

P.A.R.T.Y. Program Evaluation 2006-2008

Background

The P.A.R.T.Y. Program (Prevent Alcohol and Risk-related Trauma in Youth) is a licensed national one day in-hospital injury awareness and prevention program for grade ten students. This program is important as alcohol use continues to be the number one factor in fatal collisions in Saskatchewan.¹ In Saskatchewan Health Region (SHR), the 15 to 24 age group has one of the highest mortality rates from transportation.² There are over 70 P.A.R.T.Y. programs in Canada, the United States and Australia. Although the P.A.R.T.Y. program is widely used, there are few evaluations that have been conducted on the effectiveness of the program.

Our purpose

The purpose of our study was to see if there was a change in students' attitudes and knowledge around risk taking behaviour after participation in the P.A.R.T.Y. program.

What we did

Students were given a questionnaire one week prior to participating in the program. The same questionnaire was given to students approximately one week after. Questionnaires were matched pre and post to ensure individual student responses could be compared.

What we looked at

We used questionnaires from students who completed the program between November 2006 and June 2008. The questionnaire was a mix of attitudinal and knowledge-based questions. Five questions regarding participation in the program were also asked.

How we interpreted the data

For attitudinal and knowledge questions, descriptive statistics were computed. Paired sample t-tests were conducted on all questions.

What we found

- Seventeen schools (8 urban and 9 rural) participated in the program for a total of 408 returned and completed pre and post student questionnaires.
- After participating in the program, students' attitudes showed a significant change towards less risk taking behaviour.
- Students answered significantly more knowledge-based questions correctly after completion of the P.A.R.T.Y. program.
- In general, students enjoyed participation in the P.A.R.T.Y. program and took away key learnings.

Limitations

- No control group.
- One data collection method used.
- Short time frame between pre and post questionnaires (about 1 week).
- No individual data was collected to make comparisons (e.g., sex, place of residence, income levels, etc).

Summary

This evaluation suggests that the P.A.R.T.Y. program is beneficial in improving students' short-term attitudes and knowledge on risk taking behaviour. However, due to the limitations of this evaluation, the results only speak to short-term and not long-term changes. Further evaluations which use a longer follow-up period (e.g., one year instead of one week) should be conducted. Changes to the evaluation methodology such as using a control school or linking to actual driving records may increase the validity of the findings.

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1. Neudorf C, Marko J, Wright J, et al. Health Status Report 2008: A Report of the Chief Medical Health Officer. Saskatoon, Saskatoon Health Region; 2009.
2. SGI. Drinking and driving. Quick facts [online]. 2007 [cited 2009 15 Nov]. Available from URL: http://www.sgi.sk.ca/sgi_pub/road/_safety/drinking_and_driving/quickfacts.htm

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