PARTNERS IN PREVENTION OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE (PIPSA) THEORY OF CHANGE: A FORMATIVE EVALUATION IN IMPLEMENTING COMMUNITY ANTI-DRUG COALITIONS OF AMERICA’S STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK

By

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A THESIS PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

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by

Kelly Ann Dever
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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By
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August 2006

Chair: Barbara Zsembik
Cochair: Jodi Lane
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A qualitative study of coalition members from Alachua County’s community-based coalition, Partners in Prevention of Substance Abuse (PIPSA), on the topic of substance abuse was undertaken during April and May of 2006 at the University of Florida. The sample was comprised of 70 coalition members listed as active participants in the coalition. The purpose was to understand PIPSA’s theory of change regarding its newly declared focus on underage drinking, to offer a formative evaluation of the program, and provide suggestions as to the necessary steps it will take to structure the program in a way that can be evaluated in the future. Results indicated that coalition members place a strong emphasis on education as a strategy to decrease underage drinking in Alachua County, targeting youth at an even earlier age than they currently do. Evaluation results suggest priority be given to finalizing feasible activities the PIPSA coalition is able to
accomplish and to develop instruments that measure the process and impact of these very activities, to evidence program strengths and weaknesses, and to ensure future funding
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Substance addiction is not an individual problem, but stems from a larger community issue and should be handled in a comprehensive community-based approach. The National Survey on Drug Use and Health, conducted by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), states: of the 21.1 million people who needed but did not receive treatment in 2004, an estimated 1.2 million reported that they felt they needed treatment for their alcohol or drug use problem. Of the 1.2 million persons who felt they needed treatment, 441,000 (35.8%) reported that they made an effort but were unable to get treated (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration 2005:7). These numbers indicate a need for substance abuse programs to consistently be available and successfully create an awareness of their services, so individuals are able to seek help for problems that may affect their quality of life. It is important to note these numbers are conservative considering there are those who do not seek treatment services but might be willing to go if they were aware of the services.

The Partners in Prevention of Substance Abuse (PIPSA) program is a community-based coalition serving the residents of Alachua County, Florida. Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) defines a coalition as a formal arrangement for collaboration between groups or sectors of a community in which each group retains its identity but all agree to work together toward a common goal of building a safe, healthy, and drug-free community (National Community Anti-Drug Coalition Institute 2006). PIPSA is comprised of seventy coalition members, representing nine sectors in the
Alachua County community: Youth Services, School Board, Law Enforcement, Business and Media, Federal State and Local Agencies, Civic and Volunteer Agencies, Religious Groups, Healthcare, and Parents and Community. The members meet to discuss substance abuse issues specific to Alachua County and organize efforts of prevention, volunteering services individually and from their respective agencies.

An immediate priority for PIPSA is to organize the program in a way that can be evaluated in terms of program growth. Insight into program strengths and weaknesses is useful in building the effectiveness of the program as well as increasing the possibility for future funding, since most funding sources encourage evaluative pieces to be included with grant applications. According to CADCA trainings, PIPSA’s first step toward becoming evaluative is creating a program that has assessed its resources, understands its capacity, and has logically developed an organizational plan that is feasible and reaches community members in a reasonable manner.

The program is in the process of revising its goals (broad statements of what the coalition project intends to accomplish) and objectives (what is to be accomplished during a specific period of time to move toward achievement of a goal, expressed in specific, measurable terms) to more effectively address substance abuse in Alachua County (Rossi, Lipsey, and Freeman 2004). Currently, their goals are too broad to be realized and their objectives for reaching those goals are not defined in measurable terms, making evaluation impossible.

CADCA is a nationwide organization that offers trainings and guidance for strengthening and improving community coalitions. Many drug coalitions throughout the United States are adopting their program and structuring or restructuring their coalition to
reflect their model. CADCA’s guidance and support coupled with their acceptance, on a national level, makes them not only appealing from the coalition’s standpoint, but desirable from funding sources due to its structure. At the suggestion of CADCA, the PIPSA program has decided to focus specifically on one issue: to follow their Strategic Planning Framework Model to determine the program’s effectiveness in reaching Alachua County residents. It has declared underage drinking to be the primary concern. Children and youth are more vulnerable to problems associated with alcohol and drug abuse than any other group in society (Hawkins, Catalano, and Miller 1992). Current research shows that a higher percentage of youth aged 12 to 20 use alcohol (29% nationally) than use tobacco (24%) or illicit drugs (14%), making underage drinking a leading public health problem in the United States (Department of Children and Families 2003). According to the 2004 Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey (FYSAS), the number of youth in Alachua County who are engaging in alcohol use is even higher (32.7%) than the national or state average (Department of Children and Families 2003). Focusing on this specific issue will allow PIPSA to create a program that delivers services with a logical theory guiding activities that are capable of being evaluated. The PIPSA program has not reevaluated their program since its inception, seven years ago. With the new focus it was essential to speak with coalition members regarding their approach to Alachua County community members.

This study offered a platform for members to reach consensus regarding PIPSA’s theory behind program activities and to conceptualize underage drinking, in terms of the contributing agencies involved in PIPSA. All seventy coalition members were asked to participate in the focus group representing the sector in which they were listed on
PIPSA’s membership roster. In order for coalition members to feel a part of the program, they must be involved in its organization. CADCA trainings emphasized that maintaining a collaborative process throughout the assessment, capacity, and planning phases is essential for agreement among members in the later phases of implementation and evaluation. This process was not only informative, giving coalition members an overview of member perspectives, but it encouraged participation, since they had drafted the plan and offered their individual time as well as their respective agency’s resources.

Using a grounded theory methodology (Strauss and Corbin 1998), analyses focused on themes generated in the focus groups. Results were in the form of suggestions coalition members made regarding new strategies that are reasonable and appropriate to the problem behavior of underage drinking in Alachua County. They should use these results to guide their revisions of the program regarding new goals and objectives in their planning stage of the Strategic Planning Framework.

Results of the study show PIPSA coalition members have a working knowledge of current research pertaining to underage drinking prevention strategies. The coalition emphasizes educating community members in the hopes of changing the normative “party culture” present in Alachua County. Early, interactive education across various sectors of the community is a key strategy the coalition is hoping to employ in decreasing underage drinking. If the suggestions regarding untapped resources and innovative activities made by coalition members are implemented in the program design, benefits to the coalition may include greater program awareness and participation. With greater program awareness, individuals will be provided the knowledge of where to seek treatment when they are willing. Treatment of community members with substance abuse
problems will not only improve the quality of life on an individual level, but will improve the overall productivity and health of the community. For “a new social structure should be established, where enhancing the general welfare is thought to be an admirable goal” (Vega and Murphy 1990:152).

The process of the study may be duplicated by PIPSA in the future if new problem behaviors are deemed primary to the PIPSA program and new goals and objectives are needed. Also, insights from this study can be used to inform a variety of intervention programs, especially those that are geared to youth populations or communities with similar composition to Alachua County. Many argue the issue of substance abuse is best dealt with on a community level, because “drug abuse is a social behavior, embedded in the larger framework of community norms and social support systems that regulate the occurrence of these behaviors” (Zunyou, Detels, Jiapeng, Virginia, and Jianhua 2002:1952). Also, they state, “community intervention has proven effective for health problems such as smoking” (Zunyou et al. 2002:1952). Since it is not confined to any single campus or community a collaborative effort from campuses and communities dealing with similar issues may benefit from effective, shared solutions. By using this study’s research findings, communities may eliminate wasted effort and time related to discovering similar information.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Substance Abuse Among Youth

This chapter emphasizes literature relating to three major areas concerning this study: substance abuse as a social issue, the theoretical framework of the PIPSA coalition, and the strengths and weaknesses of community-coalitions. The literature on substance abuse considers the social implications it may have on the community and the individual. Particular focus has been placed on alcohol, the substance the coalition is most concerned with at this time. Current research is presented highlighting underage drinking in the United States, as well as specific information about Alachua County. Current strategies the literature suggests as successful in combating underage drinking are offered to help understand the PIPSA coalition’s efforts on a broader scale and point out possible strengths and weaknesses of their program they may need to consider. Literature addressing the theoretical background of the PIPSA coalition is essential in understanding its motivation and the applicability of its efforts. Criminological theory, Learning theory, and Life-course perspective are all necessary to include when considering the efforts of the coalition. Lastly, this chapter addresses the effectiveness of community-based coalitions and suggested strategies for employing them. This is to consider whether the coalition, even at its most refined state, should be used in dealing with the social issue of underage drinking, and in what ways might be more effective.
Social Issue Of Substance Abuse

Substances may be defined as any drug used to alter a person's mood or perception (how they feel and experience things) (Department of Education and Children’s Services 2003). Substances, such as alcohol, tobacco, and drugs, satisfy an inner need for experiencing other modes of consciousness (Weil 1986). Research has shown that, initially, substance abuse is most often a sign of deeper emotional troubles or concerns within the individual. Kornblum (1998) lists some major reasons people use substances: to ease pain, relax tension, lose weight, and fight depression.

For many, this emotionally-charged need to escape from reality, whether it is due to professional, familial, or social pressures, manifests itself in the use of substances. After continued use the individual may develop a physical dependence on the substance, and begin to participate in alcohol abuse, which may be defined in its most basic description as a pattern of problem drinking that result in health consequences, social problems, or both (Medical Network Incorporated 2006). Therefore, both alcohol use and abuse in underage drinking populations is the primary concern of the coalition, since they may not have the capacity to understand the difference at these ages. With both physical and emotional dependence on a substance the individual may, at the very least, lose their ability to self-regulate emotions and actions. Depending on the age of initiation, substance abuse may also disrupt normal developmental processes, jeopardizing cognitive ability and physical maturation. In addition, it is also linked to anti-social behavior. Research has shown that substance abuse has strong associations with crime, illness, and interpersonal violence (Kornblum 1998). For these reasons, the coalition finds it necessary to safeguard certain populations in order to prevent these life-altering consequences of alcohol use and abuse.
Some research suggests that interventions may be considered synonymous with social control. Vega and Murphy (1990:149) state:

Clearly incarceration is a means of social control, but interventions, particularly those that are truly community-based, do not perform this function. In fact, just the opposite is supposed to occur. Simply put, through interventions social conditions are supposed to be changed, so that persons can lead productive lives. Rather than controlling individuals, the intention should be to provide new opportunities.

