

Fact Sheet

Nebraska Collegiate Consortium To Reduce High-Risk Drinking

What is the Nebraska Collegiate Consortium to Reduce High-Risk Drinking (NCC)?

The NCC is a collective of all state-funded two- and four-year colleges and universities in Nebraska, all working on reducing high-risk drinking among their student populations through comprehensive environmental strategies similar to those used at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The NCC is created through UNL's Nebraska Prevention Center for Alcohol and Drug Abuse through a grant by the United States Department of Education.

Why form a statewide consortium?



1. As many as 47 states across the country have expanded prevention of college alcohol abuse and other drug problems into a regional or statewide effort. Leaders of these initiatives are actively involving a mix of campus, community, business, and governmental agencies to create environmental change. Broad involvement in a comprehensive statewide plan has emerged as a key component of effective college prevention. Several studies of statewide efforts have suggested that individual campuses are better able to create and sustain effective strategies to reduce alcohol-related harms when associated with a statewide collaborative. College and university personnel can rely on their peer institutions in the state to share knowledge, expertise, and resources in creating campus environments that support low-risk alcohol consumption and abstinence.
2. Institutions in Nebraska also have a peer institution, UNL, named a "Model Program" by the United States Department of Education in reducing drinking problems among its students. Through a grant accompanying the award, UNL can help other Nebraska campuses adopt a program that has shown success.
3. Thanks to efforts funded and directed by the Nebraska Health and Human Services Division of Behavioral Services, communities across the state are also forming coalitions to address youth drinking issues. Strong campus task forces can join these efforts.

How big of a problem is high-risk drinking among college students?

High-risk drinking among college students remains a significant challenge at campuses across the United States. Research about college drinking from the National Institute for Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) estimates that 1700 college students die annually due to alcohol-related incidents – including alcohol poisoning and drunk driving. A 1999 study found that over 500,000 full-time 4-year college students were unintentionally injured under the influence of alcohol and over 600,000 were hit or assaulted by another student who had been drinking.

How big of a problem is this in Nebraska?

Although we don't have any collected data about drinking rates and problems at colleges and universities in Nebraska, we know several facts that would suggest that all campuses in the state need to address this issue:

-  Youth Risk Behavior survey data indicates that Nebraska youth also drink at high rates. Nebraska ranks third in the nation for youth drinking rates.
-  The Harvard College Alcohol Study indicates that colleges and universities in the upper Midwest tend to have higher drinking rates than institutions in other parts of the country.

Why promote comprehensive environmental strategies?

Research reveals that campus and surrounding community environments play a significant role in student behavior. Access and availability to alcohol, promotions and marketing of alcohol-related activities, a lack of policies and enforcement surrounding alcohol use on and around campus, and the existence of college rituals and traditions that involve high-risk alcohol consumption all contribute to a culture that encourages high-risk behavior.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln saw significant decreases in student drinking rates and problems experienced by drinkers and non-drinkers alike by employing comprehensive environmental strategies. Simply put – it works.

What institutions are joining the Consortium?

Chadron State College	Southeast Community College
Central Community College	University of Nebraska-Kearney
Mid-Plains Community College	University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Metropolitan Community College	University of Nebraska-Omaha
Northeast Community College	Wayne State College
Peru State College	Western Nebraska Community College

What will membership entail?

For the first year, member institutions will undergo a series of training and technical assistance workshops to help them create campus task forces, environmental analysis, and strategic plans. Institutions in the Consortium will survey students on their campus to create a statewide measure of drinking rates and related behaviors. Once the initial training is completed, representatives from each campus will meet together collectively to share ideas, strategies, and lessons learned. Individual campus task forces will connect with existing coalitions in the community to address environmental issues.

Why aren't other Nebraska colleges and universities involved?

All Nebraska institutions – including private colleges and universities – are welcome to be a part of the Consortium. However, the limited funds provided by the U.S. Department of Education make it impossible to provide training and technical assistance for all institutions in Nebraska. Focusing first on assisting state-funded institutions will help create a solid base for future growth. State-funded two- and four-year colleges and universities constitute more than 75% of all the students enrolled in higher education in the state of Nebraska.

Who is coordinating the Consortium's activities?

The Nebraska Prevention Center for Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NPCADA), located on the campus of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, received the U.S. Department of Education grant to provide training and assistance for state-funded two- and four-year colleges and universities in Nebraska and will coordinate all training efforts. The NPCADA has been actively involved in substance abuse prevention throughout Nebraska for more than twenty years. The Center is led by Dr. Ian Newman, a researcher and practitioner known throughout the world for his work on culture and substance use/abuse.