

## Feature Article: Social Norms Interventions with Small Groups



The social norms model has become popular through campus-wide interventions using posters and/or electronic media. Less well-known are social norms interventions developed

for small groups such as Greeks, athletes and first-year students, which present group members with actual and perceived norms for their group and/or campus in an interactive format that fosters discussion and analysis of why false norms exist. These programs have been shown to be successful with a variety of audiences and are easy to develop and implement.

### Overview

The small group norms challenging model (SGM) was first developed at Washington State University and has also been used at the universities of South Carolina, Rhode Island, and Washington. These campuses have developed SGM workshops for freshmen orientation, courses and other groups. Interventions for first-year students target the exaggerated notions new students bring to campus regarding how much drinking is taking place to prevent “drinking up” to the false norm. Small group interventions are also useful with close-knit groups who may be more resistant to external influences and whose drinking is primarily a function of in-group behavior. Providing students with accurate information about group and/or campus norms has been shown to successfully reduce problem drinking in a variety of research studies and interventions (see Berkowitz, 2000 for a literature review).

### Research Studies of SGM

Schroeder and Prentice (1998) conducted a study in which first-year students were assigned

to one of two discussion groups during their first term. In the norm-focused condition, students were provided with data documenting systematic overestimation of drinking on campus. This data was discussed in small groups with trained facilitators who provided information about actual norms and the social dynamics of drinking. In the individual-focused condition, students participated in a workshop on how to drink responsibly. Six months later, the students in the norm-focused condition drank significantly less each week than students who were in the individual-focused condition.

More recently, in “The Greeks 2000 Project” at the University of Washington, pledge classes were exposed to an intervention combining individual and group feedback about drinking norms with motivational interviewing and skills training (Larimer, et. al., 2001). In the social norms component, pledge class members received personalized feedback about their drinking and how it compared to campus norms. In the interactive group intervention, pledge class members received information about campus drinking norms. A separate cohort of pledge classes served as a control group. One year later the SGM men reported reduced patterns of use, weekly peak blood alcohol content, and negative consequences in comparison with controls. Women in both conditions reported similar reductions. Men also reported greater reductions with peer facilitators while women benefited more from professional facilitators. Finally, peers were more effective in recruiting heavy drinking men to attend the workshop and those men were more likely to remain in the study for follow-up.

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# Editor's *notes*

In the early 1980s, I was a young Counseling Center psychologist. Wes Perkins was a new sociology professor. When we would bump into each other on campus that first year, one of us would comment “we should really analyze the results of that alcohol survey.” Little did we realize that the data we inherited from this survey contained information that would not only change our lives, but that it would also start the life of “social norms.”

As I have traveled around the country visiting your campuses and communities, I have felt the need for something to tie together the ever-growing work that is taking place under the umbrella of social norms. This newsletter is the fulfillment of my desire to provide a catalyst that will advance the field by promoting critical reflection, advancing new practices, and providing resources and state-of-the-art ideas.

Four times a year, the *Social Norms Quarterly* will review best practices, model programs, successes and failures, resources, and summaries of current research and theory. On seven of the remaining months, the *Social Norms Working Papers* will offer a more lengthy overview of social norms with respect to a particular population, methodology or topic. The title of “working paper” implies that these are works in progress, subject to revision and clarification over time. Together the *Social Norms Quarterly* and the *Social Norms Working Papers* comprise “The Social Norms Report.”

I view the social norms movement itself as a “work in progress,” and like all creative efforts, I look forward to seeing it evolve and grow. The social norms approach has been intimately linked to my own personal and professional growth. It has helped me to understand and interrupt my own silence in the face of disruptive or prejudicial behaviors and it has helped me to channel and focus my interest in creating environments that promote health and social justice. I believe that the social norms approach meets a great need in our culture for a positive, inclusive, and empowering view of life that builds on what is positive and spiritually significant in human existence while also leading to effective and verifiable means of addressing and solving pressing social problems. I am excited about walking this journey with all of you as we help the social norms approach evolve further. Please know that your contributions, comments, and feedback are always welcome.

**About this issue.** In recent years, a number of campuses have successfully adapted the social norms approach for use with small groups of students. This first issue of the *Social Norms Quarterly* focuses on these small group applications, which hold great promise for working with high-risk and intact groups such as first-year students, Greeks, athletes, and other identity groups based on race, ethnicity and/or gender. Special thanks and recognition go to Jeanne Far and John Miller of Washington State University, who first glimpsed this potential and whose successful adaptation is featured in this issue.

