evaluation that produces information used during the developmental stages of a health education program, to improve it (Windsor, Baranowski, Clark, &amp; Cotter, 1984).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gadget</strong></td>
<td>A term used to describe items given out to members of the target population to spread the intended message and promote healthy behaviors (Health Education Office, Curry Health Center, The University of Montana).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact evaluation</strong></td>
<td>An evaluation that examines the immediate effects of a program; a type of summative evaluation (Sarvela &amp; McDermott, 1993).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intervention</strong></td>
<td>A planned and systematically applied combination of program elements designed to produce cognitive, affective, skill, behavior or health status changes among individuals exposed at a specified site and during a specified period (Windsor et al, 1984).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Outcome evaluation**

An evaluation that examines the long-term effects of a program; a type of summative evaluation (Sarvela & McDermott, 1993).

**Process evaluation**

An evaluation that provides documentation of the functioning of the program; includes assessments of whether materials are being distributed to the right people and in what quantities; whether and what extent program activities are occurring and other measures of how and how well the program is working. It is a type of formative evaluation that looks at how much of what, for whom, when, and by whom (Windsor et al., 1984; Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, 1998).

**Social Desirability**

The tendency for respondents to answer questions in a way consistent with the “expected” or “ideal” answer in an effort to appear normal or non-deviant (Embree & Whitehead, 1993).

**Social Marketing**

The design, implementation, and control of programs seeking to increase the acceptability of a social idea, cause, or practice in a target group. It utilizes market segmentation, consumer research, concept development,
communications, facilitation, incentives, and exchange
theory to maximize target group response (Kotler, 1986).

**Summative evaluation**  
An evaluation that provides a summary statement of a
health promotion program's effectiveness over a specified
period of time (Windsor et al, 1984).
CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to conduct a process evaluation of a social norms campaign being conducted on The University of Montana campus.

The review of literature is divided into four sections. The first section provides an overview of the discipline of evaluation. The second section reviews evaluation methods. The third section reviews data collection techniques used in evaluation processes. Finally, the fourth section looks at evaluation of social marketing and social norms programs.

Evaluation

Evaluation is a crucial part of all health promotion programs. It provides important information in determining the impact of programs and making decisions about their future (McKenzie & Smeltzer, 1997). Evaluation is simply part of good practice that informs practitioners and program planners about how well the intervention is proceeding relative to the original objectives (Bloom, Fischer, & Orme, 1999). A fundamental characteristic of evaluation is that the program planners take stock of the programs’ process and determine whether alterations are needed (Glanz, Lewis, & Rimer, 1990). Determining the effectiveness of programs for participants, documenting whether or not program objectives have been met, and assessing the utility of innovative programs are just some of the many reasons why evaluations are conducted.
The term "evaluation" can have different meanings for different individuals, and can be encountered from various standpoints depending on the scale and objectives of the intervention program (Nutbeam, Smith, & Catford, 1990). Some researchers refer to evaluation in terms of evaluation research while others refer to evaluation in terms of program evaluation. Although the definitions of evaluation research and program evaluation are similar, it is important to distinguish difference. The purpose of evaluation research is to measure the effects of a program against the goals it set out to accomplish as a means of contributing to ensuing decision making about the program and improving future programming (Weiss, 1972). It involves the application of research methods for the systematic collection of information about the activities and outcomes of programs in order for interested persons to make judgements about the specific aspects of what the program is doing and affecting (Patton, 1978; Suchman, 1967; Rossi & Freeman, 1989; Tripodi, 1983). Evaluation research attempts to answer the question "did this program produce an observed change, and would it produce a similar change in similar settings with a similar population?" (Windsor, Baranowski, Clark, & Cotter, 1984, p.14).

Program evaluation's purpose is to determine the impact of an intervention at a given location to a specified population. In other words, did this program work in this setting and did it produce the observed change. Formal program evaluation and evaluation research differ in that program evaluation's purpose is to supplement "real world" decisions, while evaluation research's purpose is to add to the knowledge base of health education (Windsor et al, 1984).
Types of Evaluations

Evaluators generally use one of two sets of evaluations terms. Some evaluators use the terms *formative* and *summative* to describe the evaluation that occurs during the program and after the program, respectively. Others use the terms *process, impact, and outcome* to identify types of evaluation used to determine the value of a program. However, there is some overlap among the sets of terms and both sets of terms take into account the need to conduct evaluation before and/or during the program and at the end of the program (McKenzie & Smeltzer, 1997).

*Formative* evaluation is conducted as part of program development. Collecting evaluation data at this early point can provide feedback that can help make decisions about selecting a target audience as well as choosing the types of communication messages, channels, and activities to be used (Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, 1998). One example of a formative approach might be pre-testing messages and materials to assure their effectiveness prior to implementation. At the University of Kentucky, the student health services wanted to plan a marketing campaign to enhance student awareness of the available health services. Planners took a formative approach to develop their marketing plan. They developed a questionnaire and conducted focus groups to assess current student knowledge about the services provided, students participation in those services, and perceived student satisfaction. They also asked questions to assess students sources of campus information pertaining to campus events and student services to determine the most effective options of communicating their message (Stephenson, 1999).
Summative evaluation is an evaluation that provides a summary statement of a health promotion program's effectiveness over a specified period of time (Windsor et al., 1984). It is intended to judge the performance of a program that is developed and implemented. Some crossover may occur between formative and summative evaluation in some instances, but the distinction between the two lies in the motivation for the evaluation (Dignan & Carr, 1987). For example, if the stakeholders were interested in determining if and when the participants are receiving the messages of a social norms campaign, they would use a formative approach. If they were interested in finding out if the participants reduced their risk behavior because of the message, they would conduct a summative evaluation.

Process evaluation is considered a form of formative evaluation. It involves examination and documentation while programs are being developed and during implementation. This is done to make adjustments to improve the program and to ensure the program plan is on track to meet its' goals and objectives. (Maraskin, 1993; McKenzie & Smeltzer, 1997). Process evaluation (also often referred to as program monitoring) seeks to answer three key questions: (a) the extent to which a program is reaching the intended target population, (b) whether or not the delivery of the intervention is consistent with the program plan or design specifications, and (c) what resources are being used or have been expended implementing the program (Rossi & Freeman, 1989). This includes such things as assessments of whether materials are being distributed to the right people and in what quantities, whether and to what extent program activities are occurring, and other measures of how and how well the program is working (Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, 1998). For example, when the planners of the
"America Responds to AIDS" (ARTA) campaign wanted to monitor exposure of their public services announcements (PSA) to the general public, they conducted a process evaluation. They collected data pertaining to the date, day of the week, time of day, length of the PSA, theme of the PSA, name of show during which the PSA appeared, and estimated commercial dollar value of the airing (Gentry & Jorgensen, 1991).

**Impact** evaluation is a form of summative evaluation. It examines the immediate and specific effects of a program (Sarvela & McDermott, 1993). It focuses on the immediate impact of a program on behaviors, knowledge, and attitudes (Green, Kreuter, Deeds, & Partridge, 1980). For example, when the University of Koln in Germany instituted smoking restrictions on campus, they developed a program to make the transitions as easy as possible for both students and faculty (which included a poster campaign). One month after implementation of the program, they interviewed (questionnaire administered to 18.5% of student body) students to analyze attitudes towards the new policy - whether they abided by it and whether or not it affected smokers behaviors - and to gain feedback on the efficacy of the program (Apel, Klein, McDermott, & Westhoff, 1997).

**Outcome** evaluation is also a form of summative evaluation. It examines the long-term effects of a program such as mortality and/or morbidity rates or the reduction of the amount of alcoholic drinks consumed by college students in a week (Sarvela & McDermott, 1993). **Outcome evaluation is probably the hardest evaluation type to conduct.** "Tracing the causal path from a community intervention to subsequent long term changes in mortality and morbidity is fraught with difficulty, and it is inappropriate and unrealistic in most cases for programs to do this" (Nutbeam, Smith, & Catford, 1990).
Evaluation Methods

Principles and methods that apply to all other types of research apply to evaluation as well. Established research methods of design, measurement, and analysis come into play when planning and conducting evaluations. What distinguishes evaluation from other types of research is not the methods or subject matter, but its purpose for which it is done (Weiss, 1972).

Program evaluation uses both quantitative and qualitative procedures. Both methods have their place in evaluation research. Qualitative methods have important roles to play in certain types of evaluative activities, especially in the monitoring of ongoing programs (Rossi & Freeman, 1989). These types of evaluations address the quality of relationships, activities, situations, and materials, placing more emphasis on detail. Qualitative is based on the need to discover rather than test the impact of programs (Dignan & Carr, 1987; Patton, 1978). In quantitative evaluation, the evaluator looks at “how well” or “to what extent” a program achieves its objectives, “how much” learning or behavior change has taken place, and the degree to which the programs’ scope can be connected to a particular set of outcomes (Sarvela & McDermott, 1993). Quantitative methods are useful when trying to analyze data in a quantifiable manner.

In general, quantitative methods seek to determine “what” happened, and qualitative examines “how” and “why.” Some of the most meaningful data often derive from the combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods. For instance, qualitative methods might help explain quantitative findings, and quantitative methods may be used to embellish qualitative assessments (Glanz, Lewis, & Rimer, 1990). The
combination of both measures is considered highly beneficial, for it also aids evaluators in overcoming various methodological weaknesses afforded by either one alone (Salmon & Jason, 1991).

