

**SOCIAL NORMS MARKETING:
THE LOGIC AND NECESSARY DATA
TO DEMONSTRATE EFFECTIVENESS**



<http://www.socialnorms.org>

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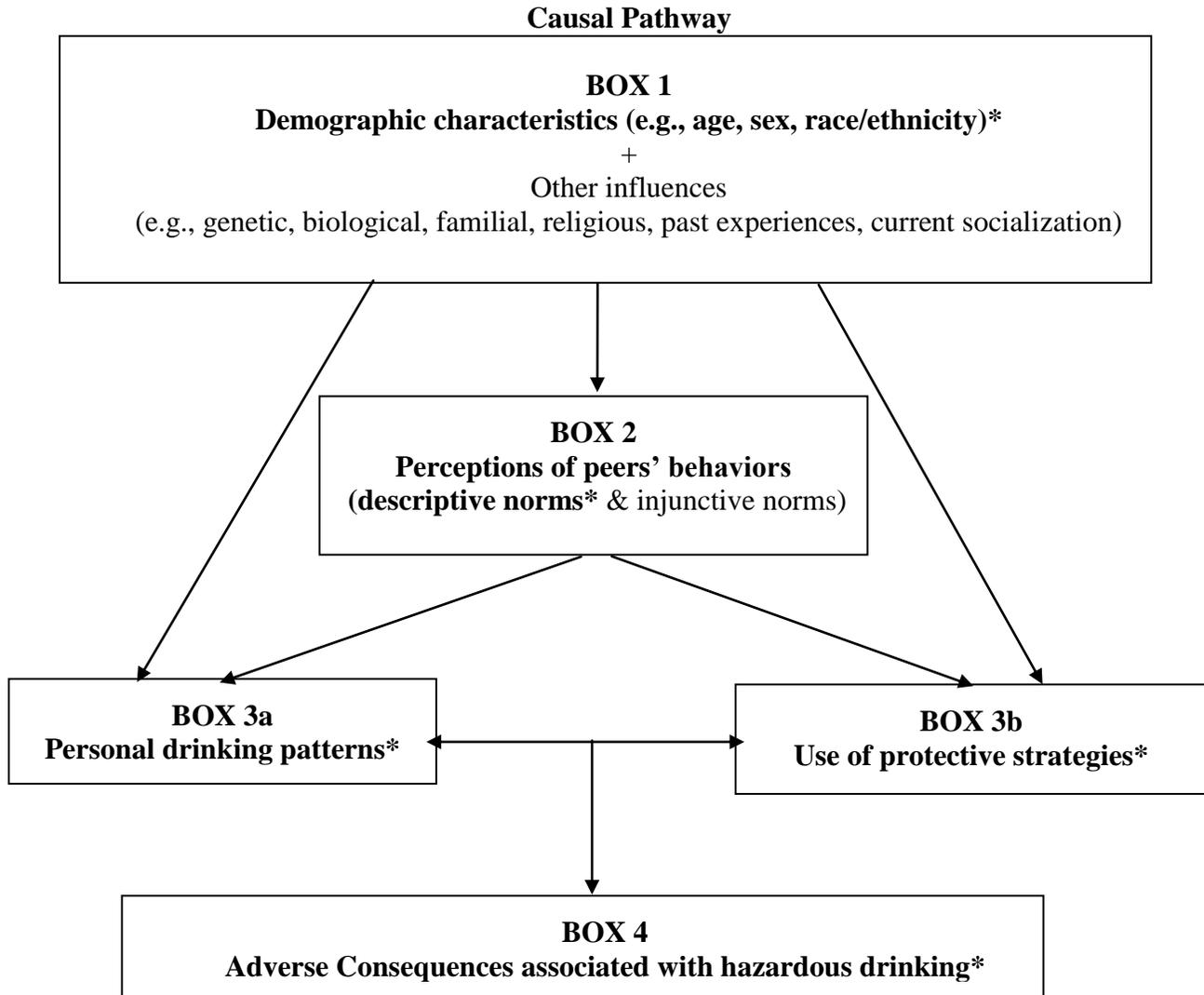
Introduction

The materials that follow were developed at NSNI as a working tool primarily to assist colleges and universities who are conducting social norms marketing interventions to reduce the adverse consequences associated with high risk alcohol consumption. Since many colleges and universities participate in the National College Health Assessment (NCHA II), this document uses questions in the NCHA II as examples of available relevant information.

The model and the assessment tool, although both written in terms of social norms marketing campaigns directed towards alcohol consumption, can be adapted for other issues. Please contact us at NSNI if you would like assistance in adapting this material for other social norms marketing interventions.