Welcome to the *Social Norms Quarterly*!

Sincerely,  
Alan David Berkowitz, Ph.D.  
Editor

## Social Norms Effectiveness Recognized by CSAP

The social norms and environmental management prevention initiative at the University of Arizona (UA) has been designated as an exemplary program by the National Registry of Effective Prevention Programs (NREPP). NREPP is an activity of the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP).

Programs selected by NREPP undergo an extensive and rigorous peer review process and must be favorably evaluated across fifteen dimensions of excellence, including: theoretical basis, the fidelity of the intervention, the quality of the process evaluation, sampling strategy and implementation, strength of outcome measures, appropriateness of the data analysis, integrity of the overall intervention, and dissemination capability. The UA program received excellent ratings in all fifteen categories.

The UA program “Challenging the Collegiate Rite of Passage,” succeeded in reducing heavy drinking on campus by 29% over three years.

The UA team has already published “A Practical Guide to Alcohol Abuse Prevention: A Campus Case Study in Implementing Social Norms and Environmental Management Approaches,” which is available from the Higher Education Center (call 1-800-676-1730) or downloadable from: [www.edc.org/hec](http://www.edc.org/hec). The CSAP award will result in additional efforts to disseminate this program.

This highly prestigious award is only given to scientifically evaluated programs that produce demonstrable results. It provides further evidence for the efficacy of the social norms approach.



*Editor's Note: "The Gathering Place" brings together news, announcements, and important developments in the field of social norms.*

### **Guidelines for Developing and Evaluating Social Norms Media.**

The National Social Norms Resource Center has recently posted on its website ([www.socialnorm.org](http://www.socialnorm.org)) an excellent set of guidelines for developing and evaluating social norms media, with numerous examples of actual media. Topics covered include use of graphics, messages that work, tailoring the message, and using focus groups to evaluate media.

**Award Announced for Publications on Social Norms.** At the close of the Fourth Annual Social Norms Conference, Drew Hunter of the BACCHUS and GAMMA Peer Education Network announced the creation of three annual awards for the best articles regarding social norms published (or accepted for publication) in refereed journals. These \$1,000 awards will help defray expenses for attendance at the 5th Annual Conference on the Social Norms Model. Winners will be invited to present their research. For information contact Michael Haines at the National Social Norms Resource Center ([mhaines@niu.edu](mailto:mhaines@niu.edu)).

### **Avoid Media and Normative Statements That Are Inconsistent.**

The Boston Coalition is a consortium of colleges, universities, governmental organizations and agencies in the Boston area that are committed to coordinated efforts to change the culture of drinking at local campuses. The coalition has done excellent work on a variety of projects. Unfortunately, a recent ad campaign developed for the Coalition made a common mistake: pairing a positive message with a picture of extreme, non-normative behavior. In this example, a young woman is featured sprawled over a toilet bowl, a beer cup on the floor, with the following message written on her arms and legs: "Only 1 in 5 students gets trashed when they party. Not everyone's getting wasted." To make matters worse, the number "1" looks like a "4," suggesting that "only 4 in 5 students gets trashed when they party." Experts suggest that media pictures should portray healthy behaviors consistent with the normative message, rather than call attention to the behaviors that are misperceived. This problem commonly occurs in media campaigns developed by advertising agencies and in media reports on the social norms model, such as the June 11, 2001 story in *Time Magazine* that included pictures of drunken, rowdy behavior. For more information about the Coalition's otherwise excellent programs, contact: <http://www.bostoncoalition.org/alcofree/>

### **The Truth About College Students.**

The National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC) has sponsored a media campaign featured in newspapers and magazines around the country that is targeted at parents of college students. The ads feature pictures of happy-looking college students with information about healthy drinking norms in college, including the information that "Drinking among college freshmen is at its lowest level since 1966." Parents are encouraged to discuss "true norms" with their college students and are offered a free brochure titled, "College Talk: A Parent's Guide on Talking to Your College-Bound Student About Drinking," developed by experts to advise parents on how to communicate about drinking in college. For this free parent guide and information about the campaign (which is funded by Anheuser-Bush), contact: [www.ansulgc.org](http://www.ansulgc.org).

