Researchers at the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) have published a summary of findings and recommendations regarding the efficacy of various interventions that address the issue of college drinking. The recommendations were organized in four “tiers” based on both the interventions’ relevance to college student drinking and the degree to which they are supported by empirical evidence. According to NIAAA, although this classification is not universally accepted and may have to be modified in response to more recent research, it can help college administrators and researchers to choose the most promising approaches. The four “tiers” are as follows:

♦ Tier 1 – included strategies that show evidence of effectiveness with college students, including:
  - Combinations of cognitive-behavioral skills training with norms clarification and motivational enhancement interventions
  - Brief motivational enhancement interventions
  - Interventions challenging alcohol expectancies

♦ Tier 2 – includes strategies that research shows have been successful with general populations and could be applied to college settings, including efforts either to restrict the availability of alcohol or to create an environment supportive of such restrictions. Examples include:
  - Implementation, increased publicity, and enforcement of laws to prevent alcohol-impaired driving
  - Restrictions on alcohol retail outlet density
- Increased prices and excise taxes on alcoholic beverages
- Responsible beverage service policies in social and commercial settings
- Campus and community coalitions of all major stakeholders to implement these strategies effectively

- Tier 3 – includes strategies with logical and theoretical promise that require more comprehensive evaluation, such as:
  - Marketing campaigns to correct student misperceptions of peer alcohol use, sometimes called “social norms marketing” or normative education
  - Consistent enforcement of campus alcohol policies
  - Provision of safe rides for students who drink too much to drive
  - Regulation of happy hour promotions
  - Information for new students and their parents about alcohol use and campus policies
  - Other strategies to address high-risk drinking, such as offering alcohol-free residence halls and social activities or scheduling classes on Fridays to reduce Thursday night parties

- Tier 4 – includes strategies with “evidence of ineffectiveness” such as simple educational or awareness programs used alone, without any other strategies or components.
To view the entire NIAAA Task Force’s findings, please see “Preventing Alcohol-Related Problems on College Campuses – Summary of the Final Report of the NIAAA Task Force on College Drinking” or visit the website at www.niaaa.nih.gov

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