The design and implementation of an evaluation depends upon its specific purpose. The application of quantitative or qualitative techniques depends upon the type of questions being asked, the stage a program is in, how established the program is, and the types of decision the evaluation is intended to inform. Every evaluation must be tailored to its program (Rossi & Freeman, 1989).

Data Collection Techniques

Evaluations use both qualitative and quantitative methods to address questions about programs generally related to an overall framework (Anderson, 1998). Data for evaluations can come from “a gamut of sources and be collected by the whole arsenal of research techniques. The only limits are the ingenuity and imagination of the researcher” (Weiss, 1972, p. 26). Common data collection techniques used for program evaluation include surveys and focus groups.

A survey involves the systematic collection of information from the population in question, usually by means of interviews or questionnaires administered to a sample of the population (Rossi, 1989). Questionnaires are structured ways of collecting and organizing information from the sample to gain insight and measure knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs as well as perceptions of the services or intervention (Green, Kreuter, Deeds, & Partridge, 1980). Surveys involve setting objectives for information collection, designing research, preparing a reliable and valid data collection instrument,
analyzing data, and reporting the results. Data from surveys is generally analyzed using conventional statistics to investigate descriptions, relationships, comparisons, and predictions amongst the sample (Fink, 1995). Survey designs are especially useful when collecting descriptive data, however should only be part of the total evaluation design (Wilde & Sockey, 1995).

Focus groups are a qualitative technique used to explore a topic in depth by gathering information on opinions, perceptions, and ideas about a specific topic through group discussions. Focus groups are a carefully planned and moderated informal discussion group with the purpose of addressing specific topics in-depth in a comfortable environment. They are intended to elicit a wide range of opinions, attitudes, feelings or perceptions from a group of individuals who share some common experiences relative to the topic under study (Anderson, 1998). There are many appropriate uses for focus groups in the health education and health planning fields, such as collecting information on attitudes and perceptions of health issues, programs, and prevention and intervention strategies as well as gathering opinions on existing programs and services to generate ideas for improvement (Rutherford, 1998).

One advantage of focus groups is the study of participants in a natural, real-life atmosphere. The format allows the facilitator flexibility to explore unanticipated issues that respondents may not have shared in a written questionnaire. It also allows researchers to probe for opinions on issues as they arise in discussion. However, the focus group facilitator has less control over a group interview, than in an individual interview, which can result in lost time if dead end or irrelevant issues are brought up and discussed (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). Needless to say, this method is a quick and
relatively inexpensive method to gather information. Focus groups can be useful when planning, improving, or evaluating programs by collecting information the participants needs. They provide a useful complement to other methods of formative and summative evaluation, permitting judgement about the value and continued utility of a program (Anderson, 1998).

Social Marketing & Social Norms Strategies

Social norms as an intervention is a relatively new concept. Many program planners often refer to “social norms strategies” as simply “social marketing.” However, it is important to note their differences and their relationship to each other. Social norms strategies use social marketing techniques in an attempt to promote behaviors of the majority (Perkins, 1997).

Social marketing uses different levels of media to communicate a product, idea, or attitude, applying marketing techniques to social issues and healthy behaviors (Simons-Morton, Green, & Gottlieb, 1995). It entails researching the needs, wants, and expectations of the target population, then designing, implementing, and controlling programs seeking to increase the acceptability of a social idea, cause, or practice in that target group (Lefebvre & Flora, 1988; Kotler, 1986).

In social marketing theory, the concept of the “Four P’s” have been adopted from basic marketing theory. They are product, price, place, and promotion. The product can be change in behavior or an offer made to target population (such as services, options, etc). The price is the cost one may have to bear such as giving up a comfortable habit or belief. The place is the means by which the social product is delivered such as supports
services, clinics, or other places people can go to embrace a program or pursue a behavior change. The promotion is the means by which messages, images, or the social product is promoted or communicated (Kotler, 1982; Zimmerman, 1997). The most important elements carried over from traditional marketing theory are the effort applied to the planning of the program and the attentive evaluation of the entire process (Zimmerman, 1997).

Social marketing campaigns are being implemented on college campuses across America addressing the issue of student alcohol use. The results of these campaigns have been favorable (Zimmerman, 1997). A study conducted at one midwestern institution found that social marketing strategies proved helpful in developing recruitment strategies for an alcohol abuse education program for university residence hall students (Gries, Black, & Coster, 1995).

The Voices of Experience campaign conducted at Lafayette is another example of a marketing campaign that produced favorable results and claims success in promoting behavior change. The Voices of Experience campaign is a poster campaign addressing major problems faced by incoming students in regards to academic performance, alcohol use, relationships, attitudes toward their appearance and/or weight, and then provides advice from students who have already experienced the transition to college. Twelve different posters were developed and had an identifying logo and tag phrase “Successful students say...” which then lead into suggestions. Examples of poster topics include getting the most from your classes, scoping out the social scene, and knowing your limits (when consuming alcohol), (Forbes, 1998).
Of course, social marketing has also encountered some literary skepticism as well. Richard Keeling, editor of the Journal of American College Health and director of University Health Services at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, encourages researchers and program planners to remain realistic. He does not criticize social marketing strategies or their effectiveness, but suggests the following interpretation: "The apparent greater polarization of drinkers on campus – more abstainers, but more intense drinkers as well. Maybe our education, social marketing, and policy change efforts have largely influenced some proportion of students to move from moderate drinking. Perhaps some of those same efforts have contributed to greater resistance among other students. If nothing else, this question of polarization reminds us that we need to think of students as members of dynamic "market segments," each of which requires different approaches" (Keeling, 1998, p. 53).

According to the American College Health Association, alcohol is the single greatest risk to the health of University Students. One powerful predictor of adolescent alcohol use, and other forms of substance use, is peer influence (Prentice & Miller, 1993). Peers are of great importance to students attending undergraduate and residential colleges. With the decreased contact with parents, siblings, and other social influences (religious communities, etc.), peers become crucial in defining attitudes and behaviors (Designing Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Programs in Higher Education, 1997). Experiments conducted Haines (1996) at Northern Illinois University, demonstrated that reducing perceptions of alcohol, and other drug use was an effective strategy for reducing actual use among adolescents and college students. This approach has been called "a social norms strategy of behavior change" (Haines, 1998).
Social norms theory is based on research of human behavior that suggests social norms, whether accurate or perceived, are very strong influences on human behavior (Haines, 1996). The social norms arise from actual life situations as a consequence of people making contact with one another. Yet, once formed, such norms regulate their relationships and daily life (Sherif, 1966).

Social norms strategies use principles of social marketing and concentrates on changing perceptions of the norm of a target population with messages that emphasize or market positive norms while ignoring negative norms. For example, Northern Illinois University used a strategy that first measured the alcohol wellness of the students on campus and then used mass media and other communication methods to promote the low risk behaviors that the data showed were already common among students. Since students' perception of the campus norm significantly contributes to his or her own drinking behavior. Therefore, the more students that believe binge drinking is occurring, the more binge drinking that will occur. This approach was aimed at both contradicting and changing the normative beliefs. It highlights the actual moderate drinking behaviors practiced by most students in order to increase those very behaviors being engaged in already (Haines, 1996; Perkins & Wechsler, 1996).

“This theory holds that if students perceive something to be the norm, they tend to alter their behavior to fit that norm, even if it isn’t reality. If however, they are presented with the actual norm, they will conform to it. So if students think heavy drinking is normal they’ll drink more. If they think responsible drinking is normal, they’ll drink more responsibly” (Haines, 1999).
Evaluating Social Marketing & Social Norms Methods

Evaluation of social marketing and social norms campaigns has been plagued with difficulty and a limited amount of published research specific to these topics. More research has been done evaluating social marketing strategies than social norms strategies. However, the literature on this subject is somewhat limited. Social marketing's effectiveness relative to other strategies is hard to evaluate (Kotler, 1986). Bloom & Novelli (1981), suggest some reasons for the difficulties social marketers encounter when evaluating their campaigns. For one, they face difficulties trying to define effectiveness measures. There is often difficulty deciding whether a program is designed to create awareness of an issue, change people's behaviors, save lives, or do something else. Beyond this, it is often hard for program planners and evaluators to identify constructs or variables that should be monitored to indicate whether program objectives are going to be met. Also, there is often difficulty estimating the contribution the marketing program has made toward achieving certain objectives.

Social marketing programs do not typically lend themselves to evaluations using more interpretable research designs that have been identified in the literature. Using randomized experimental or quasi-experimental designs is hard to do in social marketing, partly because "social marketing campaigns are hard to compress into neat packages that can be delivered to some people in the region and not others" (Bloom & Novelli, 1981, p. 87). It is extremely difficult to control exposure. This and other difficulties in evaluating effectiveness may spill over into deterrents of evaluating at all, including process. However, more applications are needed before we can fully assess social marketing's
potential of producing social change (Kotler, 1986). Despite these limitations, some evaluations of social marketing campaigns have been done.