## **Recent Research**

### **Short- and Long-Term Effects of Fraternity and Sorority Membership on Heavy Drinking: A Social Norms Perspective.**

(2001) Kenneth J. Sher, Bruce D. Bartholow and Shivani Nanda. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, 15(1):42-51. This extremely well-designed, longitudinal study looked at a variety of influences on the drinking of fraternity and sorority members over time. Although Greeks consistently drank more than non-Greeks during college, Greek status did not predict drinking after college. The greater drinking of Greeks over non-Greeks was almost entirely explained by perceived peer norms for heavy drinking within fraternities and sororities. The authors concluded that "perceptions of heavy drinking norms in the Greek system are largely responsible for the prevalence of heavy drinking among fraternity and sorority members."

### **The Social Norms Approach: Theory, Research and Annotated Bibliography.**

(2001) Alan D. Berkowitz, Ph.D. Posted on the Higher Education Center Social Norms Website: <http://www.edc.org/hecs/socialnorms/>. Recently revised and expanded, this article provides a comprehensive overview of research in support of social norms theory, reviews successful social norms interventions at all three levels of prevention (universal, selective and indicated), discusses and responds to controversies about the approach, and makes recommendations for future development of the field. Included is an annotated bibliography of important publications and articles on the social norms approach.

# from the field

## The Small Groups Norms-Challenging Model

*Editor's Note: Each issue of the Social Norms Quarterly will feature a model program or intervention that has been successfully implemented in a campus or community setting.*

In 1988-89, at Washington State University (WSU), John Miller and I began developing the Small Group Norms-Challenging Model (SGM) after reading Berkowitz and Perkins's early work. As clinicians and prevention workers, we were concerned with our highest risk students and how to treat them. There were few effective programs at the time, but those that seemed most useful incorporated peer interventions and some form of norms information. What we knew about peer relationships and membership group influences suggested that we use student norms data from specific high-risk target groups, as well as campus-wide norms data, and that we recruit high profile and popular group members as peer presenters wherever possible.

We piloted our program in 1991-92 and 1995-96 with local funding support, received funding from the U.S. Department of Education in 1998 and 2000, and won a Model Programs Award Grant in 2000. Recently we have expanded the SGM into other high-risk populations, including athletes and first-year students (in classrooms, residence halls, and summer orientation programs).

### Description

Using a series of overheads or slides, the presenters engage the audience in lively, interactive discussions regarding the discrepancies between the actual norms and those estimated (misperceived) by the group. The slides contain explanations of social norms theory and comparisons of campus-wide and group-specific norms data using the information reported by the group (gathered about three weeks earlier using a shorter version of the campus-wide sur-

vey), as well as campus-wide data. The presentations last approximately forty-five minutes. We gather follow-up data to determine program effectiveness.

A useful feature of SGM is its adaptability to a wide range of levels of experience and resources for implementation. It can be used in a variety of settings by different kinds of presenters. While SGM has been implemented with rigorous research methodology, it can also be used easily with only simple materials: a half-page survey answered during the course of the presentation, or a hand calculator and surveys gathered the day before the presentation, and with or without campus-wide data. We have also used it with groups where we don't gather any data at all, but have the students sort themselves into categories around the room and construct visible social norms.

### The Workshop

The presenters use a prepared script and a series of seventeen overheads. The script works as a guide for framing and explaining the data, encouraging discussion, and responding to questions. It also helps to reduce nervousness, as presenters can read from the script if needed. Presenters have a list of open-ended questions to ask throughout the presentation in order to keep participants discussing the material. The slides are as follows:

- ◆ The student presenters introduce themselves and remind the group of the surveys they filled out three weeks beforehand.
- ◆ "Words for Drunk and Sober" is an icebreaker exercise where people shout out popular words used to describe these states. This creates a

response set, encouraging good discussion and interaction. Students enjoy this exercise - there's lots of laughing and shouting going on.

- ◆ "Everybody Thinks Everybody Else is Doing More of Everything Than They Actually Are" shows us how people overestimate the negative and underestimate the positive across the wide range of human behaviors, not just when it comes to students and alcohol.
- ◆ "Norms and Misperceptions" introduces social norms and how they operate, how we misperceive them, and how they affect our behavior. We ask the presenter to stand very close to someone while they're talking as an example of norms for personal space in our culture. We require more personal space than some cultures, but we're not taught this directly--rather, we observe and try to do what we think others around us are doing.
- ◆ "Media Literacy" discusses how the media creates and perpetuates misperceived norms. Constantly focusing on the new and unusual makes it appear to be the "norm."
- ◆ "Misperceived Norms" explains how misperceptions stop us from challenging unhealthy behavior. Students always agree that our way of "gossiping" about each other perpetuates misperceptions about how and why people behave as they do.
- ◆ "A Party at WSU" provides a graphic representation of a party with 100 students attending and how much they drink. Of course, the next day, people talk about the 10% of students who were acting wild and crazy, not the 90% who

**"A useful feature of SGM is its adaptability to a wide range of levels of experience and resources for implementation."**

were having a good time but not over-consuming alcohol.

