



Planning a Safe Spring Break

Getting Started

When it comes to educational programming, there are some strategies that you can use to help create the perfect Safe Spring Break activities. Here are some things for you to consider:

Planning Your Calendar

It might sound obvious, but your first step is deciding the timing of your Safe Spring Break programming activities. There are many things to take into consideration, so take a good look at what is going on just before spring break. One of the advantages of starting your planning early is that you can get on your campus calendar before the second half of the year starts getting too full.

Obviously, the best time to conduct a Safe Spring Break Campaign is right before everyone leaves for break, although some campuses will plan it two weeks before break if mid-terms are a major concern. If your campus closes for break on Wednesday, do you begin your week that Monday, or the previous Friday? Most campuses do not conduct a complete week of Safe Spring Break activities. Instead, they choose to concentrate their energy on three or four full days. It's entirely up to you, depending on your group's size, your financial resources, and how ambitious you feel! Keep in mind your members will need mid-term study time, too.

Pick your dates and get on your official campus calendar in your Student Union, Health Center, Residence Life Office, Athletics, and Greek Affairs Offices. Letting these key people know that you are making plans for Safe Spring Break will be important for the next step.

Balance Different Types of Programming

When it comes to programming ideas, try to expand your list of options for planning purposes. We commonly plan an educational event, such as a speaker coming to campus or a workshop, in the student union or a residence hall. These are great ideas but it is also important to think of ways you can do an awareness event that don't necessarily involve a formal audience. How about a table set up in a high-visibility area with short quizzes and prizes to give away? What about posters hanging from hallways in academic buildings or statistics written on chalkboards in classrooms? Don't forget to take advantage of the campus radio station or video monitors to run free messages throughout the week. Finally, you might want to consider a social event or game designed just to let people

have some fun! How about a campus dance or open-mic coffeehouse? What about a pool or volleyball tournament? By combining different types of programming at different times, it is possible for you to have many successful Safe Spring Break activities.

Share the Work . . . Share The Success

Safe Spring Break is a perfect time for planning committees. Too often one or two peer educators take on the responsibility for the whole week and end up getting overwhelmed. It might be better to form committees, either by creating different committees such as marketing, fundraising, etc. or by delegating the responsibility for each major event to a different committee. Not only does this share the work, it also is a great opportunity to empower other students leaders to get more involved and prepare them for the time when they will run your peer education program.

Safe Spring Break is a Perfect Networking Opportunity

Student safety is a campus-wide issue and there are many different student organizations and campus departments that also are concerned about alcohol abuse and campus safety. Here is a chance to co-sponsor events with these different groups. Think about planning an event with Counseling or Health and Wellness. See if you have any interest from Athletics or Academic Affairs. What about organizations such as the Women's Center, Panhellenic or Interfraternity Council (IFC), or Multicultural Affairs? This might be a great time to go to the campus programming board and see if they can use their budget to bring in a nationally known speaker to do an event as part of your Safe Spring Break. By co-sponsoring and networking with some of these other groups, you have an opportunity to share resources such as budget and student help. You also have a great marketing opportunity, as each department or organization that is sponsoring the event will try to get their members to come. When we network, we become stronger!

A Great Program Needs an Audience

No matter how good your programming planning might be, it is all for nothing if no one shows up! Take the time to figure out the best and most creative ways to market your events. Check out the section later in this manual on marketing and promotion and don't forget to let people know all the wonderful things you are planning!

Developing Partnerships

In order to develop a comprehensive Safe Spring Break Campaign, it is necessary to involve a wide variety of individuals and departments from the beginning. The more groups you get involved, the more comprehensive impact you will have on your student body.

Identifying and recruiting partners serves several purposes. First, it is simple nature for people to support those programs they help create. If attendance at events is a crucial part of your campaign, you will need all the help you can get! Second, any work you do creating partners for Safe Spring Break will set up long-lasting allies for end of the year programming, next year's NCAAW, etc. It is good campus relations. Third, by including other groups, you can take advantage of their resources, whether that means financial help or simply a place to hold a program. Many groups will lend this kind of support in exchange for a chance to have their name attached to a positive campus-wide event.

When you decide that creating campus partners for your Safe Spring Break Campaign is a good idea, you can go about generating support in many ways:

1. Form a planning committee.

Go to those groups and invite them to be part of a committee from the very beginning of the planning process. This committee can be involved with choosing the theme, creating their own programs that will match up with yours, and co-sponsoring programs with your group. By having a committee that meets every week or so, not only do you get more people involved, but it provides instant communication about your efforts as each committee member takes news from your meeting back to her/his constituents.

2. Form partnerships that are win/win.

Look at other student organizations and campus departments and decide how best to combine your strengths and weaknesses. Perhaps make a deal with your athletic department to do an impaired driving prevention message during one of their home basketball games. You provide the educational component (something they perhaps could not or would not do), and they provide you an audience of hundreds or thousands of people (something that we normally do not get at our programs!) Everybody wins in this case. Look for these partnership opportunities: making mocktails at a student activities dance, providing safe break packages for the campus parking lots, writing a column for the alumni magazine, throwing a midnight breakfast with the food service, planning a service event with historically Black fraternities and sororities. Create partnerships that are win/win.

3. Create partnerships in the community.

There are many organizations and businesses in your greater community that would love to work with you on student health events. Safe Spring Break offers that opportunity for exposure in the community.

For example, look to create partnerships with:

- Police/Emergency Services
- Restaurants and Bars
- Local Health Agencies
- Community Support Groups
- Local TV/Radio/Newspaper
- Health Clubs
- Treatment Centers
- Hospitals and Clinics

Hold a rally for safe driving, sponsor an alcohol-free dance at a local restaurant, or have a workout all-nighter at a local health club. Be creative. Remember that sometimes it is easier for local agencies and businesses to donate services and facilities than donate prizes.

