Organizational Wellness & Learning Systems, Fort Worth, TX

Team Resilience for Young Restaurant Workers Program for Young Adults in the Workplace (YIW)

under the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

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OWLS

A Life in the Community for Everyone SAMHSA Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

YIW Young Adults in the Workplace

1. YIW Program Overview

About Young Adults in the Workplace (YIW) initiative:

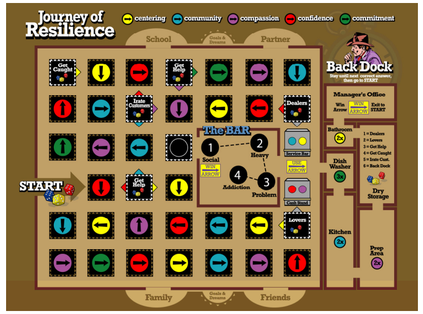
- A multi-site collaborative project
- Six multidisciplinary SAMHSA-funded grant teams
- Implementing and evaluating workplace-based substance abuse prevention and early intervention programs for young workers
- Designed to provide employers, unions, and organizations empirical information about the efficacy of a diverse set of approaches to prevention and early intervention of substance abuse and comorbidity

2. Team Resilience for Young Restaurant Workers Program Description

- Team Resilience is adapted from a program incorporating focus group/advisory input with:
  - Knowledge about emerging adulthood,
  - Aspects of personal and team resilience,
  - Job commitment, and
  - Restaurant culture.
- The program emphasizes strong integration and alignment with restaurant operational goals and policies.
  - Turnover/Retention
  - Customer satisfaction
- Supervisors and employees receive training in the following areas:
  - Stress management
  - Communication/Peer referral skills
  - Leadership
  - Employee assistance program awareness
  - Developing a culture of substance abuse prevention and health awareness in the workplace.
- Goals of Team Resilience
  - Reduce risks for substance abuse
  - Enhance job commitment
  - Increase positive retention among young workers
- Goal of OWLS
  - Find ways to maintain a healthy working environment while still realizing a profit
- Three two-hour sessions described as a journey
  - **Session 1: The Map** (establishes relevance and introduces the characteristics of resilience)
  - **Session 2: The Compass** (Allows participants to decide which areas of resilience to focus on first)
  - **Session 3: The Destination** (emphasizes the importance of good communication skills in the context of peer referrals)
- Managers are also trained on supportive techniques for working with young adults.
  - Cognitive Mapping (decision making)
  - Heart-Centered Leadership
  - Communication skills and EAP Referral

2. Team Resilience for Young Restaurant Workers Program Description *(continued)*

- A competitive game played at the end of each of three training sessions addresses
  - The benefit and importance of working in the restaurant industry
  - The risks of unhealthy choices (tobacco, alcohol, theft, etc.)
  - Work/life balance
  - Communication skills
  - Workplace policy and culture



- Core technology is peer-to-peer support and resilience skills in 5 areas:
  - *Centering* (stress coping)
  - *Confidence* (self-efficacy)
  - *Community* (social support)
  - *Commitment* (goal setting)
  - *Compassion* (peer referral)
- Participants are trained to be wellness coaches for other emerging adults.
- Focus on Commitment:
  - Commitment to a healthy lifestyle
  - Commitment to the team and the restaurant.

3. Demographics and Participating Industry

Demographics

- 560 employees
- Ages 16–30
- Young adults are at increased risk for developing chronic substance use-related problems. Restaurant Industry is highest risk workplace.
- Few interventions are available for young adults, particularly in workplaces.

Participating Industry

- Service Industry
  - Restaurant chain
- Dallas/Ft. Worth, Austin, and Houston, TX; Chicago, IL

4. Early Process Findings

- Understanding a specific worksite's culture is essential to the development of a recruiting and training strategy with top-down involvement
  - Ensuring motivated recruitment and participation
- Adapting materials to a specific worksite
  - Ensures relevance and retention
  - Bolsters involvement
- Committed managerial participation in critical to success.
- "Awareness" training has a strong impact on the employees.
- Delivering the intervention message is not enough.
  - Essential to sustaining the training are:
    - Practicing prevention behaviors, such as goal setting
    - Proactively intervening at the earliest stages of counterproductive symptoms
    - Keeping the message alive with "ambassadors" and materials
  - Partnering with post-prevention services (such as EAPs) may be the most comprehensive approach to health and productivity in the workplace.

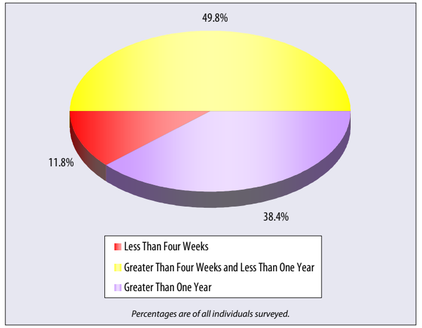
5. Survey Information

- Baseline survey data describe demographic characteristics as well as behaviors and perceptions concerning substance use of the workers surveyed.
- The restaurant workers in our study were slightly older than the cross-site average. This is primarily due to the fact that Team Resilience is a cultural intervention, involving all front-of-the-house workers (servers, bartenders, and hosts) in the store.

