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## A Look at SMART Choices...

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The SMART Choices (Students Making Alcohol and Other Drug Responsibility Theirs) course is one of Florida State University's Healthy Campus 2010 initiatives to engage students in maintaining overall health and wellness. SMART Choices is an alternate education program for students who violate FSU alcohol and drug policies and/or conduct code.

SMART Choices classes promote responsible decision-making with respect to alcohol and drug use and stress the importance of individual responsibility. Rather than attempting to change a student's behavior in a single intervention, the SMART Choices objective is to introduce the student to a process of self-examination that will eventually lead to behavior change. Conducted in a casual, non-judgmental atmosphere the classes are conducive to open discussion with emphasis on the legal and personal consequences of substance abuse. Students' opinions and attitudes are always valued but may be challenged when they are inappropriate or irresponsible.



Efforts are taken to maintain a positive atmosphere maximizing the chance that the students will leave the class with a positive association with the intervention process. Students identify with this structure. One commented, "The instructor was informative, very interesting and upbeat." Other comments from class evaluations include, "He [the instructor] didn't lecture too much, he was realistic and understanding."

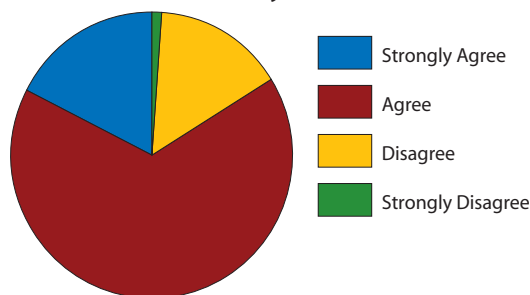
As a result of this feedback, the instructors weave the course content and learning objectives into the group discussion. The course content includes:

- Legal aspects of alcohol and other drug use on campus and in the community
- Physical effects; potential academic, social and financial consequences
- Stages of addiction and characteristics of the addictive personality
- How alcohol affects interpersonal and family relationships
- Stress reduction, recreation and healthy leisure activities
- Values clarification and personal responsibility

The class, two sessions two hours each, includes the use of didactic instruction, group discussion, a video presentation, a risk assessment test, and an online alcohol and drug education lesson that is assigned between sessions. The online course, which usually takes students 30 to 45 minutes to

complete, offers basic alcohol information and interactive self-evaluation tools. Based on feedback from class evaluations, the group discussion has proven to be the most productive part of the course. One student commented, "I thought it was a relaxed atmosphere and people could talk about anything." Another said, "It was a laid back environment and wasn't belittling at all."

**I think the program will help me make healthy choices.**



# Health Educator Spotlight . . .

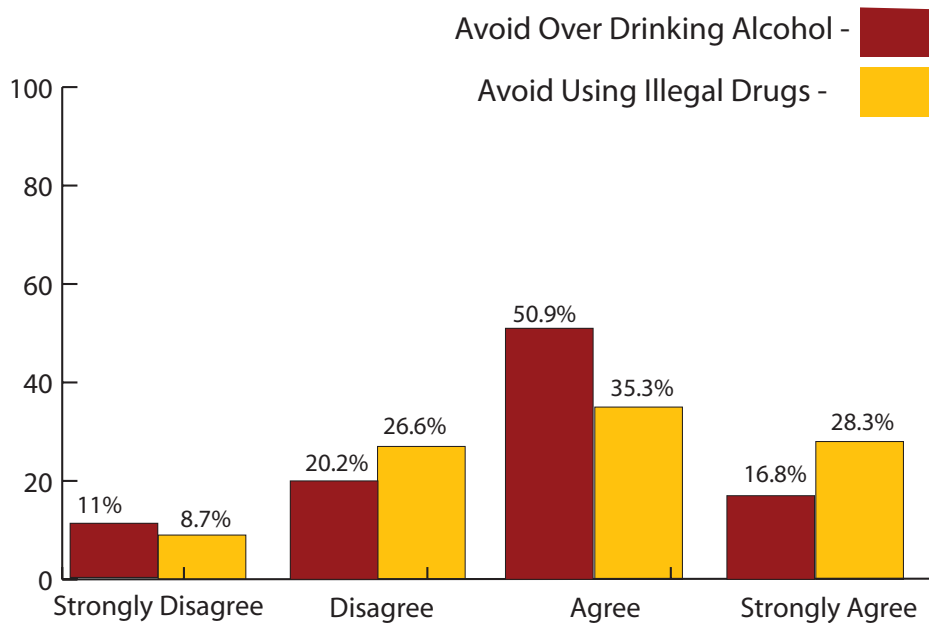


Kevin T. Frentz, PhD, who directs the FSU smoking cessation program, has been with TSHC since 1999. He is the advisor for STRIKE (Student Tobacco Reform Initiative Knowledge for Eternity) and is the principal advisor for the STRIKE grant. He has been instructing the SMART Choices classes for 7 years. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a Master's Degree in Counselor Education from the University of South Alabama and his doctoral degree in higher education from Florida State University.

Dan Moore, BA, joined the TSHC team in 2003 after working in several areas of substance abuse treatment. His main focus is alcohol and drug education. In addition to advising KARMA (Knowing About Responsible Management of Alcohol), Mr. Moore teaches SMART Choices courses and is active in the community through volunteer efforts. He received his B.A. in psychology from FSU in 1999 and is currently pursuing a Masters degree in Public Administration.



In the next 30 days, the program will help me to:



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