The hypothesized causal pathway

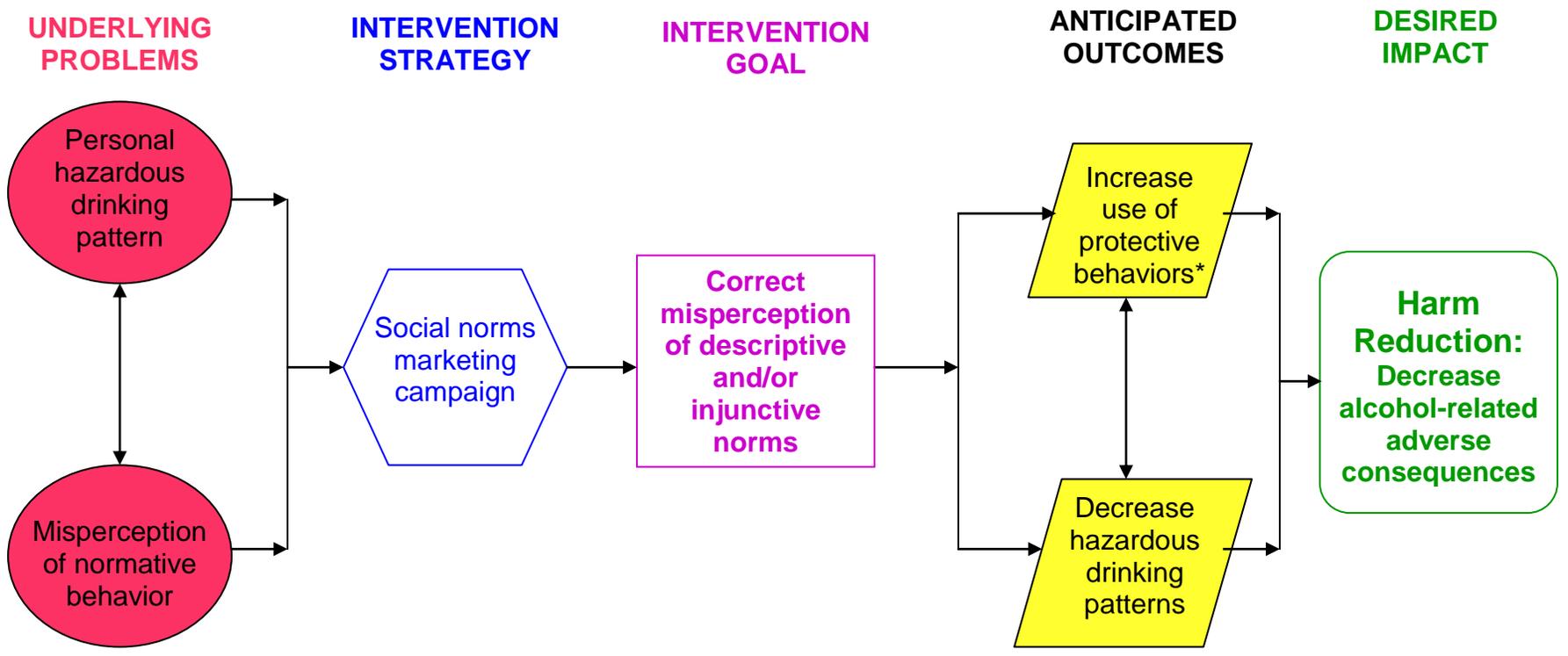
The social norms model hypothesizes that, against a background of a wide variety of influences (Box 1), a person's perceptions of peers' behaviors and beliefs surrounding alcohol (Box 2) will have a strong influence on both personal drinking patterns (Box 3a) and use of protective strategies (Box 3b). These will, in turn, strongly influence the number, type and severity of adverse consequences associated with hazardous drinking (Box 4).



*Characteristics in bold are measured by variables in the National College Health Assessment (NCHA II) survey conducted of the American College Health Association (<http://www.acha-ncha.org/>)

A *social norms marketing intervention* aims to correct the misperception of peers' behavior in order to influence personal choices. The messages typically focus on the reality of peers' drinking but may also include the use of protective behaviors by peers. For social norms marketing interventions, the causal pathway can be used to create a logic model that relates the intervention to goals, outcomes and impact.