One example of an evaluation of a social marketing campaign was conducted by Gries, Black, & Coster (1995). Their research program was aimed at increasing recruitment at an alcohol abuse education program for university residence hall students. One of the purposes of the study was to develop "a marketing campaign based on social marketing theory and public health strategies and to evaluate whether recruitment was enhanced" at the alcohol abuse education program (Gries, Black, & Coster, 1995, p. 349). The evaluation was given post-program and consisted of a survey covering demographic information, questions pertaining to recruitment, and questions focused on reactions to the promotional materials used to advertise the program. The survey was administered to members of the treatment group. Impact was measured by increased attendance at the alcohol abuse education program. The results of the evaluation suggested that the program was helpful in developing recruitment strategies. (Gries, Black, & Coster, 1995).

Forbes (1998) conducted an evaluation to determine whether students were reading the posters and whether they were actually using the information. A survey was composed and included questions seeking such information as whether they had seen the posters, which posters they had seen, whether they used any of the tips provided in the posters, whether they discussed posters with fellow students, and students' opinion on the overall usefulness of the posters. Participants of the survey were also encouraged to make comments, remarks, and suggestions on the evaluation form. The survey found that 89% of the students read the posters and 56% utilized at least one of the suggestions presented in the campaign (Forbes, 1998).
Social norms methods have primarily been applied in programs aimed at reducing incidence of drug and alcohol use. These and other prevention programs that address drug and alcohol use are operating in a very new field. Hence, there are few interventions that have proved effective and the knowledge base is still growing (Muraskin, 1993).

Haines (1996) at Northern Illinois University evaluated the social norms strategy conducted on campus by administering surveys every April over a five year period to measure the impact of their program. He used a quasi-experimental design comparing the data he collected on drinking among college students with national data to monitor longitudinal drinking trends. The results showed that during that five year period, the number of students in the NIU sample who reported binge drinking decreased, while no such change occurred nationally. Although the results of this study were encouraging, he does however acknowledge that such a decrease may not be solely attributed to the intervention program and also makes a point of noting the studies limitations.

Although there is literature on designing and conducting social norms campaigns, published documentation on the evaluation of the process of conducting these campaigns and interventions is fairly scarce. Of the lack of process evaluations in health education, Nutbeam, Smith, & Catford (1990, p.87) suggests an “explanation for this concerns the value system which has evolved among researchers which give empirical experimentation research high status, and tends to devalue the importance of process related research – frequently referred to as “soft” research. This may be because the methods involved in process research are both less well defined and in many cases simply unfamiliar to researchers used to experimental design.” This explanation may also
explain the scarcity of such research as well. This does not mean that process evaluation of social norming campaigns aren’t being done, it just means that the focus of the published literature on evaluation has been on the intervention itself and not the evaluation components.

Another explanation for the scarcity of published literature on this topic may be that research and evaluations of such programs may have shown that some of these programs failed to achieve the desired goals, objectives, and outcomes or more simply, nothing happened as a result of the program. The lack of public knowledge of the number of failures is called the “file drawer problem” (Iyengar & Greenhouse, 1988; Rosenthal & Rubin, 1979; Abelson, 1995).
CHAPTER III

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to conduct a process evaluation of a social norms campaign being implemented to reduce the use of alcohol by students on the University of Montana campus. Process evaluations provide an assessment of how a program is implemented, what intervention activities are provided under what conditions, by whom, to what audience, and with what level of effort (Nutbeam, Smith, & Catford, 1990; Flay, 1986). Data from this study was collected using focus groups and surveys administered by telephone. This chapter describes the methods and procedures that were used in this study.

Study Design

This study employed the use of both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Descriptive surveys and focus groups were utilized to assess if members of the target population are seeing, retaining, and believing the campaign message and to determine if alterations are necessary in how the program was being conducted. The target population being investigated consists of undergraduate students at the University of Montana.

Description of Target Population

The target population for this study consisted of Freshmen, Sophomores, Junior and Senior year students at the University of Montana. According to the registrars office, Spring 2000 enrollment (as of Feb 25, 2000) consisted of 2,264 Freshman, 2,010 Sophomores, 2,033 Juniors, and 2,519 Seniors, with this population totaling 8,826 students. Of these students 1,900 lived on-campus and 6,926 lived off-campus.
Protection of Human Subjects

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at The University of Montana reviewed the proposal of this study to ensure that the research methods for data collection would not put any participant of the study at risk.

Surveys

Selection of Sample

The survey method used was a random stratified sample, using class rank as the key characteristic in determining subgroups. In a random stratified sample, the population is divided into subgroups based on key characteristics, and subjects are selected from the subgroups at random to ensure representation of the characteristic (McKenzie & Smeltzer, 1997). With stratified random sampling, the evaluator builds representativeness of the variable being stratified into the sample (Tripodi, 1983). The survey sample consisted of a representative sample of Freshman, Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors. To ensure the generalizability of a representative sample the following formula was used to estimate sample size \( n \), (adapted from Tripodi, 1983; Walker & Lev, 1953).

\[
n = \frac{4Z^2NP(1-P)}{4Z^2P(1-P) + (N-1)E^2}
\]

This formula takes into account population size \( N = 8826 \), z-score \( Z = 1.96 \), the population proportion \( P = 0.25 \), and error \( E = .10 \) to obtain a sample size with a probability level of .05.
\[ n = \frac{4(1.96^2)(8826)(.25)(.75)}{4(1.96^2)(.25)(.75) + (8826-1)(.10^2)} = 279 \]

Using this formula it was determined that at least 279 students would need to be surveyed to ensure a representative sample.

Using stratified random sampling, the total sample size was divided into class rank accounting for a proportion of the total student population each class rank represents. In all, 78 Freshman (26.2%), 70 Sophomores (23.5%), 71 Juniors (23.8%), and 79 Seniors (26.5%) were surveyed.

**Instrumentation**

Two hundred and ninety-eight surveys were conducted. Descriptive data was gathered via surveys. Data included demographic information (such as age, year in school, gender, and whether they live on-campus or off-campus) and information about the campaign message (such as through what medium have they seen the message, can they identify the message, and where have they seen the message) to gauge exposure.

The survey included twelve questions in a close-ended questionnaire (see Appendix A). It was pilot tested using a test-retest strategy to ensure reliability. An acceptable reliability level was established at 70% reliability prior to conducting the tests. Test-retest was conducted looking at each individual question as well as the survey as a whole. None of the questions had less than 70% reliability (with only one question scoring 70%). Most of the questions had 100% reliability with people answering the same question, with the same response. Overall, the survey had 95.2% reliability (excluding demographic questions). It was also tested for content validity via expert review.
Data Collection

The surveys were conducted via telephone interview using a list of names and phone numbers of students obtained from The University of Montana Registrars Office. Students who attend the College of Technology were excluded from the list.

The survey consisted of questions composed in script form. This was done to make the telephone interview go smoothly. It was also done to ensure that each interview consisted of precisely the same content. To ensure for reliability each interviewer was trained to conduct the telephone interview in exactly the same manner with exactly the same responses. This included such things as speaking clearly, delivering written statements and question sequences without pauses, understanding the written instructions, exercising self-discipline, and regulating verbal behavior so as not to improperly influence responses. All interviewers were familiarized with the role of the interviewer in conducting surveys, why maintaining neutrality is important during an interview, and information about the survey project so as to answer respondents questions in a sufficient manner. Interviewers were also familiarized with the principle of confidentiality and why it is important to protect the identities of the respondents and the integrity of the program.

Data Analysis

The responses to the questionnaires were coded, and a database was established using SPSS (a statistical analysis program). Once the data was entered, descriptive statistics were used to report frequencies such as exposure to the message and recollection of the message. Cross-tabulations were also utilized to compare the
frequency of responses to year in school (Freshman, Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors) and residency (on-campus vs. off-campus). Cross-tabulations were also run comparing results by gender.

Focus Groups

Selection of Sample

The focus group sample consisted of a total of 17 University of Montana students. Two focus groups were conducted. The focus groups were organized by class rank consisting of Juniors and Seniors for the first focus group and Freshmen and Sophomores making up the second focus group. This grouping was determined by the results of the survey which demonstrated a trend in believability when compared by class rank. Participants were recruited via Kaimin (the campus newspaper) advertisements, word of mouth, and personal contact.

Instrumentation

Focus groups were used to gather information on opinions, perceptions, and ideas about the social norms campaign. The focus groups permitted evaluators to explore issues brought up in the surveys in more depth, allowing for more objective and unexpected answers. Areas of interest not obtained from the survey also were discussed. Topics included: believability of the campaign, initial reactions to the campaign, what students noticed most about the different mediums used to promote the message, where they get other information about drinking, reliability of the message, and whether the campaign should be extended off-campus.
The focus group discussion guide consisted of ten open-ended questions, some of which contained sub-questions (see Appendix B). The focus group questions were developed based upon the results of the survey and other needs of the program planners. The purpose of the questions were to supplement, explore in-depth, and substantiate the survey results, as well as explore other campaign options. The focus group discussion guide and the implementation plan were both reviewed by the program planners. This included recruitment strategies, the introduction to the focus group, the skills of the moderator, and other things deemed necessary and useful in conducting the focus groups. In addition, a content analysis chart was used to aid evaluators in organizing and summarizing the data (See Appendix C). The content analysis sheet was adapted from Krueger (1994).

Data Collection

Each focus group had one moderator who lead the discussions, and two observers who took detailed notes of the sessions. The evaluation used two observers to address the limitation of observer bias. The sessions were also audio taped. Participants read and signed informed consent sheets prior to participating in the focus groups (see Appendix D). Food and beverages were served and gift certificates to Rockin' Rudys' were given out as incentives for recruitment and participation.

