CHOICES About Alcohol (CHOICES) for Mandated College Students
George A. Parks, Ph.D.

Rationale for program implementation:

1. CHOICES is a delivery modality of the Alcohol Skills Training Program (ASTP) which is the first prevention program to be published in a professional journal demonstrating the ability to reduce college student drinking. ASTP was tested in an experimental designed and results included reduced drinking quantity and a reduction in heavy drinking from a peak BAC at baseline of .14 to .06 at the one year follow up assessment.


2. ASTP efficacy in reducing student drinking was replicated in a second study comparing the group delivery of the program to a one-on-one brief intervention (later evolving into BASICS-Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students) and a self-directed correspondence version of the program.


3. The original ASTP program consisted of 8 weekly 2-hour sessions and the ASTP replication consisted of 6 weekly 90-minute sessions. A version of ASTP delivered in 2 weekly 2-hour sessions was tested and shown to be effective and is now the delivery format recommended for CHOICES.


4. The ASTP is included on several best practice lists as an effective program for college student alcohol abuse prevention:

4.1. NIAAA (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism) Tier One Program with demonstrated effectiveness in preventing alcohol abuse in college students.

4.2. Child Trends Best Practice listed in LINKS (Lifecourse Interventions to Nurture Kids Successfully) Database.

4.3. Sociometrics Effective Program listed in their The Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Programs Archive (YSAPPA) funded by the National Institute of Drug Abuse.
5. CHOICES contains all 10 core components of the ASTP when delivered in two 2-hour sessions and is augmented by Motivational Interviewing and Interactive Journaling™ delivery, both of which are listed on the National Registry of Effective Programs and Practices (NREPP) of SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration).

6. CHOICES contains a pre-test and post-test that has reliably shown both increases in alcohol knowledge and in behavioral intention to practice protective behaviors reducing the harm of drinking. Research has show behavioral intention to be highly correlated with subsequent behavior change.

7. CHOICES is currently being implemented in over 1,000 colleges and universities with most of the applications being with first offender mandated students.

8. The University of Wisconsin-Madison uses CHOICES for all first offender mandated students.

9. Training and consultation with CHOICES program developer George A. Parks, Ph.D. assures delivery with fidelity to the evidence-based model.