LOGIC OF SOCIAL NORMS INTERVENTIONS



EVIDENCE NEEDED



*If norms for protective behaviors were included in the marketing campaign

**Baseline assessment needed before intervention & follow-up assessment after intervention

Necessary Evidence to Demonstrate Effectiveness & What's Included in the NCHA II^a

Sample Description: (NCHA II questions 46, 47, 51 – 55, 58, 59)

Evidence related to underlying problems

- Perception of norms related to drinking (NCHA II questions 9e, 12, 17b)
- Drinking patterns (NCHA II questions 8e, 10, 11, 13, calculated eBAC^b and NIAAA “binge” drinking^c)

Evidence related to intervention strategy (not included in NCHA II)

- Fidelity: Marketing materials conform to social norms principles in development strategy & content
 - Development strategy involved members of the intended audience in a meaningful way
 - Materials address correcting a significant misperception related to peers’ behaviors and conform to PIE principles: Positive, Inclusive, Empowering
- Reach: Marketing reaches intended audience
 - “Exposure”: evidence that a majority of the intended audience was exposed to the campaign
 - “Saturation”: evidence that information was seen a sufficient number of times by intended audience
 - Suggested question to measure exposure: *In the past [time frame], how many times have you seen [or heard] the [campaign logo/brand or message or specific campaign material]?*

Evidence related to intervention goal

- There is a significant improvement from pre-intervention to post-intervention in measure(s) of normative perceptions:
 - Descriptive (NCHA II questions 9e, 12, 17b)
 - Injunctive (**not included in NCHA II**)
 - Example of injunctive norm: Most [Anywhere U] students disapprove of drinking to get drunk.

Evidence related to anticipated outcomes

- There is a significant improvement from pre-intervention to post-intervention in measure(s) of protective behaviors (**may not happen if campaign did not focus on protective behaviors**):
 - Personal protective behaviors (NCHA II question 15a through 15k)
 - Prevalence
 - Frequency of use
 - Protective behaviors for others (**not included in NCHA II**)
 - Prevalence
 - Frequency of use
- There is a significant improvement from pre-intervention to post-intervention in measure(s) of patterns of drinking; for example:
 - Number of drinks consumed last time partied or socialized (NCHA II question 10)
 - Drinks per hour (NCHA II question 10 divided by NCHA II question 11)
 - Decreased eBAC^b
 - Number of days in previous month drank alcohol (NCHA II question 8e)
 - Decreased “binge” drinking^c

Evidence related to desired impact

- There is a significant improvement from pre-intervention to post-intervention in measure(s) of adverse consequences associated with drinking (NCHA II question 16a through 16i: 9 adverse consequences)

Optional additional helpful evidence

- Level of drinking and negative consequences did NOT increase from pre-intervention to post-intervention among low risk drinkers
- Perceptions, drinking and negative consequences all changed in the desired direction from pre-intervention to post-intervention among high risk drinkers

^aNCHA II is the second, and latest, version of the American College Health Association's National College Health Assessment. A sample NCHA II survey is available at http://www.acha-ncha.org/docs/ACHA-NCHAII_sample.pdf

^bAlgorithm for estimating Blood Alcohol Content (eBAC) (see Hustad, J.T.P., and Carey, K.B. Using calculations to estimate blood alcohol concentrations for naturally occurring drinking episodes: A validity study. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 66, 130-138, 2005.):

$$\text{BAC} = [(\text{consumption}/2) \times (\text{GC}/\text{weight})] - (0.017 \times \text{hours}),$$

where consumption = number of standard drinks in a drinking session (NCHA II question 10)

hours = the number of hours over which drinking occurred (NCHA II question 11)

weight = weight in pounds (NCHA II question 50)

GC = gender constant, (9.0 for women and 7.5 for men; gender is NCHA II question 47)

^cNIAAA definition of binge drinking (see http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/newsletter/winter2004/newsletter_number3.pdf):

- BAC equal to or greater than .08. "For the typical adult, this pattern corresponds to..."
- 4 or more drinks in about 2 hours for women; 5 or more drinks in about 2 hours for men

Overview of Methodology

- Conduct a (stratified) random sample survey of intended population
 - Ensure sufficient sample size for sufficient power to examine subgroups (e.g., by sex or class level) taking into account likely response rate (response rate should be at least 40%)
 - Clean the data (eliminate respondents with incomplete essential data or artifactual data)
 - Balance sample demographic characteristics to match population characteristics, for example:
 - Sex
 - Academic class level (in school populations)
 - Race/ethnicity
- Establish the baseline rate of behaviors and attitudes of interest:
 - Quantity/frequency of drinking: a variety of possible variables including drinks per week, drinks per weekend, drinks last time partied/socialized, eBAC
 - Perception of drinking of others: perception questions *must* correspond exactly to quantity/frequency questions
 - Use of protective behaviors (may be omitted)
 - Adverse consequences associated with drinking
- Test if there is a *mis*perception of the true drinking norm: are the perceived quantity/frequency measures significantly greater than the actual quantity/frequency measures?
- Test if this misperception is associated with hazardous drinking
 - Those who drink more are more likely to perceive the drinking norm to be greater than the true drinking norm, [and close to or greater than what they themselves drink, per Berkowitz]
 - Establish the percent of the population that have normative misperceptions *and* hazardous drinking
- Design a social norms marketing campaign
 - Use representatives from intended population to design message and marketing strategies
 - Ensure messages conform to PIE principles: Positive, Inclusive, Empowering
 - Use a variety of messages and/or message delivery strategies
- Test if the marketing campaign *reached* the intended audience
 - Exposure: What percentage of the population saw the messages?
 - Saturation: How frequently did members of the intended population see the message?
- Conduct a follow-up (stratified) random sample survey of the intended population:
 - Same questions about drinking behaviors and attitudes, protective behaviors and adverse consequences as in the first step
 - Closely following conclusion of campaign
 - Clean and balance sample data as in the first step
- Test if observed changes conformed to theory:
 - Is there a decrease in perception of drinking norms?
 - Is there a decrease in actual drinking?
 - Is there an increase in protective behaviors (if included as focus of campaign)?
 - Is there a decrease in adverse consequences?