Since substance abuse has such strong associations with crime, it is important to realize the goal should be to rehabilitate and not force individuals to conform, to create any long-lasting, meaningful change to social conditions. According to Vega and Murphy (1990:149):

Nonetheless, someone who needs help has come to be equated with a deviant or a threat to order. So even when rehabilitation is undertaken, as opposed to overt social control, the usual expectation is conformity in the guise of “adequate social functioning.” Order is simply reified. On the other hand, order is defied by real intervention, for providing assistance is intended to help persons to develop, and development is often idiosyncratic and can proceed in any number of directions.

By allowing people to abuse their bodies we allow them to destroy their potential lives. This is especially alarming when considering populations too young to recognize the implications of their actions.

Research suggests that socialization guards against desires to alter a person’s conscious state (Weil 1986). Every community has basic values and norms expressed to its community members in forms of media, school, and parental guidance, with social expectations implicitly and explicitly made to the individual. Social support guarding against substance use and abuse can be education of its dangers, encouragement and acknowledgment of participation in non-substance related activities, social service organizations helping individuals to deal with issues leading to emotional problems – such as family, marriage, or financial counseling. According to Vega and Murphy
(1990:152), “interventions that are community-sensitive are supposed to be liberating. Clients are supposed to be given a modicum of control over their lives, as a result of having the ability to regulate every aspect of their treatment.”

Strong and effective programs need to first be in place. Vega and Murphy (1990:145) suggest, “the maintenance of health, in short, should not be left to chance by any society that wants to improve the productivity of all its members.” Then programs must continually broadcast the message of the dangers of substance use and abuse. Kornblum (1998) introduces the idea of inter-generational forgetting in regards to substance use and abuse. He argues that each new generation is newly vulnerable and needs to be educated with the same or more effort than the previous one. In addition, “unless changes are made in conceptualizing illness, and citizens are integral to this process, even community-based interventions may merely serve to identify and rehabilitate deviants” (Vega and Murphy 1990:152).

**Alcohol As A Substance**

In the United States, the past decade has seen somewhat of an expansion of focus regarding substance abuse, with licit drugs now being targeted as harmful to the physical body. Tobacco companies have publicly admitted the health hazards relating to nicotine and have begun to pay reparations, funding the American Legacy Foundation’s “Truth” campaign and Philip Morris’s “Think. Don’t Smoke” campaign (Farrely, Healton, Davis, Messeri, Hersey, and Haviland 2002). Even though alcohol has had similar discoveries relating to addiction and harm to the physical body, society has not dealt with it in a reciprocal fashion.

Alcohol warnings may be too soft, considering the cultural backdrop of our society, which works to normalize drinking on a consistent basis. Many coalitions across America
are declaring the importance of considering the deleterious effects of attracting underage drinkers to a lifestyle of addiction. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:79) suggest, “young people are exposed to a steady stream of images and lyrics presenting alcohol use in an attractive light.” But if this message is not consistent across informational sources (i.e. media, peers, parents), the social support deterring alcohol use begins to become fragmented and unclear to the child. A more thorough discussion of underage drinking and its current rates further highlight the importance of addressing this issue.

**Current research on the underage drinking scene in the United States**

It has been suggested that “alcohol is the most commonly used drug among America’s youth” (Bonnie and O’Connell:2004:35). For this reason, research has looked at various factors relating to underage drinking and preventative approaches.

**Cognitive influences.** The cognitive influences on adolescents must first be addressed. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:72) consider the rite of passage that adolescents face:

During adolescence, individuals are going through rapid physical, social, and cognitive changes. These enormous changes to body, friendship and thinking about the world are juxtaposed against changing expectations for behavior and increases in need and opportunities for autonomy.

This period is also marked with an increase in time spent with peers and decreased time spent with parents. This unmonitored time parents allow their children, reinforce societal beliefs suggesting that adolescence is a time to practice adult roles (Bonnie and O’Connell 2004).

Historically, alcohol use has been an important symbol of adult status (Bonnie and O’Connell:2004). The legal drinking age has been adjusted to reflect the perceived age of an adult. Following Prohibition, the legal drinking age was twenty-one. In 1971, the
voting age was lowered to 18 to match the military draft age, encouraging some states to lower the drinking age as well. Alcohol-related problems stirred a push for federal regulation to increase the drinking age. By 1988, the majority of the states had re-raised the legal drinking age to twenty-one, which is where it has stayed for close to 20 years. This current law suggests that society agrees that even older teens lack judgment when it comes to the use of alcohol. More specifically, they lack judgment between substance use and abuse, and should therefore delay experimenting with this substance until they are mature enough to handle its consequences. Research agrees with this notion. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:40) state:

Individuals who begin drinking before the age of 15 are more likely to have substance abuse problems in their lifetimes, to engage in risky sexual behavior, and to suffer other negative consequences in comparison with those who begin drinking at a later age.

Although this research gives some credence to the legal drinking age being set at age twenty-one, it is unknown whether this is a causal issue or just an association. In addition to the cognitive influences that have been characteristic throughout history, there are some newly diagnosed challenges to current populations of youth. Clark, Kirisci, and Moss (1998) conducted a study of children aged 8 to 15 which found antisocial personality disorder has been linked to alcohol misuse among adolescents, suggesting conduct disorder often predates and predicts later alcohol use. Also, in non-clinical populations, a major personality characteristic that has been related to adolescent risk taking is sensation seeking, defined by seeking novel, complex, or risky situations (Zuckerman 1979).

**Social influences.** Statistics show that large numbers of teens are consistently choosing to drink. According to 2002 Monitoring the Future data, “almost half (48.6%)
of twelfth graders reported recent (within the past 30 days) alcohol use” (Bonnie and O’Connell 2004:38).

Since the early 1990’s, past 30-day prevalence rates have hovered around the 50% mark, with adolescent social pressures probably contributing greatly to the steadiness of these rates.

Some notable differences in patterns of usage do remain though. Youth appear to be drinking at an earlier age. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:38) explain:

The average age of first alcohol use has generally decreased since 1965, indicating youth are starting to drink at a younger age. NHSDA data indicate that the average age of self-reported first use of alcohol among individuals of all ages reporting any alcohol use decreased from 17.6 years to 15.9 years between 1965 and 1999.

If this pattern continues, society will begin to see an even greater increase in developmental problems related to adolescent drinking.

Table 1: Drinking Patterns among Adults and Youths (In Percent)

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<td>51 32 29 36 61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy drinking in past 30 days</td>
<td>42 49 45 44 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequent heavy drinking in past 30 days</td>
<td>8 19 26 21 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data from the 2000 NHSDA. (United States Department of Health and Human Services 2006b).

Not only are youth drinking at an earlier age, but they are drinking in heavier doses than previous years. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:39) state, “underage drinkers of all ages are much more likely to drink heavily than are adults.”

Table 2: Drinking Frequency and Intensity for Youths and Adults (Current Drinkers Only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency and Intensity</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean number of drinking days per month</td>
<td>12-20 21 and older</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.79 8.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean number of “usual” drinks on a drinking day*</td>
<td>4.48 2.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(6.03) (8.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.75) (2.07)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If respondents indicated that their usual number of drinks per occasion was some number greater than 12, that response was recoded as “missing.” Missing values were imputed, using means for the same sex and age group. SOURCE: National Household Survey on Drug Abuse. (United States Department of Health and Human Services 2006b).

In addition to the gender gap closing between girls and boys in terms of alcohol usage, biological differences should be mentioned to highlight the alarm this brings. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:49) suggest, “males do report engaging in heavy drinking at a higher rate than females”, but considering differences in body composition and alcohol metabolism, with women, on average, weighing less and processing alcohol slower, girls may feel the same effects as boys – even if they are consuming less.

Much like the patterns of alcohol usage relating to gender, Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:38) explain, “recent studies also suggest that ethnic differences are diminishing and
that these groups with historically low drinking rates are moving toward the higher rates of non-Hispanic white males.” As shown in Table 2, “among youths aged 12-20, drinking of all types (recent, heavy, frequent heavy) is highest for non-Hispanic whites, followed closely by Native Americans. Asian Americans and African Americans have the lowest prevalence of any racial or ethnic group” (Bonnie and O’Connell 2004:48). Research shows that adolescents, regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender, have a common interest in alcohol.

![Figure 2: Any Use of Alcohol in the Past 30 Days for 12- to 20-year-olds, by Gender, Race or Ethnicity, and Age Group: 2000. (Flewelling, Paschall, and Ringwaldt 2004).](image)

**Environmental influences.** Just as there are cognitive and social influences leading the adolescent to initiate drinking, there are environmental influences as well. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:55) “although the proportion of eighth graders who report that alcohol is fairly easy or very easy to get decreased over the past decade, it remains more than 60 percent.” There are many locations youth may have ease of access in getting alcohol. The easiest access is probably their parent’s kitchen. Wagenaar and Wolfson (1994:38) state, “results showed that the initial alcohol used by those in their
early teens is obtained from parents’ stocks or from older siblings and friends.” In addition, they may be able to access alcohol throughout their neighborhood, depending on community acceptance. Wagenaar and Wolfson (1994:39) further note:

Methods used to purchase alcohol reported by underage students include using false identification, buying from stores that are known for selling to underage youth, and seeking young clerks. The extant literature shows that most persons under the age of 21 are able to obtain alcohol, suggesting that this law is not rigorously enforced.

A community may be considered a “dry” or “wet” drinking environment, as suggested by Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:79):

A wet community environment is one in which drinking is prevalent and common, public opinion is generally tolerant or positive, and alcohol is readily available both commercially and at private social occasions and is advertised as available. A dry community would be one in which drinking at social occasions is not the norm and is generally frowned on, and alcohol outlets are relatively scarce.

The drinking environment is important to consider when noting the prevalence of underage drinking. It suggests important issues surrounding underage drinking, such as accessibility and availability.

**Consequences of underage drinking.** The deleterious effects of underage drinking have been partially noted previously, but should be addressed in greater detail. There are both short-term and long-term consequences to underage drinking.

