

**Report on
Underage Drinking Prevention Videos:
A Four-State Pilot Project**

**Prepared for:
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Center for Substance Abuse Prevention**

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Acknowledgments

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Introduction

This report presents the findings from a pilot study conducted by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to explore the potential benefits of a series of short videos showcasing underage drinking prevention efforts in States. The study was designed to inform SAMHSA's development of a series of videos to build upon the momentum of the 2006 Preventing Underage Alcohol Use Town Hall Meetings. Specifically, SAMHSA intended the series to serve as a far-reaching promotional and informational tool to strengthen connections between States and their communities and to keep underage drinking prevention at the forefront.

This report provides additional information on the background and objectives of the project, the study design and implementation, and feedback from participants. Conclusions and budget information are also presented.

Background

SAMHSA developed the pilot videos in collaboration with Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas and with support from the Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Prevention of Underage Drinking. (See Appendix A for more information about the study.) The pilot States were named at the Preventing Underage Alcohol Use: A Meeting of the States (Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas) on October 2 and 3, 2006, at SAMHSA headquarters in Rockville, MD. This meeting was a follow-up to the Preventing Underage Alcohol Use: A National Meeting of the States in 2005. These Gulf Coast States were unable to participate in that meeting due to demands related to the 2005 hurricanes. Approximately 40 State team members (10 from each State) attended the 2006 meeting.

Objectives

Each approximately from 7 to 10 minutes, the videos were designed to raise awareness about each State's unique underage drinking issues and prevention activities and to build enthusiasm for developing, implementing, and expanding underage alcohol use prevention activities. States were able to use the videos in a variety of ways—to inform citizens and policymakers, update current coalition members, recruit new members to important prevention efforts, and more.

Specifically, the videos were designed to:

- Build awareness of current underage drinking prevention efforts in the State.
- Promote resources available to community organizations.
- Empower parents, youth, and organizations through opportunities to join these efforts.
- Report on measurable results of State and community underage drinking activities and initiatives (for example, Town Hall Meetings, enforcing underage drinking laws programs, and Reach Out Now Teach-Ins).

Audiences included parents, youth, policymakers, community organizations, and business alliances.

Study Design and Implementation

SAMHSA provided a producer and video crew to work with a primary point person in each State. Together, the team coordinated production logistics and devised a plan to best tell each State's story. The crew traveled to each State to tape interviews and other footage over a 3- to 4-day period. States were encouraged to identify key players within their State for inclusion in the video, such as the following:

- Community leaders who helped to organize a Town Hall Meeting.
- State First Spouses, if they were involved in underage drinking prevention.
- National Prevention Network representatives.
- Traffic safety and law enforcement representatives.
- State alcohol beverage control representatives.
- Education and health (epidemiologist) representatives.
- Parents and youth who have benefited or participated in community programs.

After the videos were edited, States received a DVD master ready for duplication and distribution. A streaming media format of the video was available for use on each State's Web site.

Through telephone interviews, State representatives provided feedback on ways to improve video production if SAMHSA developed the series. A summary of that feedback appears in the following section of this report.

Period of Activity

SAMHSA began providing production assistance to the pilot States in late 2006. Videos were completed and provided to States for dissemination in 2007. The length of time needed to produce each of the four State pilot videos varied from a few weeks to several months. For example, because of its size, Texas required an additional day of shooting on location. The most significant factor in scheduling was each State's process for recommending and approving post-production edits. More editing required additional time and money to complete the video.

State Videos Spending Report

The spending report for the video project appears in Appendix B.

Feedback Interviews

Brief telephone interviews were conducted with State representatives to gather feedback on their experience in creating a video on the underage drinking prevention efforts in their respective States. Five interviews were completed between May 2007 and September 2007. (Note: Mississippi had two representatives.) A summary of the feedback received is provided below.

Objectives of the Video

For all four States, the objectives were determined by the State's Underage Drinking Task Force or State Team. The objectives were consistent across all four:

- To increase awareness of underage drinking.
- To increase agency collaboration on underage drinking prevention efforts.

In general, States wanted to educate and inform parents, youth, stakeholders, and the community about the issue of underage drinking. They wanted the videos to highlight and create an awareness of their respective State's underage drinking prevention efforts. Additionally, States wanted agencies to be more effective in their underage drinking prevention efforts by collaborating. Agencies were able to identify duplicative efforts and opportunities for combining resources.

Interviewees all believed that the video produced in their respective States met the main objectives. They identified these factors as important in meeting the objectives:

- Inclusion of relevant information on prevention efforts.
- Involvement of stakeholders (youth, parents, legislators, prevention specialists).
- Presentation of statistics.

