

Okanogan County MSFW alcohol education and screening initiative

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Okanogan County is located in North Central Washington. Agriculture is the primary industry, accounting for 34% of the total employment in the county. Staple agricultural products grown in the region includes: tree fruits (cherries, apples, peaches) and wheat & grains. **Alcohol-related fatalities** in Okanogan County have been consistently higher than both the state and national averages for the past 10 years. Additionally, the CDC assigned Okanogan county a high-moderate ranking for risky drinking behaviors, as 14.5% of residents regularly engage in binge drinking. **Binge Drinking** is an unhealthy drinking pattern, which is highly correlated with risky behavior such as driving while intoxicated and other adverse health outcomes.



Okanogan County hosts > 15,000 migrant and seasonal **farm workers (MSFWs)**. MSFWs—largely Latinos and Jamaicans—make up a majority of the agricultural workforce. Several factors put **MSFWs at high risk** for engaging in **unhealthy drinking patterns** including: **isolation, and stressful working and living conditions**. **Cultural differences** such as language barriers and immigration status also add to life stresses among MSFWs, and influence unhealthy drinking patterns.

Purpose:

To reduce unhealthy drinking patterns among at-risk MSFWs in Okanogan County through:

- 1) a community-based, culturally-designed educational program, and
- 2) developing a community-based alcohol screening and brief intervention (SBI) program for the MSFW population.

Methods:

Goal 1- community education:

- ◆ Partnered with Family Health Centers Outreach *promotores* Program
- ◆ Developed an culture-focused, interactive, educational presentation
- ◆ Scheduled educational outreach events and presented in Spanish to Latino MSFWs.

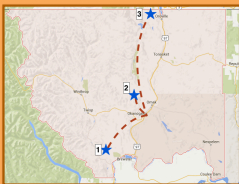


Figure 1: Presentations were given at the Alamos Orchard, Highland Orchard and Oroville MSFW housing community.

Goal 2- screening and brief intervention:

- ◆ Partnered with Okanogan Behavioral Health Centers (OHBC) to discuss training opportunities for *promotores*
- ◆ Provided literature resources and presentation materials for promotion of SBI *promotores* training program

Results

¿Cómo se define el uso de alcohol problemático?
What is problem drinking?

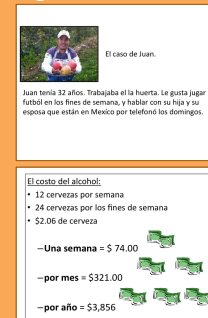
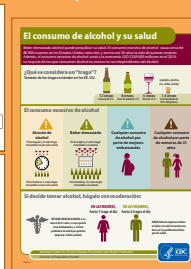
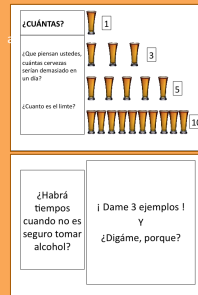


Figure 2: Presentations and handouts focused on safe alcohol consumption practices

Figure 3: Presentations were directly relatable to workers

Depende del día.
Depende cómo bebe la persona.
Si la meta es eborrecharse.
Es parte de nuestra cultura. No es una fiesta sin alcohol. Algunas personas saben cómo beber. Cómo efectúa la familia. Cómo efectúa el trabajo.

Figure 4: Common themes emerged from discussions with workers about safe alcohol use, and consequences associated with excess use.

Discussion

Goal 1- community education:

- ◆ MSFWs have limited understanding of unhealthy drinking patterns
- ◆ Directly relatable, community education allows for MSFWs to attain a greater level of understanding about safe alcohol use.
- ◆ Scheduling and orchard follow through was a major challenge. Attendance was occasionally poor because orchard supervisors did not communicate event details with workers.
- ◆ FHC Outreach will continue to use presentations and handouts as part of their health education curriculum for MSFWs.

Goal 2- screening and brief intervention:

- ◆ Lack of funding has significantly reduced FHCs *promotores* program. More funding is needed to expand program to include SBIs.
- ◆ OHBC is able/willing to provide training to *promotores* in alcohol screening (AUDIT-C, DAST-10) and brief interventions such as motivational interviewing.
- ◆ Presentations and literature review were provided to Outreach Program director with hopes for future funding opportunities for expansion of *promotores* program to include alcohol SBIs.



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