Alcohol impairs an individual’s decision-making capacity which could possibly result in accident, death, injury, illness, or arrest. When judgment is impaired, the individual is less likely to guard against impulses, which could lead to vandalism, assault, risky sexual behavior, or drunk driving. Also, adolescents, with less experience behind the wheel, pose a higher risk when drinking and driving. The crash risk associated with driving after drinking is higher for youths than for adults at all blood alcohol content (BAC) levels (Hingson and Kenkel 2004). Poor decision-making, as a result of one
drinking occasion, could lead to a life-altering consequence. Wagenaar and Wolfson (1994:37) explain, “other leading causes of death and long-term disability for youth, such as suicide, homicide, assault, drowning, and recreational injury, involve alcohol in substantial proportion.”

Accumulated effects of chronic drinking could lead to long-term social consequences, such as a breakdown in family relationships or poor school performance (Brown and Tapert 2004). Long term health consequences from underage drinking could result as well. Recent research suggests that adolescent drinking can inflict permanent damage on the developing brain (Brown and Tapert 2004), foreshadowing problems with memory and reaction time.

Other health problems are related to underage drinking as well. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:64) note:

Heavy drinking during adolescence, especially if this behavior is continued in adulthood, places a person at risk of such health problems as pancreatitis, hepatitis, liver cirrhosis, hypertension, and anemia. Recent research suggests that drinking during puberty may have deleterious effects on bone density development for young women, failing to develop maximal bone density during adolescence puts them at risk later in life for osteoporosis.

Addiction may play a serious part in these long-term health problems surfacing. “Early onset of alcohol use greatly increases the probability of adult alcohol dependence”, as Bonnie and O’Connell suggest (2004:59); “young people who begin drinking before age 15 are significantly more likely to develop alcohol dependence than those who begin drinking at older ages.” Grant and Dawson (1997) further note that youth who begin drinking before the age of 15 have a 41 percent chance of future alcohol dependence, compared with a 10 percent chance for those who begin after the legal drinking age. Another important consideration is how pregnant teens abusing alcohol
may also contribute to health complications in the child, possibly resulting in developmental problems or later addiction.

Although biological considerations contribute to a deeper understanding of how different people may be affected by alcohol use, it is essential not to be reductionistic in attributing these characteristics to be reasons why people use initially and continuously. Vega and Murphy (1990:147) explain, “as a consequence of explaining social problems in biological terms, individualism is stressed. Social issues are equated with personal faults or maladaptation.” Vega and Murphy (1990:147) further note:

For if the individual is believed to be the source of most problems, the effects of sexism, racism, and other forms of institutional discrimination are not seen as worthy of attention. The focus of interventions can thus be extremely narrow, because the complex relationship between personal motives and social practices can be ignored.

Biological considerations may aid in targeting certain populations over others, but it is important to keep in mind the social implications to explain alcohol use, so that society does not escape blame for contributing to the social issue of substance abuse.

**Strategies to combat underage drinking.** Research suggests some possible strategies for decreasing the underage drinking rates. Of significant importance is the role of the family in socializing the adolescent to postpone drinking until the legal age. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004) suggest parental monitoring and involvement as key components in reducing adolescent alcohol use. In addition, community-based approaches involving parents, communications media, and the community in promoting norms against use seem to be effective (Hawkins et al. 1992).

Researchers are suggesting that changing the adolescent normative conception of alcohol usage may result in a decrease in underage drinking. Programs that teach young people skills for resisting influences to use alcohol help them develop strong norms
against use (Hawkins et al. 1992). Also, research conducted by Cialdini and colleagues (Cialdini et al. 1990; Kalgren, Reno and Cialdini 2000) point to the need to distinguish between descriptive norms (perceptions of what most others are doing) and injunctive norms (perception of what other people think one should be doing or not doing). They argue that focusing on injunctive norms is more effective at changing behavior than targeting only descriptive norms.

Also, extra-curricular activities may further distract teens from underage drinking. Youth who participate in after-school programs, such as sports, clubs, library-based activities, and youth-serving organizations are less likely to use alcohol than non-participants (Eccles and Barber 1999). A key strategy is for community-based efforts to be dependable. Hawkins et al. (1992:7) propose, “students need to be provided with consistent, extended drug education programs.” One-shot approaches, such as those that attempt to influence behavior only after one session or educational activity, seem to be ineffective at making any long-term behavior changes among adolescents.

**Current research on underage drinking in Alachua County**

Nationally, a higher percentage of youth aged 12 to 20 reported using alcohol (29%) than using tobacco (24%) or illicit drugs (14%), making underage drinking a leading public health problem in the United States. In Alachua County, the number of youth reporting engaging in alcohol use is even higher (32.7%) than the national or state average (National Community Anti-Drug Coalition Institute 2006). The social and environmental factors contributing to these statistics should be considered. It is important to note that the following cognitive, social and environmental influences may not only be present in Alachua County, but are found in various communities across the country. The point of significance is that there are actual signs of these issues (based on data from
surveys) being present in Alachua County. In addition, other issues may be present as well that are immeasurable or undetected at this time that, in the future, turn out to be relevant. Since the following influences do present themselves in Alachua County they will be discussed.

**Cognitive influence specific to Alachua County.** Key findings from the Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey (FYSAS) describe reported antisocial behavior among Alachua County’s youth, indicating youth are less likely to become involved with pro-social organizations and positive role models in their communities in comparison to previous years. Keeping in mind the literature linking antisocial behavior to substance abuse, Alachua County youth are reporting greater percentages of drug use and delinquent behavior that could negatively affect their lives and the larger community (Department of Children and Families 2003). These, as well as other adolescent cognitive influences always present in communities, contribute to these high rates of alcohol use.

**Social influences specific to Alachua County.** Research during the past 30 years supports the view that delinquency, alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use, school achievement, and other important outcomes in adolescence are associated with “risk” and “protective factors” (Appendix A) in the student’s community, school and family environments, as well as with characteristics of the individual (Hawkins et al. 1992). In fact, these risk and protective factors have been shown to be more important in understanding these behaviors than ethnicity, income or family structure (Blum, Beurhing, Shew, Bearing, Sieving, and Resnick 2000). There is a substantial amount of research showing that adolescents’ exposure to a greater number of risk factors is
associated with more drug use and delinquency. There is also evidence that exposure to a number of protective factors is associated with lower prevalence of these problem behaviors (Bry, McKeon and Pandina 1982; Newcomb, Maddahian and Skager 1987; Newcomb and Felix–Ortiz 1992; Newcomb 1995; Pollard, Hawkins, and Arthur 1999).

**Environmental influences specific to Alachua County.** Florida plays host to two of the top party schools in the nation, Florida State University and University of Florida. Specifically, Alachua County is home to the University of Florida, a powerhouse in football, and recently crowned winner of the NCAA Men’s National Title in basketball has much to celebrate (Appendix B).

Table 3: Alcohol Consumption in the United States, 1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State or Area</th>
<th>Ethanol*</th>
<th>Per Capita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>6,656</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>1,346</td>
<td>2.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>9,971</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>3,725</td>
<td>1.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>57,195</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>8,305</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>5,953</td>
<td>2.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>1,812</td>
<td>2.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>1,647</td>
<td>3.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Florida</strong></td>
<td><strong>32,773</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.66</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>14,019</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>2,212</td>
<td>2.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>2,355</td>
<td>2.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>22,337</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>9,371</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>4,601</td>
<td>1.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>3,925</td>
<td>1.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>5,662</td>
<td>1.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>8,678</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>2,348</td>
<td>2.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>8,740</td>
<td>2.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>12,290</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>16,625</td>
<td>2.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>9,189</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>4,801</td>
<td>2.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>9,962</td>
<td>2.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3. Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State or Area</th>
<th>Ethanol*</th>
<th>Per Capita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>1,828</td>
<td>2.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>2,979</td>
<td>2.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>5,765</td>
<td>4.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
<td>3,943</td>
<td>4.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>14,416</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>3,308</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>28,187</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>12,241</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>1,264</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>18,203</td>
<td>2.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>4,624</td>
<td>1.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>6,239</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>18,723</td>
<td>1.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>1,936</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>7,590</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Dakota</td>
<td>1,354</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>8,468</td>
<td>1.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>35,677</td>
<td>2.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>2,105</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>1,144</td>
<td>2.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>11,107</td>
<td>1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>9,962</td>
<td>2.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>2,492</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>11,664</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>961</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Ethanol is the alcohol consumption measure used. Data from National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (2002). (Bonnie and O’Connell 2004).

Unfortunately, its wet environment, with the density of bars and the consistent marketing and advertising of alcohol further normalizing its use, Alachua County is a ripe environment for underage drinking to occur. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:81) note:

Research suggests that a ‘wetter’ environment may provide adolescents with more social occasions to drink, more positive attitudes about drinking, more advertising and outlets, and more lenient regulations concerning the sale and consumption of alcohol. In short, such environments have an enabling effect on underage drinking.

As suggested, Alachua County’s environmental influence on adolescents should also be taken into account when considering rates of alcohol use, if any true initiative is to be made. In addition, environmental influences and how they relate to social and
cognitive influences should be noted. According to the October 2003 issue of High Times Magazine, the University of Florida is the number one “Counterculture College” in America. This fact highlights the availability of substances and makes the county’s middle and high school students more at-risk for substance abuse, as they attempt to emulate the college students and “model up” to their behavior in a search for individual autonomy.

These previously mentioned influences should be conceptualized as interrelated in contributing to the issue of substance abuse in Alachua County. All of these factors make this community unique, and these characteristics should be considered when coalition building efforts are being designed.

Theoretical Framework Of PIPSA

Criminological Theory

Within the field of criminology there are many theories and conceptions of crime. Cullen and Agnew (2003:1) suggest:

Like much social behavior, crime is multifaceted and potentially shaped by a range of factors that operate inside and outside individuals, that exist on the macro and the micro level, and that have effects across various points in the life cycle.

PIPSA has two main theories central to its program: Social Learning Theory with a Life Course Perspective. Both will be explained in more detail in the following paragraphs.

Learning Theory

Even within learning theory, there are many theorists with varying viewpoints. However, the underlying beliefs among the theorists are similar in a few important respects. Behavior is learned through interaction with other social actors, and more importantly, crime is learned in the same way. Cullen and Agnew (2003:6) explain,
“crime is learned through associations with criminal definitions. These definitions might be generally approving of criminal conduct or be neutralizations that justify crime only under certain circumstances.” Thus, interacting with individuals who participate in crime encourages a person to conduct criminal behavior, since the interactions are reinforcing this behavior, whatever the degree may be.