Target Audiences

Target audiences were also determined by the respective State Underage Drinking Task Force/State Team. Target audiences included the following:

- Legislators (State and local)
- Youth
- Adults
- Prevention coordinators and providers
- Agencies
- Community

Presentation of Prevention Activities

Interviewees were asked to assess how effectively the video presents their State's prevention activities to the target audiences. All stated that prevention activities are shown favorably and in a positive manner. They pointed to two specific features:

- The snapshots of prevention activities across the States.
- The use of interviews, testimonials, and dramatizations to illustrate underage drinking issues.

Interviewees commented:

- “The video did a good job of presenting the prevention activities. An example would be the teen that gave her testimony of how alcohol affected her life.”
- “The video does a good job of presenting the State’s prevention activities. It shows youth programs led by youth and adults. The video cannot be all inclusive in 10 minutes, but it gives a good picture across the State.”
- “The biggest thing that stood out in the video was the PRIDE Troupe—a group of young people who put out prevention messages. Through dance and song, they do a theatrical performance of what they stand for in alcohol and drug prevention. This will have a major impact—young people not afraid of speaking out about something they believe in.”
- “We interviewed a parent whose son died on his 21st birthday from underage drinking. She was filmed pouring liquid into a shot glass similar to the size that was used by her son. The parent then poured that liquid into a pitcher. This visually informed viewers how much alcohol was consumed by her son. We wanted to make parents and youth realize the negative impact of drinking that much alcohol may have on their lives. The parent was also filmed working with legislators. We wanted parents to be informed that they play a big part in preventing underage drinking.”

Dissemination Efforts and Plans

At the time of the interviews, two States had disseminated their videos. They used these channels:

- Drug Policy Board meeting at the Governor’s office
- Public screenings
- State Web sites
- Prevention coordinator and provider training
- Local university personnel
- Prevention Resource Centers

The other two States had not disseminated their videos, but had shown them at professional conferences and meetings of the Task Force/State Team or an Advisory Council. The timeframe given for their dissemination plans was 1 to 3 months from the time of interview. Dissemination plans included:

- Web sites (SAMHSA, agency, agency partners)
- Public access TV stations
- Health fairs

- Parent workshops
- State partners and agencies
- Provider base
- Parent Teacher Association
- Community Mental Health Center alcohol and drug coordinators
- Regional Prevention Centers
- Educational Service Centers

Feedback From Target Audiences

Respondents were asked about reactions from members of the target audiences who viewed the videos. They reported that the feedback was positive overall. Viewers requested copies of the videos and asked questions about new information they had learned.

Positive Experiences and Benefits

Interviewees provided information on positive experiences and benefits of making and disseminating the video. They mentioned:

- Relationship building among stakeholders and agencies.
- Appreciation expressed by stakeholders.
- Effective delivery of prevention messages.
- Design of a calendar with no-use messages and facts about alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD).
- Creation of a Web site.

Interviewees provided the following comments about these benefits:

- “I think in working with different folks in the video, we were able to make some relationships. They remember you and have a new relationship from the past.”
- “I have an appreciation of what stakeholders do to combat underage drinking. I watched teachers present underage drinking prevention messages to youth and how it affected the youth. As they transitioned to another class, the youth conversed among themselves on what they learned.”
- “An unforeseen outcome was State Team members working together—educating each other on what is being done at each agency to prevent underage drinking and leveraging resources. Plans are being made to produce a 2008 calendar—building from the video. Distribution will be mainly in the schools. The calendar will include ATOD facts and no-use messages. A Web site was also created and will be mentioned in the calendar.”

Promotion of Resources

The videos promoted State resources on combating underage drinking by providing:

- Bulleted tips with telephone numbers for help or more information.
- Names of speakers and agencies.
- List of organizations that participated in the video.

Challenges and Barriers

Interviewees noted the following as challenges in disseminating the State videos:

- Having recently received the final video.
- Making financial decisions.
- Duplicating the DVD.
- Determining how the video fits into the Strategic Prevention Framework-State Incentive Grant plan.

The following were listed as barriers to achieving the objectives:

- The video is not focused on youth and may not attract their attention.
- Equipment may not be available to present the video at a meeting.

Recommendations for Future Videos

State representatives offered advice to other States interested in producing a video on underage drinking. A summary of the responses is provided below.

- Allow enough planning time.
- Involve youth in all aspects of the video process, including the planning council and editing process.
- Increase youth presence in the video.
- Provide a detailed script to participants.
- Alert participants that all shots and interviews may not appear in the final video.
- Confirm video participants in advance.
- Keep communication ongoing with video participants.
- Celebrate successes.
- Use the video as an information tool.
- Carefully plan but know reality. The best laid plans may not work out.
- Ensure diversity (age, race, position) in people serving on the planning council.
- Choose content advisors who bring an objective viewpoint to the video production process.