Evaluation Tool Assessing the Strength of Necessary Evidence and Inferences:

This tool is designed to help you assess the strengths of the six essential components of the social norms marketing campaign. Remember that the logic connecting your intervention to observed changes is only as strong as your *weakest* component. Ideally, each area should score at least 8; when any area scores less than 6 that is an indication that improvements in that area would strengthen your evidence of effectiveness.

1. The <i>data</i> are valid and reliable:	Completely	Mostly	Somewhat	Not at all or information not available
a. The sampling strategy was unbiased and yielded at least a 40% response rate.	3	2	1	0
b. The resultant sample matched the population in key demographic/descriptive variables (or was weighted to match the population).	3	2	1	0
c. All variables of interest were assessed using standardized measures with demonstrated validity and reliability in the population of interest.	3	2	1	0
Total Score for Data Quality:				<input type="text"/>
2. Hazardous drinking and misperceptions of norms are <i>underlying problems</i>:	Agreement among all measures	Agreement among most measures	Agreement among some but not most measures	Not at all or information not available
a. Hazardous drinking patterns are prevalent.	3	2	1	0
b. Misperceptions of drinking norms are prevalent.	3	2	1	0
c. There is a positive correlation between hazardous drinking patterns and misperceptions.	3	2	1	0
Total Score for Evidence of Underlying Problems:				<input type="text"/>
3. The <i>intervention</i> was well implemented:	Completely	Mostly	Somewhat	Not at all or information not available
a. The social norms campaign conformed to social norms marketing principles.	3	2	1	0
b. The campaign reached at least 80% of the intended audience.	3	2	1	0
c. Over 50% of the intended audience saw campaign message(s) at least 5 times.	3	2	1	0
Total Score for Evidence of Well-Implemented Intervention:				<input type="text"/>

4. <i>Intervention Goal</i>*: Following the campaign, accuracy of perceptions increased:	Change is statistically significant and clearly meaningful	Change is small but statistically significant	Change occurred but is not statistically significant	No evidence, no change, or change in wrong direction
a. The perceptions of norms that were a focus of the campaign were more accurate.	3	2	1	0
b. The perception of norms that were <i>not</i> a focus of the campaign did <i>not</i> improve in accuracy.	3	2	1	0
c. High-risk populations (defined by drinking behavior and/or risk factors) increased accuracy of perceptions.	3	2	1	0
Total Score for Evidence that Intervention Goal was Achieved:				<input type="text"/>
5. <i>Anticipated Outcomes</i>*: Following the campaign, decreased risk for harm was observed:	Change is statistically significant and clearly meaningful	Change is small but statistically significant	Change occurred but is not statistically significant	No evidence, no change, or change in wrong direction
a. Hazardous drinking behaviors decreased overall .	3	2	1	0
b. eBAC decreased overall.	3	2	1	0
c. High-risk populations experienced decreased risk for harm.	3	2	1	0
Total Score for Evidence that Intervention Outcomes were Achieved:				<input type="text"/>
6. <i>Desired Impact</i>*: Following the campaign, significant harm reduction was observed:	Change is statistically significant and clearly meaningful	Change is small but statistically significant	Change occurred but is not statistically significant	No evidence, no change, or change in wrong direction
a. There is a decrease in adverse consequences associated with drinking.	3	2	1	0
b. There is an increase in percent experiencing no adverse consequences.	3	2	1	0
c. High-risk populations experienced fewer adverse consequences.	3	2	1	0
Total Score for Evidence that the Desired Impact was Achieved:				<input type="text"/>
Overall Total Score for Necessary Evidence & Inferences:				<input type="text"/>

*For multi-year projects, the measures of perceptions, behaviors and consequences following each year of intervention become the baseline measures for the next year.

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