Particularly relevant to PIPSA’s program is Catalano and Hawkins’ “Communities That Care” strategy. It is a community-based strategy to create long-term support for behavior change. Hawkins et al. (1992:19) explain:

Involving the whole community facilitates widespread communication to achieve consistent norms about drug use and the need for prevention, as well as knowledge about risk and protective factors. A community-wide approach can also promote the development of strong bonds to family, school, and the community itself among young people. Because community approaches are likely to involve a wide spectrum of individuals, groups, and organizations, they create a broad base of support for behavior change.

Unhealthy behaviors like underage alcohol use are looked at as unacceptable among a wider audience, guarding against the behavior. Akers (1990:660) states, “the full behavioral formula in social learning theory includes both positive and negative punishment and positive and negative reinforcement.” Catalano and Hawkins’ “risk” and “protective factors” rely on this basic premise.

In theory, this support from those involved in the behavior change process leads to long-term change. Hawkins et al. (1992:19) state, “programs and strategies gradually become integrated into the regular services and activities of local organizations and institutions.” With this in mind, the importance of a thoughtful strategy, tailored to the specific community it hopes to address, should be stressed. Catalano and Hawkins advocate for every community to develop their own programs and strategies that are relevant to the community it hopes to reach. Also, “the community mobilizations strategy
of “Communities That Care” is not meant to be a rigid approach” (Hawkins et al. 1992:19). As expressed by the authors, the design allows for flexibility.

**Life-Course Perspective**

Jary and Jary (1991:277) explain, “life-course is the process of personal change from infancy through to old age and death, brought about as a result of the interaction between biographical events and society events.” Its focus is on socio-historical processes contributing to human action at various points over the life-course. Sampson and Laub (1997:9) suggest, “individual lives are studied through time, with particular attention devoted to aging, cohort effects, historical context, and the social influence of age-graded transitions.”

Sampson and Laub (1997:8) further note:

The long-term view embodied by the life-course focus on trajectories implies a strong connection between childhood events and experiences in adulthood. However, the simultaneous shorter-term view also implies that transitions or turning points can modify life trajectories – they can redirect paths.

Although this view is not accepted by all life-course theorists, this offers incredible hope to community-based approaches as they attempt to prevent initial users and “redirect” current substance abusers. Programs will be most effective if they are sensitive to the developmental needs and capabilities of particular age populations.

Life-course criminologists study crime over the life span. As previously mentioned, people are thought to be influenced differently by events at different stages in the life-course. More importantly, what may be an effective intervention for someone at one point may not be at another. Community-based programs that attempt to incorporate the life-course perspective should reflect these considerations.
Life-course criminologists generally speak in terms of three stages of development: childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. The goal is to understand the stability and changes in criminal behavior through time and over different stages of development. Cullen and Agnew (2003:7) state, “crime causation is a developmental process that starts before birth and continues throughout the life course. Individual factors interact with social factors to determine the onset, length, and end of criminal careers.” Life-course proponents agree childhood is a time when criminal behavior begins, but they argue over why continuity or change in behavior varies over the life-course, creating either “life-course persistent offenders” or “adolescent limited offenders.” Some researchers believe criminal behavior is predetermined while others believe it is context-dependent. Arguing the former statement, Moffitt (1990:100) states, “most recently, neuropsychological measures have come to be used as research tools for identifying brain dysfunctions that may characterize groups who display syndromes of deviant or pathological behaviors.”

“Adolescent limited offenders” use criminal behavior as a statement of independence throughout their adolescent years. Although they begin to resist anti-social behavior in adulthood as the “maturity gap” closes by adult conventional norms becoming available. A job to pay for purchases may decrease the likelihood of stealing, marriage may limit risky sexual activity, and becoming a parent may encourage maintaining job security – limiting actions that may disrupt employment. “Life-course persistent offenders” may experience a gap between biological and social maturity, creating a source of discontent and motivation towards crime or deviance over the life-course. Sampson and Laub’s age-graded theory of informal social control suggests that
deviance is natural. People must be controlled from following their natural feelings; otherwise they’ll participate in anti-social deviant behavior.

Over the life-course, people experience different types of social control. In childhood, social bonds with parents and family are primary. Social bonds between parent and child are important sources of control. Children who are bonded well to parents and report strong attachment to school are less likely to commit delinquent acts than those who have weak social bonds (Hawkins et al. 1992). In adolescence, peers appear to have a greater influence affecting social controls Hawkins et al. 1992).

Adulthood offers marriage and employment as primary sources of control. Sampson and Laub (1997) suggest that change can occur at any stage in the life-course, as long as strong conventional bonds are developed in the individual.

Life-course research suggests that if crime prevention is the goal, intervention should start early and focus on fostering social bonds between children and their families. Since late adolescents/early adults are more willing to seek conventional behavior, timing is crucial in knowing what strategies to employ when targeting this group. Within each developmental stage, priority must be given to building and strengthening positive social bonds between the appropriate community members. Each developmental stage requires unique support systems that may be useful only during that stage.

**Community-Based Coalitions**

Community-based coalitions are vehicles for creating cohesion among its members. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:216) advocate, “in a democratic society, the mobilization of communities in civic life is in and of itself of significant value. Democratic life relies on civic participation and an active informed citizenry.” Through open dialogue, community members are able to set acceptable standards of its people, and work to encourage the
rehabilitation of those who need it most, in order to ensure the health of its citizenry. Bogenschneider (1996:132) states, “consistent with the notion that development occurs in context, consensus seems to be emerging that the most appropriate place for solving problems is where they occur – in communities.” Lerner and Miller (1992) suggest the increase in local collaborative efforts has led some to call the 1990’s the ‘decade of community coalitions for children’.

Many agree with the current research showing that local residents are capable of bringing about change in areas important to them (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton 1985; Gardner 1989; Lofquist 1983; McKnight and Kretzman 1992). Also, “in some large states, such as California, local coalitions have sometimes had greater success than statewide efforts” (Bonnie and O’Connell:218). A more localized approach makes the strategy more personal and allows it to take a shape that is more tailored to the problems present in the community it hopes to address. The effort needs to be community-wide to make a lasting impact on it residents. Research shows, “that even when school programs change behavior, this success is short-lived in the absence of community norms that support the program goals” (Bogenschneider 1996:133).

**Effectiveness Of Community-Based Coalitions**

We have previously addressed the strength community coalitions have in mobilizing community efforts. Now it is important to suggest their effectiveness in dealing with issues relating to youth. Solutions to youth problem behaviors are too complex to be dealt with by any one single organization (Albee 1983). Community-based coalitions involving varied agencies and organizations throughout the community are necessary in dealing with the issues more comprehensively.
Community coalitions have broad goals of changing the infrastructure to the social issue being addressed. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:217) further explain, “community-based prevention research points to the importance of broad efforts to reshape the physical, social, economic, and legal environment affecting alcoholism.” Also, they attempt to generate public awareness, knowledge and concern for the issue to ensure long-term efforts. Gwaltney (2005:8) explains, “despite ‘truth’ campaigns, Surgeon General warnings, multiple treatments, and other important advances, too many adolescents still start smoking annually and relapse is still the norm following a quit attempt.” Unlike one-shot educational approaches like the American Legacy Foundation’s “Truth” campaign or Philip Morris’s “Think. Don’t Smoke” campaign, or extended programs like the D.A.R.E. program, which have been suggested to be ineffective, the PIPSA coalition is aiming to change the physical, social, economic, and political climate of drinking in Alachua County, particularly within underage youth populations in the hopes of making long-term changes in the community relating to alcohol use. The General Accounting Office (2003:3) pulled together a literature review on the D.A.R.E. program, in which they cited six long-term evaluations done during the 1990’s that found no significant difference between students who received the D.A.R.E. program and those who did not.

Community-based coalitions have been effective in dealing with substance abuse issues, more specifically, alcohol-related problems. As Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:216) note:

Although most community coalitions have not been rigorously evaluated, several community trials provide evidence that community coalitions can affect alcohol-related outcomes and also document the elements that make community initiatives
successful. In addition, numerous case studies and substantial qualitative research attest to the effectiveness of community coalitions.

Pentz, Dwyer, MacKinnon, Flay, Hansen, Wang, and Johnson (1989) further note, comprehensive community collaborations have proven to be an effective method for preventing such youth problems as alcohol and drug abuse. In more specific ways, a community-based coalition can contribute to reductions in underage drinking. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:217) suggest:

It can help to create the political will and organizational support for developing and implementing proven strategies for decreasing underage drinking (such as minimum age drinking laws, zero tolerance laws, and measures to reduce physical availability and outlet concentration). It can help change the normative climate surrounding the acceptability of underage drinking, and create greater awareness of, and publicity about, enforcement activities, such as random breath testing and sting operations. It also helps to establish the idea that alcohol and other drugs are a community problem that local people can solve, thereby increasing the likelihood that people will support and sustain efforts they help create.

Community-based coalitions clearly have credibility in addressing substance abuse issues like underage drinking. Research suggests that certain strategies are more effective than others though.

**Suggested Strategies Employing Community-Based Coalitions**

Research has suggested many successful strategies in employing community-based coalitions. Hingson and Howard (2002) suggest that if community coalitions are to be successful, they must employ a variety of techniques such as educational programs, community organization, environmental policy changes, use of media, and law enforcement practices that correspond to the policies in place. It is in the combination of the strategies that success is gained. As discussed, there is no one way to reduce underage drinking. Successful community-based groups should include various techniques from a variety of sources in the community.
It is important for communities to collaborate with neighboring colleges and universities, such as in Gainesville where a college affects drinking behavior, to effectively impact the community at large. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:226) note:

Effective restrictions on underage access to alcohol in a community may be severely undermined by the ease of alcohol in the campus living communities. The reverse is also true: even a substantial campus-based alcohol prevention strategy cannot succeed if it is surrounded by a community with easy access to alcohol.