Interviewees shared this advice:

- “Watch the timing of the production (filming) when planning. Keep the State calendar and priorities at the forefront when scheduling interviews and filming. Be cognizant of the legislative session.”
- “Have very detailed questions you want asked and answered. People are not always going to say what you want.”
- “Be sure to get everyone confirmed far in advance to avoid rescheduling at the last minute.”
- “Always have a backup for interviews.”

Recommendation by the Evaluation Team

A full assessment of the effectiveness of the videos and dissemination efforts was not conducted. Two of the States had not disseminated their videos at the time the feedback interviews were conducted. Additionally, viewer feedback provided by the States was vague. The evaluation team recommends that follow-up interviews be conducted with the pilot States to gain a fuller assessment of the effectiveness and dissemination efforts of the videos.

Conclusions

Overall, the pilot video project was successful as a platform to showcase the States' underage drinking prevention activities. That showcasing was demonstrated on September 17, 2007, when the pilot video project was presented at the 20th Annual National Prevention Network Prevention Research Conference in Portland, OR. Excerpts from each State video were included in the presentation made by Gwyndolyn Ensley of SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, representatives from the four pilot States, and a member of the evaluation team. Interest in the presentation was great—the room was filled to capacity. Attendees asked the panelists many questions, including whether funding would be available for other States to participate. The presentation was well received by attendees.

Although some of the pilot States would have preferred more planning time, all were pleased with the results of the videos. The States genuinely appreciated SAMHSA's invitation to participate in this pilot project.

Appendix A—Promoting Your State’s Underage Drinking Prevention Activities

Promoting Your State’s Underage Drinking Prevention Activities

WHAT: The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is exploring the potential benefits of developing a series of short videos (each approximately 7 to 10 minutes in length) showcasing underage drinking prevention efforts in States. A pilot test of this approach will soon get underway, and four States will be selected as video test cases. These videos will be developed in direct collaboration with the featured States and with support from the Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Prevention of Underage Drinking. The videos will be designed to help States raise awareness about their unique underage drinking issues and prevention activities and to help build enthusiasm for developing, implementing, and expanding underage alcohol use prevention activities.

WHY: Each video will be a far-reaching promotional/informational tool for States to use in whatever ways they think best—to inform citizens and policymakers, update current coalition members, recruit new members to important prevention efforts, and more. Potential audiences include parents, youth, community organizations, and business alliances. Each video will build upon the momentum of the Town Hall Meetings and strengthen connections between States and their communities by keeping underage drinking prevention at the forefront of important topics. Each video will:

- Build awareness of current underage drinking prevention efforts in the State.
- Promote resources available to community organizations.
- Empower parents, youth, and organizations by offering opportunities to join these efforts.
- Report the impact of Town Hall Meetings, if measurable results are available.

HOW: Through a contractor, SAMHSA will provide a producer and video crew to work with your primary State point person. Together, these people will coordinate production logistics and devise a plan to best tell your State’s story. The crew will visit your State to tape interviews and other footage over a 2- to 3-day period. People you may want to include in the video are:

- Community leaders who helped organize a Town Hall Meeting.
- State First Spouses, if they have been involved in underage drinking prevention.
- National Prevention Network representatives.
- Traffic safety and law enforcement representatives.
- State alcohol beverage control representatives.
- Education and health (epidemiologist) representatives.
- Parents and youth who have benefited or participated in community programs.

The SAMHSA contractor will edit the video and provide it to you on a DVD master, ready for you to duplicate and distribute. An electronic file of the video also will be housed on the contractor’s server for you to use on your State and organization Web sites. Just create a link on your site that points to the video, and people everywhere will be able to see what your State is doing to reduce underage alcohol use.

SAMHSA also will provide States with technical assistance on marketing the videos, suggest new outlets—such as airing on local government access cable channels—and propose methods for gathering feedback from viewers. Feedback will be gathered by State representatives via phone interviews or paper forms, and will be used to improve future videos and marketing efforts.

WHEN: *Starting fall 2006.* SAMHSA is preparing to develop the first pilot videos in the series during the fall so that they are ready for dissemination in early 2007.

For more information about the videos or to discuss featuring your State, please contact:

Gwyndolyn Ensley at SAMHSA’s Center for Substance Abuse Prevention

240-276-2546 or gwyndolyn.ensley@samhsa.hhs.gov

Appendix B—State Videos Spending Report

Health Communications Initiative for the Prevention of Underage Alcohol Use

October 19, 2007

State	Labor Hours	Cost
Arkansas	286	23,075
Louisiana	286	22,822
Mississippi	358	28,338
Texas	503	41,038
Feedback Interviews	33	3,075
TOTAL	1,466	\$118,348