Data Analysis

The focus group data was analyzed using a tape-based analysis (Rutherford, 1998; Krueger, 1994). The tapes of the session were reviewed in conjunction with the observers' notes and references. The evaluators also debriefed immediately preceding the focus groups. This dialogue included review of the most important themes and ideas
that arose in discussion, how the responses may have differed from what was anticipated, how one group differed from the other group, what points need to be addressed in the results, unexpected findings, and what should be done differently in the next focus group. Notes and tapes were labeled and the tapes were transcribed. An abbreviated transcript was prepared for the program planners.
CHAPTER IV: Results

Surveys were used to assess if members of the target population were seeing, retaining, and believing the campaign message. Descriptive information was gathered and statistical analyses were run to interpret the results.

Demographic Information

The following information is a summary of the demographic and descriptive information pertaining to the survey sample.

Fifty-seven percent of those surveyed were female and 43% were males. Approximately, 62% lived off-campus and 34.9% lived on-campus. Also of those surveyed, 26.2% were Freshmen, 23.5% were Sophomores, 23.8% were Juniors, and 26.5% were Seniors. The ages ranged from 18 to 51 years of age. A majority of the students were between the ages of 18 and 25 years of age (85.3%), while 14.7% were 26 years of age or older. Finally of those surveyed, 86.9% reported that they had seen the message.

| Table 1a. Number and proportion of students surveyed by gender |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Gender:                        | %   | #   |
| a. male                        | 43.0| 128 |
| b. female                      | 57.0| 170 |

| Table 1c. Number and proportion of students surveyed who had seen the message |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Have you seen the message?      | %   | #   |
| a. yes                          | 86.9| 259 |
| b. no                           | 13.1| 39  |

| Table 1b. Number and proportion of students surveyed by age |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Age:                            | %   | #   |
| a. 18-19                        | 29.5| 88  |
| b. 20-21                        | 30.9| 92  |
| c. 22-23                        | 18.5| 55  |
| d. 24-25                        | 6.4 | 19  |
| e. 26+                          | 14.7| 44  |

| Table 1d. Number and proportion of students surveyed who had seen the message by where they reside |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Do you live ...                 | %   | #   |
| a. on-campus                    | 34.9| 104 |
| b. off-campus                   | 62.1| 185 |
| c. University Villages          | 3.0 | 9   |
Survey Results

The following information is a summary of the results of a phone survey conducted Tuesday, April 30 through Thursday, March 2, 2000. The following results only pertain to those students who reported seeing the campaign message.

According to the survey, most UM students have seen the message of “Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week” (see Table 2). Approximately 87% of students surveyed had seen the message. Also, a majority of students representing each class rank, as well as on-campus and off-campus students, had also seen the message.

Table 1c.
Number and proportion of students surveyed by class rank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Rank</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Freshmen</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Sophomores</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Juniors</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Seniors</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.
Proportion of UM students that have seen the message “Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Rank</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Population</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen</td>
<td>92.3</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomores</td>
<td>87.1</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juniors</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>83.5</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who live on-campus</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who live off-campus</td>
<td>82.7</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Almost half of the students surveyed (48.3%) could recall the number of alcoholic drinks most UM students have in a week as stated by the campaign message (see Table 3). Most of the students who live on-campus (61.9%) could recall the message. Similarly, 59.7% of Freshmen surveyed could recall the message, which was the highest of all of the class ranks. Freshmen make up 66.4% of the population of students who live on campus, according to the Spring enrollment numbers provided by the Registrars Office, and 87.2% of the Freshmen who live on-campus could recall the message. There was a significant rank correlation using Spearman Rho \( (r = .62, p = .00, \alpha = .05) \) between where the students live (on-campus vs. off-campus, excluding University Villages) and class rank. The correlations were also fairly consistent when comparing where students live and class rank, between those who could recall the message \( (r = .66, p = .00, \alpha = .05) \) and those who could not recall the message \( (r = .58, p = .00, \alpha = .05) \).

Approximately 42% of Sophomores and Seniors surveyed could recall the message while 46.7% of Juniors could recall the message.

Table 3.
Proportion of UM students that can recall the number of alcoholic drinks most UM students drink in a week as stated in the campaign message.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Rank</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Population</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomores</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juniors</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who live on-campus</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who live Off-campus</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who live in University Villages</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Posters were consistently the most reported medium through which UM students reported seeing the message (see table 4). Advertisements in the *Kaimin*, were consistently the second most reported medium through which UM students reported seeing the message.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Rank</th>
<th>Most (%)</th>
<th>2nd Most (%)</th>
<th>2nd Most (%)</th>
<th>2nd Most (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Population</td>
<td>Posters (65.5%)</td>
<td>Kaimin (29.7%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen</td>
<td>Posters (87.5%)</td>
<td>Kaimin (5.6%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomores</td>
<td>Posters (60.7%)</td>
<td>Kaimin (34.4%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juniors</td>
<td>Posters (53.3%)</td>
<td>Kaimin (43.3%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>Posters (57.6%)</td>
<td>Kaimin (39.4%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who live on-campus</td>
<td>Posters (89.7%)</td>
<td>Kaimin (5.2%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who live off-campus</td>
<td>Posters (49.7%)</td>
<td>Kaimin (45.5%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The location where the sample population saw the message the most was in the University Center (see Table 5). This was also true for Sophomores, Juniors, Seniors, and a majority of students who lived off-campus (51.6%). The second place the general population of students saw the message the most was in the residence halls. This ranking is highly influenced by students living on-campus, of which 78.4% said they saw the message the most in the residence halls. The third place students saw the message the most was in academic buildings (18.1% said they saw the message in academic buildings the most). Students also reported seeing the message in the recreation annex, the library, and the Curry Health Center.
Table 5.  
Campus locations UM students reported seeing the message of "Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week" most often?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Rank</th>
<th>Most   (%)</th>
<th>2nd Most (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Population</td>
<td>UC (34.4%)</td>
<td>Res. Halls (31.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen</td>
<td>Res. Halls (69.4%)</td>
<td>Lodge (11.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomores</td>
<td>UC (41.0%)</td>
<td>Res. Halls (31.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juniors</td>
<td>UC (46.7%)</td>
<td>Academic Bldgs. (23.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>UC (43.9%)</td>
<td>Academic Bldgs. (27.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who live</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on-campus</td>
<td>Res. Halls (78.4%)</td>
<td>Lodge (10.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who live</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>off-campus</td>
<td>UC (51.6%)</td>
<td>Academic Bldgs. (26.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most frequent response to the question of "How many times a week do you see the message?" was "2-3 times" (see table 6). The response of "6 or more times" was answered the second most. Again, students living on-campus had a strong influence on the general population’s response to the question with 47.4% reporting seeing the message "6 or more" times in a week. The second most frequent response reported among sophomores and juniors was "4-5 times" a week, and "once" a week among seniors.

Table 6.  
How many times a week UM students reported seeing the message of "Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Rank</th>
<th>Most          (%)</th>
<th>2nd Most       (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Population</td>
<td>&quot;2-3 times&quot; (33.2%)</td>
<td>&quot;6 or more&quot; (25.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen</td>
<td>&quot;6 or more&quot; (48.6%)</td>
<td>&quot;2-3 times&quot; (23.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomores</td>
<td>&quot;2-3 times&quot; (31.1%)</td>
<td>&quot;4-5 times&quot; (29.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juniors</td>
<td>&quot;2-3 times&quot; (40.0%)</td>
<td>&quot;4-5 times&quot; (26.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>&quot;2-3 times&quot; (39.4%)</td>
<td>&quot;once&quot; (30.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who live</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on-campus</td>
<td>&quot;6 or more&quot; (47.4%)</td>
<td>&quot;2-3 times&quot; (26.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who live</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>off-campus</td>
<td>&quot;2-3 times&quot; (37.9%)</td>
<td>&quot;4-5 times&quot; &amp; &quot;once&quot; (25.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most students did not believe the message of "Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week". Thirty-eight and a half percent of the students surveyed believed the message, 47.9% did not believe the message, and 13.5% were not sure (see table 7). There appeared to be a slight trend in class rank and believability, although Freshmen believed the message more than Sophomores and Juniors. However, there is a definite decrease in the percentage of students who did not believe the message as class rank increased. When believability was compared with age, again there was a slight decrease in the percentage of students not believing the message as age increased (see table 8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Rank</th>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>No (%)</th>
<th>Not Sure (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Population</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomores</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juniors</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who live</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on-campus</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who live</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>off-campus</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.
Do most UM students report believing the "Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week" message?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Believe message (%)</th>
<th>Don't believe message (%)</th>
<th>Not sure (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-19</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
<td>56.7%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-21</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-23</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24+</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
<td>40.3%</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.
Believability of the message "Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week" by age.

Figure 8a.
Proportion of students who had seen the message, that reported believing the message, not believing the message, and not sure.
Gender

Of the people who responded "yes" to having seen the media campaign, 41.6% (n=108) of them were males and 58.3% (n=151) were female. The consistency among males and females is worth noting. When asked to complete the following statement "Most UM students choose to have __ to __ messages in a week," the results of the males and females were consistent with each other with 49.1% (n=53) of males, and 47.7% (n=72) of females recalling the message.