- ◆ “Comparing Perceptions to Reality” explains what the recently collected data will tell the audience about the group’s actual norms and what the group estimated for others.
  - ◆ “Collecting Data on Actual Behaviors” repeats the previous data, but in different words. We find that students can start to get confused when we are presenting data, so we explain twice what we will be showing them.
  - ◆ “Beliefs—Your Group” shows the group’s estimated and actual alcohol attitudes, using Perkins and Berkowitz’ original five-point liberal-to-conservative statements. The data is introduced in a “game-show” atmosphere—we cover up the data, ask students to guess what they estimated and if they got it right, and then uncover the actual data with a flourish, saying, “And here’s what the actual figures are!” Students are always surprised by their missed guesses (most of them guess wrong) and the data gets discussed pretty heatedly. We’ve taught presenters not to argue, but just to refer questions to us if a simple explanation doesn’t suffice.
- In any group there is a small majority of students who are the heaviest drinkers. These students will argue with the data, the research, and the presentation. The large majority of responsible students don’t say much, but you can see them nodding and smiling during the presentation - they know the numbers are accurate, because our findings represent what the majority is really doing!
- ◆ “Beliefs—Your School” reports the group’s estimates about the attitudes of students campus-wide and then reports the actual attitudes. On our campus, students always strongly overestimate approval of drinking, and they often seem relieved (if dis-

believing) when we show them the true norms.

- ◆ “How Many Drinks?” displays the group’s estimated and actual drinking (how many drinks) and also the same data about the student body. By now, students are starting to “get it” and will say they’ve probably guessed too high, but they’re still surprised when they see how much they’ve actually overestimated consumption.
- ◆ “How Often Do Students Drink?” shows the estimated and actual drinking frequency for the group and campus. They’re not as surprised by now, so we put the following three data slides up uncovered and just let the students read the data themselves.
- ◆ “Protective Behaviors” provides percentages for group and campus for four behaviors that serve to protect against alcohol-related harm. We chose these from the campus-wide data because large majorities of students do them.
- ◆ “Altruistic Behaviors” presents group and campus percentages for willingness to help a friend who has had too much to drink. On our campus, almost all students are willing to help their friends stay safe and healthy.
- ◆ “Having Fun Without Alcohol” shows actual percentages of the group and campus for enjoying several fun activities not involving alcohol.
- ◆ “What Have We Learned?” is just a set of statements summarizing the presentation. We’ve trained the presenters never to read the slides to the audience, because college students read them on their own. With this slide, usually someone from the audience will read one of the statements out loud, sparking laughter from the group and more comments about the presentation. This is fine - we don’t care what they say, just as long as they’re saying something!

## Outcomes

The presentations have changed a lot over the years. We used to include information about negative consequences, but stopped that a few years ago when we realized we were focusing on the problems rather than the “good news.” We also tried several methods of delivery, and found that students liked the non-challenging, humorous “game-show” format rather than any attempt to persuade them to accept the material.

While we’ve been using this model, we’ve seen significant decreases in alcohol use in high-consuming groups and corrections of misperceptions in groups that don’t drink more than the campus norm. Our campus drinking rates have also decreased significantly, and we believe that targeting high-risk groups has helped bring rates down. Our administration is now supporting a campus-wide marketing campaign and several departments are starting their own with our supervision. We hope to see even greater decreases in drinking with these added prevention efforts.

We would be happy to provide you with information, our training manual or consultation and support if you’d like to implement SGM on your campus.

*by Jeanne M. Far, Ph.D., Director, Project Empowerment, Washington State University*

**“We’ve seen significant decreases in alcohol use in high-consuming groups and corrections of misperceptions in groups that don’t drink more than the campus norm.”**

**For more information ...**

**Please contact Jeanne Far at [jfar@wsu.edu](mailto:jfar@wsu.edu) or John Miller at [jamiller@wsu.edu](mailto:jamiller@wsu.edu).**

# The Fourth Annual National Conference on the Social Norms Model

Nearly 350 individuals attended the Fourth Annual Conference on the Social Norms Model, held July 18-20, 2001 in Anaheim, California. The conference benefited from the support of the California State University system, which recently approved a comprehensive system-wide alcohol policy recommending the social norms approach as a critical component.