Marketing for Success

Your marketing plan is your map to how, when, and where you are going to let the campus community know about your Safe Spring Break programs. It is crucial to inform your potential audience about these activities as far in advance as possible. Your marketing plan must be well thought out

before you order that first poster and should be planned about one month ahead of time to ensure that you have covered all of your bases. For more information on utilizing media resources in your Safe Spring Break Campaign, please visit the BACCHUS website.

Fundraising Tips

How To Get What You Need To Do What You Want

Raising funds for your Safe Spring Break Campaign programs is not the insurmountable task that it may at first appear. It just takes planning, organization, and follow-through. Preventing drinking and driving and other drug abuse are a top priority and a great cause for campuses. Your role is to tap into that concern, develop a great plan and budget, and to identify potential funding sources both on campus and in the community.

Planning and Budgeting

Generally, it is more effective and easier to raise money for a “concrete” rather than an “abstract” idea. If you have clearly identified what you want to accomplish, how you intend to do it, and what it will cost, potential donors and sponsors will be more receptive. A good plan to follow is to orchestrate your week as a series of small, varied activities revolving around a central theme. Seek fundraising each activity by doing this, even if you are unable to fund your total program, you will be able to have activities throughout the week. Also, when you are preparing your budget, make sure that you identify all of the costs by category (i.e. food, equipment, since some funding sources you may wish to tap into may be limited in the type of things they will fund. Other funding sources may be willing to contribute “in-kind” goods and services where budgets will not permit a monetary contribution.

Organizing the Search for Revenue

Start with the campus community. Your first stop can be your President's office, Vice-President's office, or Dean's Office. These officials have contingency funds (your school may call it something else). For special projects call each office and ask what the procedure is for requesting these funds.

Some other sources of campus funds are:

- student government
- campus-community relations
- health and wellness/counseling center
- speakers bureau or special events
- residence life activity funds
- fraternity or sorority co-sponsorship
- Foundation or development office

A practical way to begin your search for campus funding is to spend some time going through the campus organization section of your campus directory. Do not be shy in asking for any type of support that an organization is able to provide. Make it clear that there are ways you can work with them in the future and that this will be an ongoing relationship. Just because some groups cannot contribute money, does not mean you cannot co-program. Can the group provide some marketing? An audience? Some people power? Other services? For example, it is unlikely that your campus newspaper can write you a check to help with your fundraising for Safe Spring Break. But the newspaper can agree to give you some quarter-page ads for free. This type of donation can be as helpful as money. Don not be afraid to get creative when asking for “in-kind” help if your first request for monetary funds is rejected.

Off Campus Funding—Business and Community Contacts

Identifying off-campus resources and building coalitions between campus and community organizations are the next steps and the beginning of the creation of a more comprehensive support system for your continuing year-round programming. The first step in this effort is to look for your natural allies in alcohol abuse prevention such as health care providers, insurance agencies, treatment centers, car

dealerships, and local civic organizations. Many campuses have found that local alcohol beverage vendors are a viable source of funding. These organizations have budgets to help educate against the irresponsible use of their product. However, some people believe that these organizations send a mixed-message about the health and safety of using alcohol. You will have to make a decision that is best for both you and your campus.

There are several government agencies and non-profit organizations that are perfect allies in the alcohol education arena. State Highway Safety Departments and Departments of Health and Human Services are great places to look for support. Do not forget local law enforcement agencies and community coalitions when you make your rounds. If your town has a local MADD Chapter, you might want to co-sponsor an event with their organization.

Businesses in the campus area which depend largely on students are also willing partners in your activities. Campus eateries are good places to approach for support such as free meals or gift certificates to give away at events. Before paying for anything at a local business such as printing or office supplies, once again check to see if there is any way you can get that business to donate their services "in-kind."

Many schools have also been successful getting food or non-alcoholic beverages donated to give away during an event. There's nothing like advertising free pizza to help get students to your functions!

Fundraising Events

Every student group knows that sometimes the best way to generate money is to do a fundraiser! From cookie sales to car washes, the only thing stopping us is our creativity and willingness to work. Get creative and brainstorm some wonderful fundraising events. For more ideas on events that can raise money, check out the "Affiliate Support" on the BACCHUS website at www.bacchusnetwork.org.

Making Sure You Say Thank You

If someone has given your organization something—funds, time, in-kind support, or anything that has been helpful—keep track of this list. When the campaign is over, send thank you notes along with any positive press you have received. Some campuses send certificates or other recognition items thanking the sponsor for being a partner in saving lives. These short thank you efforts take very little time, but go a long way in generating goodwill and creating long-term partnerships for your organization.

Fundraising Summary

Once you have planned your event and established a budget, you need to concentrate on two areas: first develop a fundraising strategy and second put someone in charge of the campaign and follow-through. Whether you try and get a large amount of money from a single source or smaller amounts from a number of sources is an individual campus decision based upon what you know about your institution and your potential funding sources. This is the place and time to brainstorm ideas with your committee and confer with other campus organizations.

The way that you organize your funding strategy can be very individualized to meet your campus needs. However, the crucial part is to approach your potential supporters with a well thought out, comprehensive plan. Make sure you let your sources know how important their contribution will be to the success of the program and to the prevention of alcohol abuse on campus. Also give them a clear picture of what your chapter does on a year-round basis. This is an excellent way to create an on-going partnership. Finally, but perhaps as important as anything else, make sure that each donor is recognized in some tangible way, either by certificate, mention in the advertisement or promotion, or by a thank you letter or dinner.

So, as you approach the topic of fundraising, do not be afraid to ask. Remember, if you do not ask, there will always be someone out there who will get the money instead.