Also consistent between males and females were their responses to the question "Of the types of media just listed, on which have you seen the media most?" Both males and females reported seeing the message through posters the most, and through Kaimin Ads, the second most.

Table 9.  
Type of Media through which UM students reported seeing the message the most, by gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Most (%)</th>
<th>2nd Most (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>males</td>
<td>posters 61.1%</td>
<td>Kaimin ads (34.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>females</td>
<td>posters 68.9%</td>
<td>Kaimin ads (26.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Females and males also responded to the question "Of these places, where have you seen the message the most?" similarly (see table 10). Both males and females reported seeing the message in the University Center the most, followed by residence halls and academic buildings.

Table 10.  
Campus locations UM students reported seeing the message the most, by gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Most (%)</th>
<th>2nd Most (%)</th>
<th>3rd Most (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>males</td>
<td>UC (36.1%)</td>
<td>Res. Halls (33.3%)</td>
<td>Academic Bldgs. (33.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>females</td>
<td>UC (33.1%)</td>
<td>Res. Halls (30.5%)</td>
<td>Academic Bldgs. (22.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Male and female responses were consistent in their responses to the question “How many times a week do you see the message?” (see table 11).

Table 11.
Amount of times a week UM students reporting seeing the message, by gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Most (%)</th>
<th>2nd Most (%)</th>
<th>3rd Most (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>males</td>
<td>“2-3 times” (34.3%)</td>
<td>“6 or more” (28.7%)</td>
<td>“4-5 times” (25.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>females</td>
<td>“2-3 times” (32.5%)</td>
<td>“6 or more” (23.2%)</td>
<td>“4-5 times” (21.9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking at the believability of the message by gender, there seemed to be a slight difference (see table 12). A majority of males did not believe the message (61.1% not believing the message). However, more females believed the message (47.0%) then did not believe the message (38.4%). Running a Pearson Chi-square to test if there is a significant difference in the proportion of males and females in terms of believability substantiates this observation since $p < 0.05 (p = .001)$.

Table 12.
Do you believe the message of “Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week?” (by gender).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Yes %</th>
<th>No %</th>
<th>Not sure %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Focus Group Results

The purpose of the focus groups were to supplement and explore more in-depth responses to the phone survey questions. They were also used to gather information about opinions, perceptions, and ideas about the social norm campaign.

Demographic Information

The first focus group (made up of Juniors and Seniors) consisted of 5 participants (3 males and 2 females). The ages ranged from 20 to 26 years of age. Four of the
participants lived off-campus and one lived in University Villages. The second focus group (made up of Freshmen and Sophomores) consisted of 12 people (5 males and 7 females) with ages ranging from 18 to 20 years of age. All of the participants lived on-campus.

**Focus Group Results**

The following information is a summary of what was discussed in the focus groups conducted Tuesday, March 14 and Wednesday, March 15, 2000. The focus group results are presented in the form of an abbreviated transcript as to best report on what was discussed. Focus group #1 consisted of Juniors and Seniors, and focus group #2 consisted of Freshmen and Sophomores.

1. **How believable is the message of “Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week”?**

   **Focus Group #1**

   Most members of focus group #1 did not believe the message. Some felt that the numbers of “61% drink 0-4,” seemed high. Many agreed that when they were Freshmen, they drank a lot more but most of them don’t drink as much anymore. One individual said he interpreted the message as “the other 39 percent drink a lot.” Quotes included the following:

   - “I personally don’t drink but it just seems like a lot of people I know over here talk about going out at night and getting trashed.”

   - “It seems like a lot of people around here are older students and usually a lot of people tend to drink in their earlier years, with the whole freedom of mom
and dad aren't here I can do what I want. But when you feel out not everyone

drinks every week. You might have a few drinks one week and then not drink

at all another week. A lot of people where I live choose to drink 0-4, but its

not all of the time. It's more like an average.”

*Focus Group #2*

Most members of focus group #2 did not believe the message. Many admitted
drinking more than 0-4 drinks in a week and have friends who drink more than 0-4 drinks
in a week. One person commented that they felt that UM was pretty tame compared to
other campuses they had seen. Also, the Princeton Review report that ranked UM as the
#6 party school came up several times. Although most of the students agreed that they
have their doubts about the party school ranking, they still felt that people were drinking
more than 0-4 drinks in a week. One participant questioned where the numbers for the
campaign came from. Quotes included the following:

• “Not believable at all because I drink more than that, and I know people who
drink more than that.”

• “I’m thinking I can believe it if the drinks are all long island ice teas or
something but if is like beer or something like that, I don’t believe that
because people are going to get drunk.”

• “I don’t [believe the message] with the reputation we have as the big party
school I can’t believe it.”

• “Oh, I think people still drink more than that but I don’t think we are among
the top party schools in the nation, either.”
1a. What about the message causes you to believe or not believe the message?

Focus Group #1

One of the participants heard that one of the people in one of the posters is known to drink more than 0-4 drinks in a week. That affected the credibility of all of the posters for this individual. Another person felt they were receiving conflicting messages, in that the media has been talking about what a big party school UM is and yet the message says otherwise. Another questioned where the numbers originated and another doubted that people answer surveys seriously (even though this particular individual said they always do). Some of the quotes included the following:

- "Somebody told me that somebody in the ad was drinking more than 0-4 in a week. That kind of made me think, well a lot of these people who are posing in these pictures are probably drinking more."

- "I drank a lot as an underclassman. I would say that I drank more than 0-4 drinks in a week. Most people I know did too."

- "Where did they get the data? Did they look at a mass of people or did they just look at Freshmen, or Sophomores, or Juniors, or Seniors, or Grad students? How accurate is their survey? Did they call few people? Anyone might say they do but whether or not they do ..."

Focus Group #2

Some participant felt that the message was unrealistic and challenged the credibility of the research used to obtain the numbers. One student even claimed "they probably only asked a smaller group or small proportion of the population or the students who don't really drink." One student said "I want to believe it. I personally don't drink
that often.” Another student said they heard that some of the people in the posters drink more than 0-4 drinks. Another student said they think that the campaign is “propaganda that the university is putting out, not for the students, but so they look like they are trying to stop binge drinking.” Some of the quotes included the following:

- “I want to believe it. I personally don’t drink that often. But if I do drink, it tends to be a little more than four drinks. I think that there a lot of students don’t [drink] but it might be that there is a majority that even if it is habit drinking such as watching TV and having a beer, that still counts as one drink.”

- “It’s just that it comes from an authority figure. I mean, we’ve been battered for years in school. We had to go through drug awareness in high school, no smoking ads, etc. It’s not influencing you anymore. It’s just there.”

- “They try to go around and find specific cases [of people who don’t drink or drink very little] so they can make up numbers almost to get that majority don’t drink.”

2. What were your initial reactions to this message? What are your reactions now? What were your friend’s reactions?

Focus Group #1

Members of the first focus group did not believe the message, however one participant thought the intent behind the campaign was a good idea. Some said they discussed the posters with friends and their friends did not believe the message either. Participants still don’t believe the message and claim their friends don’t either. Some of the quotes include the following:
• "I thought, wow. Cool."
• "I didn’t really believe it."
• "I straight up laughed. I said “whatever.”"
• "I kind of laugh about it and thought about it for a little bit when I first saw it and like I said, kind of went back and thought about why I thought it was funny?"

**Focus Group #2**

Most members of the second focus group did not believe the message, however there were one or two individuals who did not say they didn’t believe the message. One said that they were surprised by the fact that the majority only drinks 0-4 (but still did not believe it). Their initial reaction was that it wasn’t true and challenged the campaign’s credibility. Some of the comments were “it seems like it’s for other people, not us”, “it might help someone who has never drank before they came to college”, and “it seems naïve to think that something so simple is going to get people not to drink.” A couple of people said they discussed it with their friends and that their friends did not believe the message either. Quotes included the following:

[Initial reaction]
• “I thought, well that’s nice, but is it true?”
• “It surprised me. The fact that the majority only drink 0 to 4. Not that I think people don’t drink but it seems like I wouldn’t of thought it would be that high [high amount of people that don’t drink].”

[Reaction now]
• “Don’t notice it.”
[Friends reactions]

- "We used to talk about how it wasn't true. Just basically judging by the way we act and see how a lot of other people act. We see a lot of other people from the University at the bars."

3. How does the Student Health Services logo (or the fact that it is affiliated with Student Health Services/Curry Health Center) affect the message? How does it affect your reaction to the message?

Focus Group #1

Most of the members of focus group #1 did not notice the Student Health Services logo, however one student said it was encouraging, because it showed them that Student Health Services is concerned about student drinking. Quotes included the following:

- "I kind of feel like you [Student Health Services] have this concern about the issue."
- "I didn’t notice the logo."
- "I didn’t think much of it."

Focus Group #2

Some of the participants said they didn’t notice the Student Health Services logo. One student said that although they didn’t notice the Student Health Service logo, they knew it had come from there, however they still doubted the message. Quotes include the following:

- "I didn’t notice the logo but know it was from Student Health Services."
- "Well, I was just saying, it didn’t matter where it came from, sometimes I feel like if they want you to do something, your not going to do it."
• "I still doubted the info on it, but I think it had a little more credibility than if the administration like Dennison had put it up."

4. Tell me about the gadgets …
4a. Where have you seen them?

Focus Group #1

Most of the participants of focus group #1 had not seen very many gadgets. One point brought up was that since none of them lived in the dorm, their chances of exposure were slim. One person said they had seen a crushed frisbee on the ground that looked as if it had been purposely destroyed.