Conference attendees enjoyed opportunities to dialogue with some of the leading researchers, theorists, and practitioners in the field. Approximately thirty break-out sessions were devoted to a wide range of issues, including: proper focus group methodology; the comparative value of various surveys used in the development of social norms campaigns; the emerging use of electronic media; extending interventions to community settings; and using web-based surveys to assess middle and high school students' norms for substance use.

## Keynote Highlights

In his keynote plenary address, Dr. H. Wesley Perkins reviewed the theoretical basis and history of the social norms approach and refuted its most common criticisms. His points included:

- ◆ There is an abundance of data to show that students consistently overestimate both the frequency and the level of peer drinking and permissiveness.
- ◆ Traditional methods of health promotion have consistently shown no measurable positive impact. Social norms is currently the only health

promotion strategy with a fund of data demonstrating its effectiveness.

- ◆ There are ways to determine that self-report data can provide accurate measures of actual behavioral change and are not just a reflection of "reporting behavior" (the salience effect). Survey instruments that are properly designed have checks for internal validity; in addition, objective measures can be used to corroborate findings.

In his closing remarks, Dr. Perkins identified three areas that deserve further attention and study:

### *The Gender Question*

Data from Hobart and William Smith has shown that the actual norm for women is more closely correlated with the perceived male norm than the perceived female norm. (Note: Analysis of data at Northern Illinois University has revealed the same correlation.) This has important implications for message development, since a statement that includes information about men and women, such as "Most women consume 0-3, most men consume 0-5 drinks when they party" may inadvertently impel women to emulate the much higher male norm. A less problematic alternative might be to provide a normative message that is not gender-specific, such as "Most students consume 0-4 drinks when they party."

### *The Conformity Question*

One criticism of the social norms approach is that it promotes an unthinking or unhealthy conformity to the norm.

This criticism fails to acknowledge that a portion of the population will conform to the norm in any event. Given that, the social norms approach simply suggests that it is preferable to conform to the true, healthy norm rather

than succumb to the pressure of a misperceived, false norm that may impair health. Nevertheless, care needs to be taken in message development to craft statements that are based on facts, not admonitions.

### *What Normative Message Strategies Are Most Effective, and Why?*

While it is clear that correcting misperceptions can change behavior, it is less clear exactly what methods and practices offer the best means to correct misperceptions. Thus, there needs to be more effort evaluating the effectiveness of the various methods that we employ.

### *New Directions*

Given the scope of the conference, it is perhaps best to provide a brief overview of some of the new directions that were identified as holding promise.

While prevention specialists continue to refine and extend their campus-wide campaigns, innovative efforts continue to be made in the area of selected, group interventions. There is an emerging consensus that the preferred instruments for data collection are either the American College Health Association's National College Health Assessment or the Campus Survey of Alcohol and Other Drug Norms, which more readily lend themselves to the development of informed social norms campaigns. One exception regards the contemplated use of the social norms approach to address social justice issues, since no standardized questions currently exist to assess behaviors and perceptions in these areas. Lastly, it is becoming clear that the next wave of interventions will include middle and high school settings. Interest continues to grow in the success of the DeKalb County Partnership DCP-Safe Program in Illinois, with similar efforts in process or under consideration in other states.

*by Rich Rice, Coordinator of Information and Education, National Social Norms Resource Center*

#### For information on ...

- ◆ The ACHA National College Health Assessment Survey contact: [http://www.acha.org/projects\\_programs/assessment.cf](http://www.acha.org/projects_programs/assessment.cf)
- ◆ The Core Institute's Campus Survey of Alcohol and Other Drug Norms contact: [http://www.siu.edu/departments/coreinst/public\\_html/norms.html](http://www.siu.edu/departments/coreinst/public_html/norms.html)
- ◆ The DeKalb County Partnership DCP-Safe Program contact: [http://www.dcpsafe.org/new\\_page\\_9.htm](http://www.dcpsafe.org/new_page_9.htm)

## Campuses Using the SGM

Prevention researchers at Washington State University have pioneered the development of focused norm interventions with groups such as athletes, fraternities, sororities, and first-year students (Barnett et al, 1996; Far & Miller, 2000; Peeler et al, 2000). Group members are provided with feedback about their group's and the campus's actual and perceived drinking patterns. Discussion focuses on the nature and causes of misperceptions in a game-show format, using slides with data on actual and perceived norms for the group. This approach has produced reductions in drinking among male first-year students (Peeler et al, 2000), and sorority members (Far & Miller, 2000) and has been associated with significant overall reductions in campus-wide drinking behaviors