Also, college-community partnerships may save time and money by developing joint grant proposals, giving further credence to the initiative by showing its overlapping support by both the college and community. It is for these reasons collaboration with neighboring institutions is strongly suggested. Research shows that consistency of policy between campus and community contributes to success. As Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:227) state, “colleges working with local police can enhance the consistency of enforcement efforts by notifying one another of alcohol-related incidents and by seeking timely and meaningful sanctions.” This communication is small in terms of cost, but has been known to improve the drinking scene dramatically and reinforce the collective efforts both the local police and campus police are working towards. There has also been success in employing media to target underage drinking. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:217) note:

Case studies have documented how communities have organized and used the news media to support changes in alcohol availability, reductions in outdoor advertising of alcohol, increased compliance checks on retailers regarding service and sales of alcohol to minors, keg registration laws…. 

The media can be a wonderful vehicle for getting important details out regarding upcoming activities as well. In addition, they may broadcast or recap important efforts by community-based coalitions, like town hall meetings.
School-based initiatives have had a long history in targeting underage drinking. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:193) suggest, “delivery of such programming through schools offers the benefits of reaching a wide (and captive) audience, as most young people (especially elementary and middle-school-aged children) are enrolled in school.” Also, school-based initiatives allow programs to be disseminated at specific developmental intervals. Some would argue this is essential considering the life-course perspective (Steinberg 1991). Since youth are reporting initial drinking between the ages 12 to 14, programs need to begin reaching them prior to this age. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:193) state what does not seem to work in school-based initiatives:

Many early drug education curricula that relied on factual information about alcohol and other drugs, including information on the negative consequences of use, or fear arousal were based on the theory that adolescents who used alcohol and drugs had insufficient knowledge about the consequences of use and that increased information would make them more likely to decide not to use drugs.

These programs have not been shown to affect behavior, for cognitive reasons previously mentioned for adolescents beginning to use initially. “School-based initiatives that use normative education to undermine youth beliefs that alcohol use is prevalent among their peers and that peers universally approve of this behavior appear to have promise” (Bonnie and O’Connell 2004:194). Also, programs that take a critical look at the cultural messages the media is sending and the targeting tactics used to capitalize, monetarily, on a wider audience may even work. Regardless of the content, it has been suggested that “educational programs demonstrated to reduce alcohol use and abuse have all been highly interactive” (Bonnie and O’Connell 2004:197). Dryfoos (1990) suggests intervention needs to be early, and continuous for it to facilitate long-term change. Also, Empowerment theory offers that youth should be involved in the decision-making process in order to get them invested (Lofquist 1983).
Federal and state governments may also be instrumental in decreasing underage drinking. Community-based coalitions may suggest they do a variety of tasks to improve the well-being of the people they serve. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:232) note:

Federal and state governments should coordinate and monitor the various components, including providing the data and research needed to assess and improve the strategy. The third role is to increase alcohol excise taxes to both reduce consumption and provide funds to support the strategy. There is strong and well-documented evidence of the effects of raising taxes on consumption, particularly among youth.

The federal government oversees three national surveys, reporting the prevalence of underage drinking: the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), and Monitoring the Future (MTF). Overall trends seem generally consistent across surveys. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:236) further note, “currently the federal government does not report regularly on activities across the various agencies that fund targeted underage drinking activities, and evaluating the effect of those activities, as it does for illegal drugs.” Efforts from the government to report findings, especially discrepancies between agencies, would provide a clearer picture of what the underage drinking scene is like. With this knowledge, programs can more effectively plan strategies.

Within a community coalition, a broad range of organizations may be acceptable, or a focused selection may work best together, depending on the needs of the community. Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:218) explain, “there is some evidence that coalition partners with strong ties to alcohol producers may not support effective environmental interventions.” Sometimes it is counterproductive to have members who have vested interests in alcohol production or sales, since they may be given the power to veto alternative intervention strategies that might affect their productivity. Bonnie and
O’Connell (2004:217) further note, “having the flexibility to choose one’s partners has been an important ingredient in the success of many effective coalitions.” Also, “work-based interventions may also serve to reach a population of young people who are not exposed to school-based interventions” (Bonnie and O’Connell 2004:210). It is the employer’s duty to the community to provide work-place alcohol prevention programs to warn against the dangers and repercussions it might have on job productivity and possibly job security. The employer knows, “a full-or part-time job provides discretionary money that young people may choose to spend on alcohol” (Bonnie and O’Connell 2004:210). The business segment of a community has many resources and should be considered when developing community coalitions.

Although not much research has been conducted with faith-based approaches, “family involvement in faith-based institutions, religiosity, and spirituality all have been shown in research to reduce the risk for adolescent substance use” (Bonnie and O’Connell 2004:196). Also, parents have shown to be a positive source of socialization. Community-based programs “can provide parents with skills and motivation for actively monitoring and supervising their children” (Bonnie and O’Connell 2004:196). Both faith-based approaches and parental involvement have been shown to be successful in decreasing underage drinking.

Strategies employing healthcare staff and facilities are suggested to be successful as well. Healthcare staff may come across to adolescents as impartial, possibly allowing them to hear the dangers of alcohol use and abuse in a more sincere manner. As noted by Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:209), “emerging research suggests that physician rates of screening adolescents for alcohol use can be improved (from an average of 59 percent to
76 percent) by training physicians on knowledge, attitudes, and skills that are necessary to create behavior change.” This is another area of community-based initiatives that has only recently been addressed.

Scientifically-based strategies are strongly recommended when implementing alcohol prevention programs. “It is important for communities to rely on scientifically-based strategies to reduce underage drinking,” combining environmental and social change with theory-based approaches (Bonnie and O’Connell 2004:217). Employing strategies that have been proven ineffective could lead to an exhaustion of resources and wasted time, without any real social change.

Attention to irresponsible sale, promotion, and marketing of alcohol are essential to eliminating the culture of underage drinking, in addition to controlling the alcohol availability to youth. As suggested by Bonnie and O’Connell (2004:218), “recent cross-sectional research has shown a correlation between outlet density and underage drinking.” Decreasing the number of bars may lessen market competition, resulting in fewer alcohol specials trying to attract underage drinkers to their establishment over another.

Key leaders in the community are important to include. Some may not be able to participate regularly, but just by their affiliation they give the coalition credence. Key leaders who are active participants can increase support and awareness in ways other coalition members may not have the contacts to do.

This chapter laid out the implications of alcohol use and abuse among underage populations. It also described the drinking scene in Alachua County, the target population of the PIPSA coalition. PIPSA’s suggested theoretical framework expressed the
foundations the coalition was based on, as well how the coalition generally intends to approach its community members. Literature describing the effectiveness of community coalitions in response to social issues such as underage drinking was provided to show the worth of PIPSA efforts and to express what this coalition aims to accomplish. Suggestions for strengthening the coalition, based on prior literature, were presented. These will be addressed in later chapters to highlight the PIPSA program’s strengths and weaknesses. Before this can be done, a deeper insight into the PIPSA program is necessary. The following chapter expresses PIPSA’s immediate priority and the goal of the study in more detail.
CHAPTER 3
PARTNERS IN PREVENTION OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE (PIPSA) COALITION

The following chapter provides a more in-depth look at the PIPSA coalition. The program history is outlined and a description of the Alachua County setting is detailed. Also, attention is called to PIPSA’s program theory, both in the form of its program impact theory and its program process theory. Their new focus on underage drinking is explained as well as PIPSA’s immediate priority, program evaluation. A formative evaluation in the form of this study is offered as a necessary step in moving towards an evaluative program.

Program History

Partners in Prevention of Substance Abuse (PIPSA) was established in 1999 by founding partners Corner Drug Store, Inc., UF Center for Cooperative Learning and Department of Psychiatry, and the School Board of Alachua County. Originally, it received funding through an Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) Drug Free Communities Grant, which was part of a five-year project that aimed to create a coalition in every county by the year 2004 that dealt with local problems specific to that community. The grant was matched dollar for dollar by the Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida. PIPSA is “a combination of several local agencies, businesses and community members in the Alachua County area that meet to discuss and plan ways to make our community drug free” (Corner Drug Store Incorporated 2006). It is a level one prevention program that is non-client specific, meaning they do not track individual client outcomes.
PIPSA’s original mission was to reduce the prevalence of problem behaviors (such as alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use) among the community’s youth and to strengthen PIPSA and develop a long-term (over the life-course) anti-drug initiative with citizen involvement. The term “prevalence” refers to the total number of existing cases of problem behaviors in Alachua County (Rossi et al. 2004). PIPSA hoped to focus primarily on the youth of Alachua County, with program activities geared to them, but also welcomed all residents of Alachua County to make a life-long commitment to this community initiative. The program is currently not funded and is hoping to procure future funding once evaluation pieces may be done to show the program’s merit.

**Alachua County**

First I will describe the setting. Next, I will discuss PIPSA’s program theory. Alachua County includes the cities of Alachua, Archer, Gainesville, Hawthorne, High Springs, La Crosse, Melrose, Micanopy, Newberry, Waldo and significant non urban areas. In Table 4 the total estimated population in 2004 was 223,090, with 20.2% making up the under 18 population (Department of Children and Families 2003). Considering the underage drinking level is twenty-one, PIPSA’s target population is a slightly larger percentage than 20.2% (Department of Children and Families 2003). This means slightly more than 20 out of every one hundred people PIPSA hopes to reach in order to intervene or prevent their use of alcohol. In terms of income, the median household income of Alachua County residents is approximately seven thousand less than the Florida average. Roughly twenty-three percent of the Alachua County population is below the poverty level, as compared to Florida’s state average of 12 percent (Department of Children and Families 2003). Considering transportation and participation costs, free and easily accessible prevention programs should be especially available in Alachua County. Age,
gender and race categories for Alachua County all have similar rates when compared to the Florida average. Therefore, there are no notable considerations that need to be made for Alachua County in regard to changing the current allocation of funding resources based on these categories. Focus group participants suggested Alachua County to be currently the highest funded county within its surrounding 11 counties, due to its population. Attention should be focused on the patterns found in juvenile offenses in Alachua County. Most crimes are committed during the week and in the daytime (Department of Children and Families 2003). Successful prevention activities need to accommodate youth at times they are most vulnerable to participate in crime. With 11 percent of drug offenses being committed by youth in Alachua County, it may be suggested that prevention activities from the PIPSA coalition could be more successful in reaching its target audience.