Number of Individuals Surveyed	Age (Years)	
	Mean	Std. Dev.
425	22.6	4.2

6. Early Survey Findings

Figure 1. Duration at Current Job



Percentages are of all individuals surveyed.

Average turnover in the restaurant industry (casual dining) can range from 80% to 120% for young workers. This chart is consistent with these national norms, showing that 50% (38 + 12) of the sample worked less than one year at their store.

6. Early Survey Findings *(continued)*

Figure 2. Age at First Use of Substance

Restaurant workers appear to begin using at a slightly later age. It is possible that this may be driven by coworker socialization.

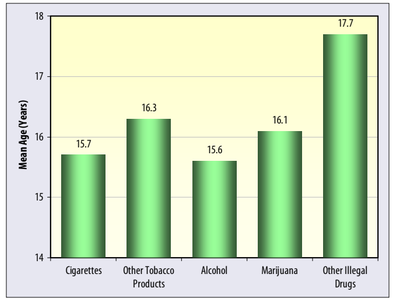


Figure 3. Substance Use: Lifetime, Past Year, and Past Thirty Days

When compared to national data, levels of substance use for the young restaurant worker are higher than average and also (in this cross-site study) the highest of all the grantees. For example, past thirty day use of other illegal drugs is 11% in the restaurant sample and 4% for the entire cross-site study.

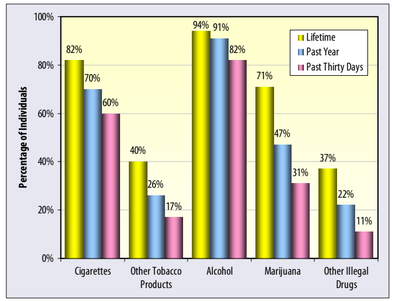
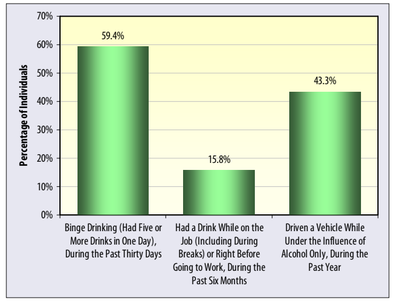


Figure 4. Alcohol-Related Risky Behaviors

For each of the three risky behaviors, the young restaurant worker shows higher degrees of risk. For example, driving under the influence is 250% greater in this sample (43.3%) than in the combined cross-site sample (17.6%).



6. Early Survey Findings *(continued)*

Figure 5. Perception of Harm Associated with Use of a Substance, by Use of the Substance in the Past Thirty Days

For all three substances, users perceive less risk of use than non-users. For example, among those who binge drink only 12% rate binging drinking as "high risk"; the comparable rate for non-binge drinkers is 26%.

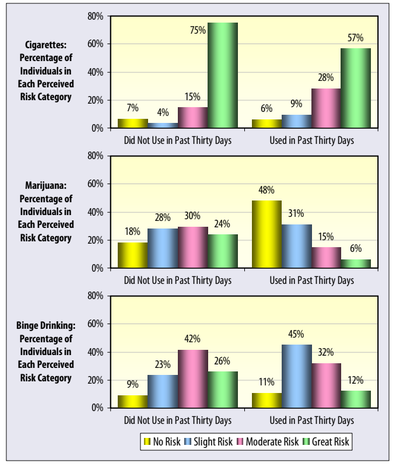
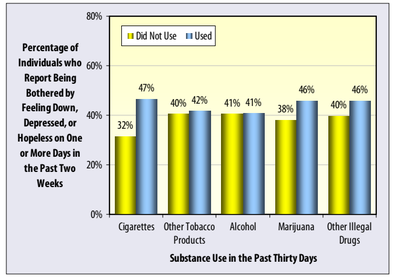


Figure 6. Bothered by Feeling Down, Depressed, or Hopeless

Cigarette users are significantly more likely to experience symptoms of depression (47%) than non-cigarette users (32%). A similar pattern of greater depression risk for users, although not statistically significant, can be seen for young restaurant workers who use marijuana and other illicit drugs.



Summary of Early Findings

The 18–25 year old population has consistently reported among the highest risks of alcohol and substance abuse (Kjaerheim et al., 1995; SAMHSA, 2005; Zhang & Snizek, 2003) and the highest levels of workplace turnover (Chapman, 2004). The present study suggests that restaurant culture and the challenges of emerging adulthood combine to create a more intensely stressful work environment. Accordingly, the present study engaged young restaurant workers and their managers in 400+ hours of focus group activities and discussions, resulting in a collaborative adaptation dubbed *Team Resilience*.

Contact Information

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