### For information on:

- ◆ Washington State University's Small Group Norm-challenging Model, contact Jeanne Far at: [jfar@wsu.edu](mailto:jfar@wsu.edu) or John Miller at: [jamiller@wsu.edu](mailto:jamiller@wsu.edu)
- ◆ University of Rhode Island's freshmen seminar group intervention, contact Daniel W. Reilly at [dreilly@uri.edu](mailto:dreilly@uri.edu)
- ◆ University of South Carolina's Perception of Alcohol Norms workshop, contact Bradley Smith at [smithbrad@sc.edu](mailto:smithbrad@sc.edu)
- ◆ University of Washington's Greeks 2000 Project, contact Mary Larimer at [larimer@uwashington.edu](mailto:larimer@uwashington.edu)

(Far & Miller, 2000).

At the University of Rhode Island (Reilly et al, 2001) an interactive social norms correction activity was incorporated into half of the sections of a first-year orientation course. Baseline data collected during summer orientation documented inflated expectations of drinking in college. Misperceptions data for both individual class sections and for the whole first-year class were incorporated into the intervention. At the end of the semester, trends were in the predicted direction (decreased perceptions, less alcohol and marijuana use, and decreased negative consequences) for the experimental group.

At the University of South Carolina, PAN (The Perception of Alcohol Norms) was incorporated into sections of University 101, a course for first-year students. PAN students were surveyed to determine actual drinking rates and the perceptions of class and campus drinking rates. These first-year students drank about 4.1 drinks/ occasion but estimated that their peers drank an average of 6.7 drinks/occasion. Similarly, PAN students stated that they drank on average 1-3 times a month, but thought that their peers drank 1-2 times a week. These perceptions were compared with actual campus norms in a discussion facilitated by trained peer educators. At the end of the semester, when PAN students were compared with other students in University 101 who received a standard alcohol education workshop (SAP),

## Social Norms Interventions with First-Year Students

Small group interventions can be tailored to the needs of first-year students to inform parents and students about healthy drinking norms on campus. Strategies include:

- ◆ **Mention** positive campus norms and protective behaviors during campus tours.
- ◆ **Include information** about positive campus norms and protective behaviors in letters to parents and students following acceptance.
- ◆ **Mention** positive norms in orientation presentations.
- ◆ **Develop** an orientation, first-year seminar or residence hall workshop using the small group model.
- ◆ **Design** tailored workshops for peer-intensive groups such as athletes and fraternities.
- ◆ **Work** with faculty to infuse social norms data into class discussions.
- ◆ **Evaluate** the potential effectiveness of a social norms media campaign directed at first-year students alone or for the whole campus.

PAN students showed a trend towards drinking less alcohol per week than SAP students.

### Implications

While these results are promising, small group norms interventions are still undergoing development and have been found to vary in their impact. This is to be expected given the unique culture and peer context of each reference group. It is particularly important to consider potential gender differences in program impact and to target the primary identity group of a student. For example, a fraternity member may benefit more from a program tailored for

## Social Norms Intervention with Small Groups

Greeks than from participating in a first-year seminar. Because the nature and context of these influences may not be known or apparent at the beginning of an intervention, a long-term commitment to this approach is suggested so that interventions can be evaluated, revised and adapted over time. Overall, the application of social norms theory to small groups is extremely promising and may be an effective strategy to consider by itself or in combination with an all-campus media campaign.

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"Implementation of an Interactive Social Norms Intervention."

Presented at the Fourth National Conference on the Social Norms Model. Anaheim, CA, July 18-20.

## Contributions:

Do you have a promising practice or successful application that you would like to contribute to the *Social Norms Quarterly*? Would you be interested in reviewing research and/or program materials or making recommendations to your colleagues? Is someone doing creative work in this field that should be recognized? If you have anything that you would like to contribute to the *Social Norms Quarterly*, or if you would like to suggest a topic for a working paper, please contact:

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## Working Paper #1: Cultural Cataracts: Identifying and Correcting Misperceptions in the Media

Students commonly ask questions about the role of media in fostering misperceptions. Next month, Jeff Linkenback, Ph.D., director of the Montana Social Norms Project, will provide information on how this takes place and how these misperceptions can be corrected. Jeff has been one of the early innovators and practitioners of social norms theory, applying it to special populations such as Greeks (in *Our Chapter, Our Choice*), and developing the first statewide social norms intervention in Montana.

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