Table 4: Alachua County Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Alachua County</th>
<th>Florida</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LAND AREA</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Square miles (2000 est.)</td>
<td>874</td>
<td>53,927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons per square mile (2000 est.)</td>
<td>249.3</td>
<td>296.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POPULATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population (2004 est.)</td>
<td>223,090</td>
<td>17,019,068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population, percent change (2000-2004)</td>
<td>2.4%+</td>
<td>8.8%+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households (2000 est.)</td>
<td>87,509</td>
<td>6,337,929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons per household</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>2.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AGE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 5 years old (2000 est.)</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 18 years old (2000 est.)</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-64, percent (2000 est.)</td>
<td>70.2%</td>
<td>59.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 years old and over (2000 est.)</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENDER</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (2000 est.)</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male (2000 est.)</td>
<td>48.8%</td>
<td>48.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RACE</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%White (2000 est.)</td>
<td>73.5%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black/African American (2000 est.)</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Hispanic or Latino origin (2000 est.)</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4. Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Alachua County</th>
<th>Florida</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persons reporting two or more races (2000 est.)</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INCOME</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median household income (1999 est.)</td>
<td>$31,426</td>
<td>$38,819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduates, % 25+ (2000 est.)</td>
<td>88.1%</td>
<td>79.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree or higher, %25+ (2000 est.)</td>
<td>38.7%</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POVERTY PREVALENCE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons below poverty, percent (1999 est.)</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children below poverty, percent (1997 est.)</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JUVENILE OFFENSES (2004 est.)</strong></td>
<td>2,180 (2% ^)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two most common days of the week to commit Offense (2004 est.)</td>
<td>Thursday (16.6%)</td>
<td>Friday (16.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three most common time of day to commit Offense</td>
<td>3-6pm freq. 399 (18.3%)</td>
<td>12-3pm freq. 393 (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug offense (2004 est.)</td>
<td>240 (11% of offenses committed by juveniles)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Department of Children and Families 2003). 2004 Alachua County Statistics.

**Program Theory**

In this section, I outline PIPSA’s program theory. This explains why the program does what it does and provides the rationale for expecting that doing so will achieve the desired results (Rossi et al. 2004). PIPSA follows Catalano and Hawkins’s Social Development Theory (see Figure 3). The strategy is to begin with a goal of healthy behaviors for all children and youth. In order for young people to develop healthy behaviors, adults must communicate healthy behaviors and clear standards for behavior to young people. Bonding (an attached, committed relationship) between a child and an adult who communicates healthy beliefs and clear standards motivates the child to follow healthy beliefs and clear standards. A child who creates this bond with an adult is less likely to threaten the relationship by violating the beliefs and standards held by the adult
(Catalano and Hawkins 1996). Hawkins and Catalano suggest that bonding is dependent on three conditions (Catalano and Hawkins 1996). Children need appropriate opportunities for meaningful involvement with a positive social group, such as their community, family, and school. Children need the emotional, cognitive, social and behavioral skills to successfully take advantage of opportunities. Lastly, children must be recognized for their involvement.

Figure 3: Program Theory: Social Development Strategy

The Goal:
Healthy Behaviors* for all children and youth

Start with (strong support system*):
Healthy Beliefs and Clear Standards
(in families, schools, communities and peer groups)

Build:
Bonding*
(Attachment & Commitment to families, schools, communities and peer groups)

By providing:
Opportunities in families, schools, communities and peer groups
(Ex. jobs, social situations, etc…)

By providing:
Skills in families, schools, communities and peer groups
(Ex. workshops, counseling, good parenting skills from community agencies)

By providing:
Recognition in families, schools, communities and peer groups
(Ex. Certification in community programs Informed Families, Knight Vision)

And by nurturing:
Individual Characteristics (Protective factors based on cultural values)
Healthy Behaviors include being totally free from substance abuse, promoting the same in others, raising drug-free children. (Since social norms encourage the escalation of substance abuse, it is ideal to curb initiation of these behaviors.)

Theory of affecting social norms: It may take years to change the ideas in the population, but the community must start with a strong support system that provides clear standards and healthy beliefs. (Ex. of values that are not healthy or clear standards - Collecting keys at a party, so children may stay and drink all evening encourages binge drinking and lack of responsibility).

Bonding is created among community members. When clear messages (as opposed to “mixed messages”) are conveyed, a sense of safety is maintained (Catalano and Hawkins 1996).

**Program impact theory**

In this section, I explain PIPSA’s impact theory (see Figure 4). An impact theory consists of assumptions about the change process actuated by the program and the improved conditions that are expected to result (Rossi et al. 2004). PIPSA’s stated impact theory is that by providing information to community members (through community agencies) it will build strong “protective factors” (possibly changing attitudes/motivation regarding substances) as barriers to “risk factors” to prevent initial or continued drug abuse (see Appendix A).
Catalano and Hawkins’ Social Development Strategy seems to emphasize focusing on “protective factors,” in order to prevent initial or continued drug abuse. In practice, PIPSA activities actually focus both on “protective factors” and “risk factors.” Educational workshops and Drug Summits include information regarding examples from...
both categories. CADCA suggests focusing on both, with the goal of prevention to be changing the balance so “protective factors” outweigh “risk factors” (National Community Anti-Drug Coalition Institute 2006).

Alachua County community agencies recruit youth to attend PIPSA events by interagency, e-mails, word-of-mouth, flyers, and posters. In theory, attendance and participation at these educational events (workshops, drug summits, Red Ribbon Awareness activities) lead to a pro-social environment for the individual with “protective factors” being built. These strong “protective factors” guard against “risk factors” and prevent the initial or continued use of substances. Without substance abuse, the individual is more capable of being physically and emotionally healthy, both individually and for his/her community.

Measurable outcomes showing the individual’s “healthy” lifestyle may be either proximal or distal. Proximal outcomes would be the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and behavioral intentions. For example, youth may model their mentor’s values and behavior, or youth may use their leisure time more constructively (i.e. hanging out with family, going to church, doing homework) strengthening the “protective factors” even more. Distal outcomes might be a decrease in problem behaviors (alcohol, tobacco and drug use) over an extended period of time.

Program process theory

In order for any outcome to occur, the services must be delivered to the target populations. The service utilization plan is constituted by the program’s assumptions and expectations about how to reach the target population, provide and sequence service contacts, and conclude the relationship when services are no longer needed or appropriate (Rossi et al. 2004). Currently, participants are recruited by local advertising in ways
discussed below. These are considered the best ways (considering the resources available) to reach PIPSA’s large target population. Alachua County residents (both youth and adults) are offered the same types of educational training and awareness activities. This should lead to the strengthening of the individual’s pro-social environment (building “protective factors” as barriers to “risk factors”), since there is a clear message being broadcast to all who may come in contact with the individual. The process does not conclude, but is cyclical. Each year the same activities are offered, with the idea in mind that, the more an individual participates, the stronger their pro-social environment will become.

Examples of educational trainings include bi-monthly educational workshops and the Annual Regional Drug Summit, advertised through flyers, posters, and list-serve e-mails to community agencies (that they post and announce as well). Adults are always able to become members of the coalition, as are youth, but youth also have a special invite offered to them at the Annual Regional Drug Summit that encourages them to become peer leaders and to join the Youth Advisory Committee (a sub-committee within PIPSA). If they join this, they are expected to: attend bi-weekly meetings to discuss youth problems in the community; help the committee develop/revise youth goals for their peers in Alachua County; and implement activities that will achieve these goals. Currently, the sub-committee is being formed, so goals and activities have not been established. Adults and youth are also encouraged to participate in substance abuse community awareness activities.

Examples of awareness activities include legislative activities, “Family Day”, and “Red Ribbon Week”. Legislative activities encourage community members to take action
to combat substance abuse in forms of letter campaigns (highlighting the irresponsibility of print and radio ads that advocate binge drinking), Op Ed pieces, Letters to the Editor, and trips to Washington, D.C. (Day at the Capital). Family Day encourages families to make dinner time a family affair. The goal of the project is to have 5,000 families pledge to eat together on Family Day (last year, it was Monday, September 26, 2005) and to make eating together a family a priority throughout the year. Increasing time spent strengthening a pro-social environment builds “protective factors” as barriers to “risk factors.” Red Ribbon Week is a campaign honoring Enrique Camarena, a DEA agent who lost his life while working undercover in Mexico investigating a major drug cartel. The belief behind this campaign is that even one person can make a difference. Activities include youth poster and essay contests that encourage and reward creative ways to get out the message of substance abuse. A luncheon is held at the end of the week to acknowledge and applaud the efforts of those participating, in an effort to recognize community members (further strengthening their pro-social environment).

**PIPSA’s New Focus: Underage Drinking**

PIPSA would like to specifically focus activities on combating underage drinking, since this is their new primary concern. This study will aid PIPSA in brainstorming for new activities, as well as connecting these activities with the organizational plan. The organizational plan relates to program resources, personnel, administration, and the general organization of the program (Rossi et al. 2004). Factors that are important for PIPSA to maintain this service delivery system are interagency collaboration and citizen involvement. It is crucial for PIPSA to have each sector (law enforcement, education, social services, health, parents, government, civic, faith-based, and business) of the community represented in the coalition. Their efforts need to be coordinated by a
governing body – the executive board of PIPSA. This board organizes educational trainings and awareness activities and encourages the sectors to disseminate this information to community members they have contact with. Monthly meetings (at an Executive Board member’s place of work- presently The Corner Drug Store) are important for this transaction of information to take place. They then can go back to their respective agencies (with no additional facilities required) and broadcast the importance of the upcoming events in the community, encourage participation and offer these opportunities for community members to seek information regarding a prevalent social issue that may exist as close as their very home.

