

# Brief Interventions in Educational Settings

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# Different Settings & Populations

- Largely age-defined populations in primary, secondary and tertiary education
- Drinking among adolescents and young people of increasing public policy significance internationally
- NIAAA 2002 report & RSA symposia on college drinking
- Fusion of two research traditions – alcohol/drug education & brief interventions (BI)

## Larimer & Cronce (2002)

- Total n=32 college studies, 3 categories of intervention
- Educational (n=14) comprising traditional information, values clarification & normative education unpromising
- Cognitive-behavioural (n=15) comprising expectancy challenge, self-monitoring & skills training recommended
- Motivational/feedback (n=11) comprising brief face-to-face motivational or mailed feedback recommended
- No 'treatment' studies identified

## Foxcroft et al. (2002)

- Cochrane review for young people aged up to 25
- 56 studies included, 32 generic, 24 alcohol-only, 5 BI
- Sparse evidence of long term effects
- Poor methodological quality stressed
- Marlatt (1998) & Monti (1989) MI-based BI
- Werch (1996a) Brief STARS 3-part 'multi-component motivational stages prevention model'

## Tait & Hulse (2003)

- 8/11 non-curriculum alcohol studies, mean age < 20
- Total alcohol n=1075; Universities n=622 (58%); Schools n=282 (26%)
- Motivational Interviewing (MI) involved in 6/8 studies with participants mean age 18-19
- 2 non-MI studies schools-based STARS mean age 13-14
- Follow-up periods 30 days – 9 months except Marlatt et al. (1998)
- ES=0.28 alcohol, ES=0.24 MI - similar to adult BI effects

# Observations on schools & colleges

- BI literature at early stage of development
- BI literature is virtually 100% from the U.S.
- Attention warranted to non-mandatory treatment and the role of college health services
- Limitations of classroom intervention increasingly apparent
- BI in school settings not systematically explored - extended intervention opportunities available?

# Are Brief Interventions effective with Young People?

- Age not a prominent characteristic in adult BI literature
- Grossberg et al. (2004) 18-30 year olds sub-group analysis
- No known evidence of variation in receptivity to BI by age
- 'Boundary problem' with teenagers under 18
- Specific targeting of youth relatively recent development & largely restricted to older teenagers

# Innovations in Brief Interventions?

- Group interventions – e.g. D'Amico & Fromme (2000; 2002)
- Peer intervention equivalence – e.g. Larimer et al. (2001)
- Multiple substances/behaviours – e.g. “Lifestyle Management Class”
- Electronic intervention preferred – e.g. Kypri et al. (2003)
- Mobile phones & parents as intervention media/channels?
- What is the potential of advice – unstudied in education settings?

# The Content of BI

- Brief electronic assessment & feedback interventions may be straightforward to disseminate...
- ...but complex to study – Russell et al., 1979; Bien et al., 1993
- Recent London study – unexpected performance of non-intervention control group suggests assessment reactivity
- Disaggregation of feedback & MI-specific effects  
weakness of MI literature
- Murphy et al. (2004) initial college comparison – more studies needed

# London Further Education Studies

- Post-compulsory technical/vocational education important targeting opportunity where social gradient
- Recent London demonstration of short-term efficacy in this setting - McCambridge & Strang (2004)
- No primary target drug, alcohol ES=0.34 (0.09-0.59)
- Three-month effects deteriorated by 12 months or assessment reactivity?
- Ongoing studies exploring effectiveness, primary prevention & community-level interventions respectively

# Conclusions

- Potential established by Baer et al. (2001) in educational settings & Grossberg et al. (2004) for young people
- Merit in secondary analyses of existing BI data on age?
- Specific targeting of children & adolescents under 18 particularly undeveloped, apart from work of Werch et al.
- Not yet possible to assess the specific effects of different educational settings
- Need to develop an international evidence base

## INEBRIA PROPOSED OBJECTIVE 6

- “To pay particular attention to the needs of young people in relation to alcohol brief interventions.”
- Why, where & how?