Focus Group #2

Participants of focus group #2 said they had seen the gadgets in the dorms, food services, and academic buildings. Several members of the group said that they either have owned one or own one now. One student suggested using colors that stand out more (claims they blend in too much). Another student complained that some of the gadgets are of low quality. They said that they had a water bottle that leaked and the frisbees are too flimsy to actually use. They also complained that the dry-erase boards are difficult to erase. Quotes include the following:

• "I’d use them if they work. It’s just like the posters. There are so many of them, they just become part of the wall."

• "I think if they were higher quality. The frisbees were not the best. I had a waterbottle and it leaked everywhere. If it was a really good frisbee that you could actually go out and play a game with I would use it because it is a good frisbee."
4b. What other promotional materials would you pick up or keep or use? What kind would you leave behind or throw away?

Focus Group #1

Students liked the writing boards (except one person said that they might ignore the message). Other suggestions included coffee mugs, pencils, and stickers. Quotes include the following:

- "Writing boards are a good idea, but I might ignore the message."
- "I thought the SOBEAR coffee mugs that they had were real nice."
- "Maybe pencils or something."

Focus Group #2

Some of the suggestion from focus group #2 included better quality frisbees, dry-erase boards with erasers, coffee mugs, camping gear, and "fun stuff." Quotes included the following:

- "Camping gear. You know, fun stuff."
- "I like the mouse pad. I scratched the message off though but I still use it everyday."
- "I think it doesn’t matter what they are, frisbees, waterbottles, whatever. It’s not going to make people change their minds about drinking. They’re not going to be heading for the bar and see a frisbee and be like, I shouldn’t hit the bar then."

5. What do you notice most about the posters?

Focus Group #1

Participants in focus group #1 didn’t have much to say about the posters. Some of the things people said they noticed were the people’s expressions in the pictures, the
colors of posters, and the asterisk by "Most" that qualified the numbers. Another person commented that there is so much stuff pinned up around campus, that they didn’t really notice much details about the posters except for the message on it. Quotes included the following:

- "Maybe the expression of the people on it."
- "I remember seeing them but not much else about them."
- "With the posters I noticed the colors"

Focus Group #2

Immediately after being asked this question, one of the participants of focus group #2 replied "Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week. That’s the only part I notice." Another student said they notice the pictures.

5a. What do you notice most about the Kaimin Ads?

Focus Group #1

The participants of focus group #1 did not have much to say about the Kaimin ads except for the fact that they noticed them. One person said they noticed the size and location of the ads. Another student mentioned they noticed the frequency in which they appeared in the Kaimin. Quotes included the following:

- "I don’t know. Size and location."
- "With the ads and bulletin boards, there just so much stuff. I ignore a lot of it."

Focus Group #2

One person said they noticed that the ads were often next to the Kettlehouse Brewery ads. Some of the students agreed that the Kaimin (through articles, editorials,
and other stories) tends to promote a drinking more than a non-drinking tone. Quotes included the following:

- "Well, they have the 0 to 4 drinks ad and right next to it they have the Kettlehouse Brewery ads."
- "The Kaimin definitely doesn't have a non-drinking [tone]."

6. In the past, where have you gotten information about safe drinking? What did you think about the reliability of this information?

Focus Group #1

Responses to this question included parents, personal experiences with alcohol, and high school health education classes and programs. People put the most reliability in personal experiences and parents. One student commented that his prior college (transfer student) had a similar campaign. Although he didn't put much faith in it, he still remembered the message. Quotes included the following:

- "I don't drink much because I get hungover when I do drink. So I drink occasionally. My friends that I hang out with don't drink much at all. I go from a lot of my personal experiences. It was pretty much based on what I drank when I was a Freshman."
- "I too learned from trial and error. But I don't think that I would necessarily listen to anybody that told me without going through it on my own."
- [Referring to reliability of source] "Yeah, coming from my mom, because there has been some history in my family. And my doctor had some stuff too."
Focus group #2

Responses to this question for focus group #2 included high school health education classes and programs and media (newspapers, television, etc.). Quotes included the following:

- "Everywhere. Every time you see a story about a drunk driver on the news, or read about it in the paper. I mean it’s everywhere. It’s the big topic of the day."

7. Where have you seen the posters? How does the location affect your reaction to the message?

Focus Group #1

Participants of focus group #1 have seen the posters in academic buildings, dorms, and in the Curry Health Center. Participants did not feel that location had any effect on reactions to the message.

Focus Group #2

Participants of focus group #2 have seen the message in the dorms the most. One student commented that there is one right outside his dorm that he sees everyday. Another student commented that there were so many all of over the place, that he just doesn’t pay attention to them anymore. Quotes included the following:

- "It’s just that there are so many of them up that I just don’t pay attention to them anymore. It’s like a sound: If you hear a sound over and over again, you learn not to pay attention anymore."

- "Everyday, I walk out of my [dorm] room and there is one on the wall."
8. What do you think about putting the message in off-campus locations?

**Focus Group #1**

Participants of focus group #1 had mixed feelings about extending the campaign off-campus. Two people thought that it would be a good idea because it might generate more discussion on the subject. The other two participants, didn’t think it was a good idea because they didn’t feel that people would take it seriously. Quotes included the following:

- "I think it is a good idea. Like in restaurants and bars. Maybe at Food For Thought because it is so close to campus."
- "I just wonder how seriously people would take it if they saw it at a bar. I mean that one bar has a breathalizer and people would just drink as much as they can just to see how high they can get it [blood alcohol reading]."

**Focus Group #2**

Many of the participants of focus group #2, felt that putting the message off-campus would not be a good idea. One student mentioned that he would interpret it as an image thing for the University and not for the students. Quotes included the following:

- "I think that it would just be an image thing, that the university is trying to counteract the #6 party school thing. It’s not for the students anymore. It’s more for the image they want."

9. What else might you mention that we haven’t asked about today?

**Focus Group #1**

Two of the participants expressed concern about the people in the poster. Wanted to know if the people in the poster were real students or if they were just some random
pictures used for the campaign. They assumed that they were “pictures manufactured elsewhere.” This concern went towards credibility of campaign. Another suggestion was using peoples names, majors, and a quote such as “I get a lot more out of my school when I don’t drink” to prove that the people in the posters were real UM students. Another suggestion was using people who were well-known and respected on campus who people know don’t drink or drink moderately, such as the ASUM president, head of student organizations, etc. Another suggestion for Kaimin ads were “Non-Drinker Profiles” (just like the Iron Horse Pub’s “Drinker Profiles” that are advertised in the Independent every week). A final suggestion was some sort of club or organization for people who don’t drink to meet other people who don’t drink (sponsor alcohol free trips). Participants also agreed that they liked the fact that the campaign message was positive. Quotes included the following:

- “About the people in the posters maybe? Are they just snapshots of people playing frisbee in the Oval or are they actually people who don’t drink? Like if you have somebody in the picture, you want to know if that is one of the people you are campaigning for but its not. It’s kind of like a lie.”
- “Well, I always assumed that the people in the pictures aren’t UM students at all. They are manufactured elsewhere for whatever goal and brought in. I have no reason to think that when I look at a person in the picture that they are actually on this campus for real.”
- “Like I said, my friends don’t drink. I don’t do it because they don’t do it. When I was a Freshmen, I hung out with people that drank all the time so I did too.”
Focus Group #2

One student in focus group #2 commented that it was nice to see that the message was positive. This student said that “if there were some way to shock people more with a positive ad, than it might get more attention.” Quotes included the following:

- “It seems naïve to think that something so simple is going to get people not to drink. Most people accept that college students drink. It’s pretty accepted from where I am from.”
- “I think its positive by saying its 0 to 4. It makes it nice. I mean I am tired of the negative ads. If there were someway to shock people more with a positive ad than it might be more ... I am sick and tired of seeing negative ads. But if you could make something more positive that jumps out at you.”

Debriefing

Focus Group #1

The moderator and the two observers agreed that among the topics discussed, two themes stood out. For one, the idea of perception vs. use. For example, most of the participants said that although they used to drink a lot when they were Freshman, they don’t drink that much anymore, but thought that a lot of other people, especially Freshmen, were drinking a lot. Another theme that arose was the credibility of the data sources. They questioned the numbers and also questioned how seriously people take surveys such as the CORE survey. However, despite the fact that participants did not believe the message, two points are worth noting. For one, these students all retained
some part of the message, and two, they commented on the fact that it was a positive message.

Focus Group #2

There are a few issues and discrepancies that need to be noted pertaining to focus group #2. First, the moderator and the two observers all agreed that there was a feel of social desirability among the participants. The researchers noted that there were a few participants in focus group #2 who although spoke a lot in the beginning, became quiet despite attempts by the moderator to probe and draw out their thoughts. The discussion also became dominated by people who had negative things to say about the campaign.

Also, this group, made up of Freshmen and Sophomores, tended to be more resistant to the campaign. Many times throughout the discussion, the mention of authority figures and the theme of "Us vs. Them" emerged several times. Also, this group was harder to keep on task. The discussion constantly drifted from the main question back to the subject of credibility and believability. Finally, some of the participants contradicted themselves. For example, the same students that said they didn't read the Kaimin earlier in the discussion later said that they did.
Chapter V
Discussion & Recommendations

Introduction
The purpose of this study was to conduct a process evaluation of a social norms campaign being conducted at The University of Montana by the Health Enhancement Office of the Curry Health Center. Phone surveys and focus groups were used to gather information. The following chapter consists of a summary of the findings of the study, conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for further research.