**Formative Evaluation**

PIPSA is currently in the process of revising their organizational plan in order to more effectively reach their target population and to develop a plan that can eventually be evaluated in terms of its process and impact. Evaluation is essential to ensure future funding, since most grants are now awarded to evidence-based programs. The program is not capable of being evaluated based on its current program structure. Even though this program has been in Alachua County for seven years, it is still in need of a more refined program design. The past two years the program has been completely unfunded and PIPSA is going through changes still, adopting CADCA’s Strategic Prevention Framework. Also, a Youth Advisory Committee was just newly appointed as a PIPSA sub-committee and has yet to draft goals and objectives. These changes in goals and objectives no doubt will affect the service utilization and organization aspects of the PIPSA program. It is necessary to speak with coalition members to coordinate feedback on the changes of the coalition and the resources and possible activities PIPSA could offer the community, centered on the new primary concern of underage drinking.
Most often evaluations provide a singular focus on program improvement, accountability or knowledge generation. Scriven (1991) notes, a formative evaluation is intended to furnish information for guiding program improvement and its purpose is to help form or shape the program to perform better. A formative evaluation is best suited for PIPSA to help clarify the needs of the target population, improve program operations, and enhance the quality of service delivery (Rossi et al. 2004) since impact assessments are most appropriate for mature, stable programs with a well-defined program model and a clear use for the results that justify the effort required (Rossi et al. 2004).

Rossi et al. (2004:34) explain, “the audiences for formative evaluations typically are program planners, administrators, oversight boards, or funders with an intent in optimizing the program’s effectiveness.” Following the idea of a formative evaluation, this study will explore the needs of the target population, improvements in program operations, and service delivery possibilities through the eyes of the coalition members. It will incorporate feedback from them regarding program operations and service delivery in order to create a comprehensive list of current as well as newly suggested activities that are directly related to the program’s process and impact theories concerning to underage drinking. At this point, the PIPSA program does not coordinate the available resources from participating coalition members and their respective agencies in a comprehensive effort to reduce problem behaviors in Alachua County, let alone their new goal. Following CADCA’s Strategic Prevention Framework, it is first necessary to identify the resources available to PIPSA through its coalition members, and their participating agencies. The goal of the study is to develop a comprehensive response to the problem behavior addressed (currently underage drinking). The duty of the coalition
will be to use this formative evaluation to create a feasible organizational plan including only the activities they agree to include in the program, and monitor the process and impact of these activities over periods of time to evaluate the programs strengths and weaknesses. With feedback from all sectors, PIPSA can offer a more community-based approach and increase the awareness and involvement of the program in Alachua County, further strengthening its impact.

This chapter expressed the PIPSA coalition’s efforts in more detail, allowing for a better understanding of its history and its desired future. The next chapter will present the ontological, epistemological and methodological approaches that will be employed in this study, as well as any accompanying limitations that may be associated.
CHAPTER 4
STUDY DESIGN

This chapter gives the ontological, epistemological, and methodological background of the study. Since focus groups were the primary method in this study, time is dedicated to explaining the benefits and limitations of this method. More specific details regarding the focus group design employed in this study are offered as well, such as focus group questions and materials used in the study. Following this, analysis procedures in applying Strauss and Corbin’s Grounded Theory are described. Lastly, overall limitations of the study design are addressed.

Ontology

The principal investigator approached this study within a constructivist paradigm. As Schwandt (1994:118) notes:

Proponents of these persuasions share the goal of understanding the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it. This goal is variously spoken of as an abiding concern for the life world, for the emic point of view, for understanding meaning, for grasping the actor’s definition of a situation, for Verstehen. The world of lived reality and situation-specific meanings that constitute the general object of investigation is thought to be constructed by social actors. That is, particular actors, in particular places, at particular times, fashion meaning out of events and phenomena through prolonged, complex processes of social interaction involving history, language, and action.

This constructivist paradigm assumes a relativist ontology, suggesting multiple realities do exist. Hazelrigg (1989) stresses the importance in keeping this mindset by focusing on the practice of the researcher: who we are, what we do, what world we make. By distancing research from the God’s eye point of view, we accept the logic that research is dependent on both the social and historical setting. More importantly,
whatever results researchers produce because of this should be dealt with in a considerate manner. Denzin and Lincoln (2003:441) note, “the problem is that to continue to employ the language of a ‘discovered world’ is to continue a passivity in regard to responsibility for the world.” This is not to say that research is unproductive, but that a multiplicity of realities exists and all studies, especially within the social sciences, should approach knowledge with this notion, since it is a result of perspective.

**Epistemology**

A subjectivist epistemology was employed, understanding that the researcher and respondent co-created meanings throughout the focus groups. As mentioned previously, “these constructions are influenced by specific historical, geopolitical, and cultural practices and discourses, and by the intentions – noble and otherwise- of those doing the constructing” (Denzin and Lincoln 2003:598). It is the researcher’s responsibility to understand people’s construction of meanings in the context being studied. This constructivist (or interpretivist) approach is undeniably subjectivist – “the inquirer’s worldview becomes part of the construction and representation of meaning in any particular context,” with “inquirer bias, experience, expertise, and insight all part of the meanings constructed and inscribed” (Denzin and Lincoln 2003:598). With this in mind, a different researcher would most likely yield different results, with interpretation stemming from individual beliefs and values.

**Methodology**

Natural settings are considered the best context for researchers employing constructivism, “with the human inquirer as the primary gatherer and interpreter of meaning, with qualitative methods, with emergent inquiry designs, and with contextual, holistic understanding, in contrast to interventionist prediction and control, as the overall
goal of inquiry” (Denzin and Lincoln 2003:598). The focus is on quality and understanding, with questions of purpose and role, rather than technique and implementation. Since this study has an evaluative shadow to it, and “evaluators are particularly concerned about criteria and methods of warranting their evaluative knowledge claims as empirically based representations of program experiences and not as biased inquirer opinions”, constructivist evaluation techniques will be highlighted in the Analysis section and the Formative Evaluation chapter (Denzin and Lincoln 2003:599).

**Qualitative Design**

Dewey (1934:2) comments on the importance of keeping an open mind during the research process, “if the artist does not perfect a new vision in his process of doing, he acts mechanically and repeats some old model fixed like a blueprint in his mind.” It is important to explain the methodology, or ways to study the social reality of substance abuse used in this research study. As noted by Strauss and Corbin (1998:11), “qualitative research is a type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification.” This does not mean that statistically gathered sources of information were not referred to, but that the bulk of the analyses were interpretative, with focus groups interpreted by the principal investigator. These rich, thick descriptions were necessary to understand more fully coalition members’ views regarding the topic of substance abuse. Secondary sources of information, such as the 2004 Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey were incorporated to further strengthen interpreted results of focus groups and to see if coalition members had differing accounts in terms of what is occurring in Alachua County, according to statistical measures.

The purpose of qualitative research is to discover concepts and relationships in raw data that preplanned quantitative analysis might not allow for, and organize them into a
theoretical explanatory scheme that offers new insight into the area under study. It not only allows for but stresses the socially constructed nature of reality. Strauss and Corbin (1998) suggest that qualitative research be used in research that attempts to understand the meaning or nature of experience of persons with problems such as chronic illness, addiction, divorce… to get out into the field and find out what people are doing and thinking. The purpose of these focus groups is to get inside the minds of the PIPSA coalition members to understand more clearly how they envision the coalition’s contribution to the community. The ideal way to encourage this is to approach the individuals with no preconceived notions of underage drinking in Alachua County, and learn from what they are willing to share, while also noting relevant topics they are not addressing.

Qualitative research allows the researcher to glimpse an individual’s feelings and thought processes that may not be possible to uncover within stricter, more quantitative research methods. Patton (1987:11) notes, “the narrative comments from open-ended questions are typically meant to provide a forum for elaborations, explanations, meanings, and new ideas.” Not only do open-ended questions allow for closed-ended responses, but they also offer the opportunity for fresh new ways of conceptualizing the topic by giving the respondent ability to express them in a more detailed and fuller manner.

Methods

Focus groups comprised of coalition members accounted for the bulk of the data gathered. In addition, fieldnotes were documented during the focus groups, as well as PIPSA events, noting physical gestures and reactions of coalition members that may have been useful in understanding emphasis in later analysis of verbal dialogue.
Focus Group As A Method

Denzin and Lincoln speak of the significance the structure of a method has on the outcome of the dialogue. They explain when choosing the method of research, “in a culture that highlights individualism and separation, shifting the research agenda in the direction of commonality and togetherness is, in itself, subversive” (Denzin and Lincoln 2003:373). They appear to suggest an importance of getting people to think in terms of commonality and togetherness. I believe this strategy would only strengthen the support of coalition members in the focus groups of this study.

Historical and contemporary uses of focus groups

The focus group has seen changes in its implementation throughout its history. Initially, focus groups were used by social scientists to develop survey questionnaires in the 1920’s, with the final result being a purely quantitative response to the social issue at hand. It wasn’t until the 1970’s that market researchers began to find value in focus groups, hoping to find people’s wants and needs in an effort to capitalize on them. The 1980’s to present day has seen an increase in focus group usage across disciplines to research varied social issues. Denzin and Lincoln (2003:367) explain, “in the social sciences, group interviews developed as reservations concerning the effectiveness of individual information gathering techniques grew. Such reservations focused on the influence of the interviewer on research participants and the limitations imposed by closed-ended questions.” It is evident that social scientists have begun to consider the focus group to be an important qualitative research technique.

Benefits of using focus groups

Focus groups have many benefits to their approach as a method. Arguably the most important aspect of their nature is that they make it possible for the researcher to observe
the interactive processes occurring within the group, and among the participants. Morgan (1997:2) clearly states, “the hallmark of focus groups is their explicit use of group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group.” Krueger (1988:44) argues that, “focus groups place people in natural, real-life situations as opposed to the controlled experimental situations typical of quantitative studies.” He suggests that hierarchy within the organization, that may present itself in various forms throughout the interactions taking place in the focus groups, may even be lessened by employing an outsider to the organization to conduct the focus groups.

In addition to producing large amounts of information during a relatively short period of time (compared to individual interviewing), focus groups produce concentrated amounts of information on the topic of interest to the researcher in highly focused (by sector) groups. Morgan (1997:10) offers, “group discussions provide direct evidence about similarities and differences in the participants’ opinions and experiences as opposed to reaching such conclusions from post hoc analyses of separate statements from each interviewee.” An open discussion of the research topic is available to the participants. As discussed previously, the researcher as an outsider has the ability to appear less knowledgeable about the subject and is forgiven for probes intended for clarification purposes. This flexibility in the focus group allows for unanticipated topics to be explored more fully that might not have been addressed using other research techniques.