Discussion
There were several themes that came to the surface during this process evaluation. The following section summarizes and discusses these themes.

Exposure
Exposure is an important aspect of social marketing. Within social marketing theory, exposure can be categorized under the fourth “p” or promotion, which is the means by which messages, images, or the social product are promoted or communicated (Kotler, 1982). The purpose of the posters and the gadgets is to increase exposure to the campaign by University of Montana students.

University of Montana students are seeing the message. Most of the students surveyed (86.9%) had seen the message. Almost half of the students surveyed (48.3%) could recall the message. They are seeing the posters on campus. The highest exposure rates were reported at the University Center, residence halls, and academic buildings. In
addition, posters had the highest exposure rates compared with the *Kaimin* Ads and the gadgets and therefore have been the most effective medium through which to promote the message, especially for students living on-campus. The *Kaimin* ads also have had a high level of exposure. They have also been an effective medium, especially when trying to reach older students and students who live off-campus. These two groups reported seeing the message in *Kaimin* ads almost as much as they reported seeing the message on posters.

The gadgets used so far have only had moderate exposure. For example, of the total students surveyed, 21.2% have seen the message on a frisbee, 8.5% have seen the message on a dry-erase board, 11.6% have seen the message on a mouse pad, and 27.0% have seen the message on a waterbottle. The students with the highest exposure to the gadgets have been students who live on campus (of which 65.4% are Freshmen).

Students disliked the waterbottles. Even though it had the highest exposure of all the gadgets, students complained about the quality of the waterbottles. Those students who still owned waterbottles claimed they never use them. Again, the biggest complaint with the frisbees and dry-erase boards were the quality (students complained that the frisbees were flimsy and the dry erase boards were hard to erase). However, students said they would pick up, use and keep these two items if they were of better quality. The mouse pads were a good idea for students living in the dorm. A growing number of university students are purchasing and using their own computers. Hence, mouse pads are a gadget that can potentially be utilized on a frequent basis.

Another topic dealing with exposure was the idea of whether or not to extend the campaign off-campus, which was discussed in the focus groups. Most students had a
negative reaction to this idea. Many felt that extending the campaign off-campus would only serve the purpose of promoting an image of the university to the community than to the deterring of student binge drinking. However, one student felt it might help generate more discussion.

**Believability**

The purpose of social marketing is to promote or sell an idea or social concept. To succeed in promoting an idea, the target population must accept and believe what the message is telling them or trying to promote. Only then will they buy the idea or take steps towards changing their behavior. However, in reference to the social marketing of social norms strategies, Haines (1998) says “do not be discouraged if some students indicate that they don’t believe the message. Remember the false norm is prevalent. One only needs to change the perception of some students to begin the process of changing student behavior.”

Believability of the campaign message had mixed results. Of the students surveyed, 47.9% did not believe the message, 38.6% did believe the message, and 13.5% were not sure. There was a slight trend between age and believability in that as the age groups got older, the amount of students who did not believe the message decreased. Seniors believed the message the most with 48.5% believing the message. Both the survey and the focus groups showed that Freshmen and Sophomores tended to be more resistant to the message. More than half of the students in both of those class ranks, didn’t believe the message. It is also worth noting that the moderator and two observers sensed that some social desirability existed in focus group #2 (Freshmen and Sophomores). There was a sense that some of the student were responding in a way consistent with what
others "expected" to hear and what was "acceptable" among the other participants. The researchers also felt that this intimidated a few of the other participants who became more silent as the focus group continued.

Location had no effect on the believability of the message. Whether the campaign message was in an academic building, residence hall, or other common areas, it had no effect on whether or not students believed it more or less. Location, did however, have some impact on exposure and the students ability to recall the message. In addition, the fact that the message came from the Curry Health Center had no effect on the believability of the message.

The issue of credibility arose quite often in both of the focus groups. For example, students challenged the source of the data behind the campaign. Also, although proper precautions were taken by the program planners to make sure students in the posters represent the message they were trying to promote, students in both focus groups reported they heard rumors that some of the people in the posters are binge drinkers. Even if the rumors are false, it still hurts credibility of the campaign. It is difficult to control for such rumors. One suggestion worth looking into is using well-known and respected students (such as ASUM president, ASUM senators, and other student leaders who represent different sub-cultures and populations around campus) in posters.

Students in the focus groups also said that their friends don't believe the message. However, the fact that students knew their friend's reactions is a sure sign that students are not only engaging in dialogue about the issue of alcohol consumption, but thinking about it as well.
Also, members of both focus groups were pleased with the fact the campaign message was a positive one.

Recommendations

Advertisements

The ads that have been used to date have been successful. *Kaimin* advertisements had high exposure rates among the survey population and focus group participants noticed things such as frequency of the ads as well as the size and locations of ads. An idea that came out of the focus groups worth looking into for future strategies is advertising “Non-Drinker Profiles” in the Kaimin. This is an idea that mimics the “Drinker Profiles” sponsored by the Iron-Horse Pub in the *Independent* every week. This is where a student will have their picture taken, along with their name and major and asked a question such as “What is your favorite thing to do on a Sunday that does not include drinking alcohol?” A different profile can be put in the paper every day or every week.

Gadgets

Suggestions for new gadgets that came out of the focus groups include coffee mugs and writing utensils (i.e., pens, pencils, highlighters, etc.).

Location

At this time, it is this evaluators opinion that extending the campaign off-campus is unnecessary. Again, data from both the surveys and focus groups show that exposure to the campaign message is high among UM students. Also, students in both focus groups had negative overall reactions to this idea. Although one person felt it might generate
more discussion of the campaign, most would not take it seriously and see it as an effort by the University to boost its image, rather than curb binge drinking among students. Finally, monitoring posters off-campus would require more time and resources than it is worth. Poster monitoring is done by Peers Reaching Out (PRO's), a class of peer health educators sponsored by the Health Enhancement Office. Off-campus monitoring might create a problem for those who have no vehicle or other forms of transportation. It would also consume much of their limited weekly office hours.

**Targeting off-campus students**

The research showed that students who live off-campus are seeing and recalling the message proportionally less than those who live on-campus. However, off-campus students are believing the message slightly more. New strategies for targeting students who live off-campus should still be considered because they make up a majority of the student population at UM. Such strategies could include giving away gadgets with the message on it when students purchase their parking decals at Campus Security. Another idea might be giving away bike bells with the message to off-campus students who commute to school on bicycles. The gadgets to date have been seen and utilized mostly by those who live on-campus. Gadgets like the ones suggested could help increase exposure of the campaign message to students living off-campus (as well as students residing in University Villages).

**The Social Norms Campaign**

Despite the fact that more students do not believe the message (47.9%) than do (38.6%), it is recommended that the campaign continue. The social norms campaign at Northern Illinois University (NIU) reported an 18% decrease in reported binge drinking
by the end of the first of year of its social norms campaign and a 44% reduction in binge drinking over 9 years (Haines, 1998). This is the first year of the social norms campaign at The University of Montana. The NIU study shows that change in drinking behavior is gradual. Only by continuing the campaign and conducting further evaluations will there be the possibility of seeing a change in the reported cases of binge drinking among UM students.

**Conclusion**

Getting the message across about responsible drinking to students in a way that is believable and credible to university students is no easy task. Students reported receiving information on alcohol and drinking from personal experiences, high school health education classes and programs, parents, and the media. Of these, the two most credible sources of information were personal experiences and parents. This creates a challenge for health educators when trying to promote responsible drinking among students. Not only do health educators not know what kind of personal experiences each individual student is having, it is unknown what messages parents are giving their children. Also, there are conflicting messages from the media and often negative stereotypes of such interventions that have carried over from past exposure to other health education campaigns (such as high school health education classes). For example, the Princeton Review published a report last year that ranked The University of Montana as the #6 party school in the nation. One focus group participant even commented “I don’t believe the message] with the reputation we have as the big party school, I can’t believe it.” This report and the publicity that surrounded it had some effect on the campaign. It
hurt the believability of the message as well as reinforced the perception of the norm that
students do drink a lot. The only thing health educators can do is to keep trying to
promote the message of responsible drinking, continue creating and implementing new
and innovative ideas of promoting the message, and evaluate these ideas to create a
knowledge base of what works best. This is what the health educators at the Curry
Health Center are doing. This process evaluation report has summarized and discussed
the results, and made some recommendations. Nevertheless, this evaluation concludes
that the social norms campaign being implemented at The University of Montana by the
Health Enhancement Office of the Curry Health Center has done a exemplary job of
promoting it's campaign message.

Limitations

No research is without flaw or limitations. This section attempts to acknowledge
these limitations, their possible impact, and methodological recommendations for future
research similar in nature.

1. Social desirability can corrupt the integrity of the data. In the case of focus groups,
many students might have said what they felt was the “expected” or “acceptable”
response to a question asked. Also, social desirability may have intimidated other
focus group participants from contributing in fear of responding in a way that was not
accepted or socially desirable. Finally, social desirability may also have had an
impact on respondents answers to the survey questions in that, again respondents
might have responded in a way that they felt is consistent with what their peers would
consider “acceptable.”
2. More focus groups could have been conducted. For example, four focus groups divided by class rank (two for Freshmen and Sophomores and two for Juniors and Seniors) could have been conducted instead of just two. For one, it would help the researchers determine the consistency and redundancy of the qualitative data collected in the focus groups. "The intent is to achieve "theoretical saturation," which is akin to redundancy. We are watching for patterns in our interview results, and we will sample until we have "saturated" the theory or found redundant information" (Krueger, 1998, p. 72). It also may help reduce the impression of social desirability in that one focus group may experience less social desirability than another group. Finally it may also help generate more ideas for future changes in the campaign (such as new gadgets, not mentioned in the focus groups already conducted).

3. Process evaluations are not limited only to the methods used in this research. The more methods and the more data gathered, the richer the results. For example, other methods could include a documentation review, one on one interviews, etc.

4. The information gathered from this survey is limited to information gathered from only those students who had seen the message. Although, this group made up most of the study population (86.9%), it might be helpful to interview students who have not been exposed to the message. This could have been done when phone interviews were being conducted by having a separate questionnaire for students who had not seen the message. Such a questionnaire could explore such things as why haven't they seen the message (how often are they on campus, where on campus are they the most, etc.) as well as collect ideas for other places on campus where they might be
exposed to the message. Another advantage of this would be that the interviewer could get an actual initial reaction to the message. This information might be more accurate than asking students who had seen the message to recall their initial reactions.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

Evaluation is an important part of all health education programs, especially when implementing innovative strategies like social norms and social marketing campaigns. However, the research literature in this area is scarce. As mentioned in the review of literature, this does not mean that evaluations of these strategies are not being done, they are just not being published. On the other hand, the lack of empirical evidence can mean that program planners of such strategies are not evaluating their programs. Whatever the reason for the lack of published literature on the subject, it is important to evaluate programs using reliable and valid research techniques. Such research would not only make references available to other program planners and add to the knowledge base of such programs, but also add to the credibility of such programs. Evidence of effectiveness of these programs is very important. It is also cost-effective to conduct process evaluations. It is important to know whether the funds allocated are being used wisely or if they could be used more efficiently in another way.

Also, both the campaign and this process evaluation focus more on students who live on-campus and off-campus than those students who reside in University Villages. Students who live in University Villages only accounted for 9% of the survey population and one focus group participant. Although this population only represents a small proportion of
overall UM students they should not be overlooked. However, at the same time students who reside in University Villages might have different issues, therefore, this campaign might not accommodate their needs. Currently, a needs assessment is being conducted to determine the needs of this population. Further research could determine if a social norms campaign targeting an issue identified by the needs assessment would suit the needs of this population.

Although the information obtained from this research is valuable, it cannot be generalized to other university student populations other than UM students. It is highly encouraged that other campuses implementing social norms and social marketing campaigns conduct their own evaluations, especially process evaluations.

Finally, not only is it important to conduct process evaluations, but it is also important to follow up with impact and outcome evaluations. Such evaluation requires a great deal of time and effort. However, it helps justify and validate all of the time and effort already put into the intervention program. Program planners at the Health Enhancement Office of the Curry Health Center at The University of Montana are encouraged to follow up the results of this process evaluation with an impact and outcome evaluation of the social norms campaign being conducted on campus.
References


Appendix A:

Social Norms Campaign Student Evaluation Survey
**Social Norms Campaign Student Evaluation Survey**

Hi, my name is _____ and I am a student here at the University working on a thesis project. I was wondering if you could help me out with a study we are conducting. Your responses will remain confidential and it should only take about 3 minutes. I just have 12 questions to ask you about a media campaign being used on campus.

**IF NO then say “Thanks for your time and have a good evening.”**

**IF YES then say “great” and move on to #1.**

1. First I need to ask you about some demographic information. Gender: □ Male □ Female
2. Are you a □ Freshman □ Sophomore □ Junior □ Senior or □ Graduate student
3. How old are you? (Please fill in)
4. Do you live □ on campus □ University Villages or □ off campus
5. Currently there is a media campaign on campus addressing how many drinks most UM students have in a week. Have you seen the message? □ yes □ no
   (If YES go on to question 6, if NO then reword and ask again just to make sure they understood. If they still so NO then say “Thank you very much for your time. Have a good evening.”)
6. How many times a week do you see the message?
   □ never □ once □ 2 to 3 times □ 4 to 5 times □ 6 or more times
7. Please fill in the blanks in the following message: “Most UM students choose to have ___ to ___ drinks in a week?”
8. I’m going to list the various types of media used to promote the message. Please tell me if you have seen the message on any of the following by responding with a “YES” or “NO”:
   a. posters □ yes □ no
e. on a mouse pad □ yes □ no
   b. Kaime ads □ yes □ no
   f. on a water bottle □ yes □ no
c. on a frisbee □ yes □ no
   g. not sure □ yes □ no
d. on a dry-erase board □ yes □ no
   (Only if “NO” to all the others!!)
9. Of the types of media I just listed, on which have you seen the message the most?
   □ posters □ on a mouse pad
   □ Kaime ads □ on a water bottle
   □ on a frisbee □ not sure
   □ on a dry-erase board
10. I’m going to list various campus settings you may have seen the media with the message on it. Please tell me if you have seen the message in any of the following places by responding with a “YES” or “NO” to all of the following:
    a. University Center □ yes □ no
e. Recreation Annex □ yes □ no
    b. Lodge □ yes □ no
    f. other: □ yes □ no
c. Residence halls □ yes □ no
    g. None of the above □ yes □ no
d. Academic buildings □ yes □ no
    h. not sure □ yes □ no
   (such as the LA building, Jeannette Rankin, etc.)
11. Of these places, where have you seen the message the most?
    □ University Center □ Academic building □ None of the above
    □ Lodge □ Recreation Annex □ not sure
    □ Residence Halls □ Other (Please Specify): _______________
12. Do you believe the message of “Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week”?  □ yes □ no □ not sure

Well, that’s it. Thank you very much for taking the time to answer my questions. If you have any questions about this study please call 243-6958 and ask for Nolan. Have a good evening!
Appendix B:

Focus Group Discussion Guide
Focus Group Discussion Guide

Age:
Gender:
Year in School:
Do you live on-campus or off-campus?

1. ICE-BREAKER question

2. How believable is the message of "Most UM students choose to have 0-4 drinks in a week"?
   a. What about the campaign causes you to believe/not believe?

3. What were your initial reactions to this message? What are your reactions now? What were your friend's reactions?

4. How does the Student Health Services logo (or the fact that it is affiliated with the Student Health Services) affect the message? How does it affect your reaction to the message?

5. Tell me about the gadgets...
   a. Where have you seen them?
   b. What do you think about when you see them?
   c. What other promotional materials (such as keychains, mugs, etc.) would you pick up/keep/use? What kind would you leave behind/throw away?

6. What do you notice most about the posters? What do you notice most about the Kaimen ads?

7. In the past, where have you gotten information about safe drinking?
   a. What did you think about the reliability of this information?

8. Where have you seen the posters? How does the location affect your reaction to the message?

9. What do you think about using the message in off-campus locations (ex. Independent, restaurants, etc.)? Where would you like to see it off-campus?

10. What else might you mention that we haven't asked about today?
Appendix C:

Focus Group
Content Analysis Chart
Content Analysis Chart

Focus Group #1

Date of Focus Group:
Location of Focus Group:
Number and Description of Participants:
Moderator Name:
Assistant Moderator Name:

Question #1:

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<th>Brief Summary/Key points</th>
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Appendix D:

Informed Consent
STUDENT INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

The Student Health Services at the University of Montana supports the practice of protection for human subjects participating in research. The following information is provided so you can decide whether or not you wish to participate in this study.

The UM Student Health Services is very interested in your opinions and experience with the University of Montana's social norms campaign to reduce binge drinking among students. The purpose of this focus group is to assess the social norms campaign and the message of "Most UM students choose to have 0 to 4 drinks in a week." The discussion will address issues brought up by group participants pertaining to the campaign. The moderators will ask general questions and keep the group on task. The focus group will be audio-taped and should last no longer than an hour and a half. Information gathered from this study will be made available to the Student Health Services.

Because the focus group may bring up some issues that may be sensitive or legally damaging to some subjects, the following steps will be taken to minimize potential risks:

1) All reported information will remain confidential
2) Subjects identity will remain anonymous and will not be associated with research findings in any way
3) At the conclusion of the study, the list of subject names and any information pertaining to subjects identity will be destroyed
4) After tapes have been transcribed, it will be impossible to identify the source of any statement.
5) At the conclusion of the study, the tapes will be erased.

Participation in this study is voluntary. If at any time during the course of the discussions you do not feel comfortable, you are welcome to leave. Any comments made up to that point will still be recorded, however, your identity will still remain anonymous.

Although there is minimal risk to subjects participating in this study, the University of Montana requires that all participants be aware of the following information:

In the event that you are injured as a result of this research you should individually seek appropriate medical treatment. If the injury is caused by the negligence of the University or any of it's employees, you may be entitled to reimbursement or compensation pursuant the Comprehensive State Insurance Plan established by the Department of Administration under the authority of M.C.A., Title 2, Chapter 9. In the event of a claim of such injury, further information may be obtained from the University's claims Representative or University Legal Counsel.