Since it is unreasonable to get all coalition members to meet at one locale to productively discuss these issues in such a focused manner, focus groups provide a
technique that is not only efficient, but productive as well – including many viewpoints in a relatively short period of time. Focus groups are traditionally considered a less expensive research technique as well. If the researcher already has access to a room to conduct the groups in, only a tape recorder is needed. No additional materials, such as questionnaire copies are necessary, since the recorded dialogue is the main source of data.

Focus groups are exploratory in nature. Morgan (1997:11) notes, “this ability to give the group control over the direction of the interview is especially useful in exploratory research in which the researcher may not initially even know what questions to ask.” Rather than testing hypotheses, focus groups offer the participants, those closest to the issue, to tell the researcher what the important aspects are. It is a way to allow for marginalized voices to be heard without forcing the researcher’s agenda upon the participants and possibly affecting social policy in the process. Although the researcher may not escape influencing the discussion, by providing power to the group, focus groups minimize researcher bias (such as preconceived notions, opinions, words, and concepts) that could ultimately affect results. They allow the researcher to know the language participants employ and encourage the researcher to conceptualize the issue within the framework they provide. Denzin and Lincoln (2003:372) explain, “language is of particular importance because a sensitive understanding of people's lives requires shared symbols, meanings, and vocabularies.”

When all this is taken into consideration, “focus groups can improve the planning and design of new programs and provide means of evaluating existing programs” (Krueger 1988:15), allowing for future evaluations of the program to accurately measure
the intentions of the program. Also, an unintended benefit of focus groups might be in
getting participants newly excited and informed about the issue, with the participants
encouraged to sit and think critically about the issue being addressed. They might not
have this luxury throughout the course of their average work day, and may not be
challenged to consider others’ (possibly opposing) viewpoints.

Multiple viewpoints allow for contradictions to be dealt with throughout the data
collection period and not relegated to the researcher sorting it out in analyses, as is the
case in individual interviewing. Also, what Morgan calls “member checking” may take
place in a group environment, allowing the researcher to comment on the implementation
(or lack) of program activities as a way to hold participants accountable for what they are
supposed to be doing within the program, compared to what is actually done. Unlike
surveys and telephone interviews, focus groups allow the researcher to note the degree of
irregular participation from certain participants as well as nonverbal cues, body language
and patterns of turn taking, which may provide valuable insight into the content and style
of responses the participants offer. Since patterns were only able to be noted on a limited
basis because the researcher did not have an assistant at her disposal, no notable patterns
worthy of mention were found in the focus groups.

As a final note on the benefits of focus groups, they are typically considered as
having high face validity. As Krueger (1988:42) explains,

Fred Reynolds and Deborah Johnson (1978) reported on a comparison of focus
group discussions with a large-scale mail-out survey. The two studies were both
nationwide in scope—a mail survey of 2000 females with a 90% response rate
compared to a series of 20 focus groups in 10 cities. When these two market
research studies were compared, there was a 97% level of agreement, and, in the
area of discrepancy, the focus group results proved to have greater predictive
validity when compared to later sales data.
The high face validity may be attributable to the comments from participants appearing more believable, since people provide more detail and open up more, suggesting many possibilities.

As outlined, focus groups have many benefits as a research technique. Coupled with these benefits also comes limitations. These are important to note as well, in an attempt to be reflexive about the problems related to the research design of the study.

**Limitations in using focus groups**

Focus groups are difficult to assemble. Even careful planning in terms of location, time, and date will not guard against nonparticipation. People may even confirm their attendance, but are unable to show up due to unexpected work responsibilities, home responsibilities, or personal illness. When the researcher expects a certain number of participants but, in actuality gathers far less, it poses a dilemma to the researcher. Should the researcher cancel, in the hopes that more people will show up at a rescheduled time, or should s/he conduct the focus group knowing that this could mean compromising the data? The size of the focus group is extremely important to its success. The more people attending the focus group the greater the opportunity for a diverse amount of ideas shared – and included in analyses. Due to the study needing to be accomplished in a reasonable amount of time, it is unlikely that the researcher has the flexibility to continue to reschedule focus groups until all participants are in attendance. The larger problem with continuing on with small focus groups is the possibility of saturation not being reached. Strauss and Corbin (1998) state this is the point at which data collection no longer generates a new understanding of the issue. The data collection phase is considered complete.
As mentioned earlier, focus groups are generally considered to occur in a natural setting, unlike in experimental studies. It should also be noted that groups like a coalition, where a group of people representing other organizations gather together, may be viewed as being in an unnatural social setting. In actuality they are not being observed or questioned in their own work environment but a mutually agreed upon location. This location may not be where they regularly interact with program participants. Also, the conversation is managed by the researcher and is not conducted as a regular coalition meeting. Inexperience of the researcher may further jeopardize the results and the comfort level of the participants – further distancing participants from the natural environment they are used to and affecting their behavior, ultimately affecting results.

Another major limitation to focus groups is that the group may influence the data it produces. Krueger (1988:23) notes, “evidence from focus group interviews suggests that people do influence each other with their comments, and, in the course of a discussion, the opinions of an individual might shift.” It is strongly suggested that the researcher pay close attention when this happens in order to document what the influencing factors were in creating the shift of opinion. They may even reverse their opinion after interacting within the focus group. Also, it is suggested that people tend to report more extreme views in focus groups than they actually hold, in an attempt to convince others or conform to their stance. Morgan (1997:15) states:

The concerns for focus groups include both a tendency toward conformity, in which some participants withhold things that they might say in private, and a tendency toward polarization, in which some participants express more extreme views in a group than in private.

Krueger highlights the dangers of researching existing groups, suggesting people with more years of experience in the field may tend to dominate the discussion (Krueger
Those who are less experienced may defer to them for a response, assuming they know the issue in more nuanced ways. Power issues relating to experience or job title may influence participants’ level of involvement. People holding higher offices may be accustomed to controlling the group, while those in less senior positions are accustomed to listening. The purpose of the focus group is to get everyone’s input, but power issues may pose a threat to this task. Individuals may have their own agenda within the focus group, such as lobbying for a certain outcome. If the researcher allows for a less structured format and allows individuals to manipulate the focus, this makes analyses more difficult when attempting to compare across groups.

All of these aforementioned problems foreshadow difficulties with validity and generalizability. Validity is the degree to which the procedure actually measures what it intends to measure. Krueger (1988:41) suggests, “people are not always truthful, and sometimes they give answers that seem best for the situation. Other times, people hold back important information because of apprehensions or social pressure.” Because data are group dependent, it is difficult to comment on the validity of the data derived from focus groups. Focus groups are generally thought to lack generalizability for this same reason. This is not to say they do not offer valuable insight into the issue studied, but that the results should not be used to generalize to other populations outside of the one under study. These are all limitations that influence the results and implications of focus groups.

More limitations of focus groups include their reliance on verbal communication. Certain questions may not be asked that would encourage respondents to respond in an accurate and thorough way (Krueger 1988). Reasons for this may be due to a misunderstanding of the questions posed. A limitation related to relying on verbal
communication is the quality of data they produce. As mentioned earlier, self-report data, as is gathered in focus groups, may not be accurate – whether intentional or unintentional (Fallon and Schwab-Stone 1994).

**Focus Group Design**

The data collected for this study were gathered through semi-structured focus groups. A guide was used to focus group discussion. Morgan (1997:47) suggests, “the structure that a guide imposes on discussions is valuable both in channeling the group interaction and in making comparisons across groups in the analysis phase of the research.” Considering the philosophical underpinnings previously suggested, moderator involvement should be somewhat limited, in order to lessen researcher values framing the discussion. A semi-structured guide allows for a somewhat focused, yet unconstrained discussion.

The study consisted of nine focus groups, each one representing a sector within PIPSA. This was in an attempt to allow each sector to collectively explain their contributions to the coalition. Although there should be a difference of opinion among the sector participants, the idea is that they will be more similar than across sectors. Categorization of members into professional sectors was done by PIPSA executive members prior to the study. Each coalition member was listed as having their current professional experience lying within one sector. As Krueger (1988:26) explains, “focus groups are best conducted with participants who are similar to each other, and this homogeneity is reinforced in the introduction to the group discussion.” An ice breaker at the beginning of each focus group, allowing for participants to introduce themselves and their affiliation with PIPSA, was a chance for them to relate on an occupational level. Also, an announcement from the researcher regarding the purpose of the project, their
commitment to the social issue of substance abuse, reinforced homogeneity on a more personal level.

The focus groups were conducted at the Corner Drug Store conference room, at scheduled meeting times that were convenient for coalition members (see Table 5). The Corner Drug Store is where PIPSA’s bi-monthly meetings are held and access of the room was granted by PIPSA’s executive chairperson, an employee of the Corner Drug Store.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Group By Sector</th>
<th>Members within Sector</th>
<th>Total Members Participating</th>
<th>Members Participating from Sector</th>
<th>Members Participating outside Sector</th>
<th>Organizations Represented</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Length (minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>04/24/06</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Alachua Sheriff’s Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>05/02/06</td>
<td>45</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Corner Drug Store, Inc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family/Community</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>05/02/06</td>
<td>45</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Corner Drug Store, Inc.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Act of Faith Production</td>
<td>05/03/06</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Focus Group By Sector</td>
<td>Members within Sector</td>
<td>Total Members Participating from Sector</td>
<td>Members Participating outside Sector</td>
<td>Organizations Represented</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Length (minutes)</td>
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</tr>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>05/25/06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Totals                | 70                    | 35                                      | 15                                   | 20                                                                      |

*All focus groups were conducted at the Corner Drug Store in Gainesville, Florida.
Table 6: Focus Group Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Group by Sector</th>
<th>1st Time Participants</th>
<th>Additional Sector Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Law Enforcement</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Services</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family/Community</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business/Media</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal/State/Local Agency</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic/Volunteer Group</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Some participants contributed in more than the focus group they were invited to. This table indicates how many in each focus group were participating in a focus group for the first time and how many were providing feedback for additional times.
Focus group questions

Since a grounded theory approach was to be used in analysis, the interview questions were adapted to include topics that arose during earlier focus groups and to follow-up unanticipated issues. The basic questions were placed in a logical order, with the coalition members being asked about their approach to Alachua County residents, followed by a more in-depth look at what their needs are, what resources are available to aid them, and what activities could be planned for them. Five broad questions were asked in each focus group to begin the dialogue, with secondary follow-up questions to guide discussion. Question one was asked in order to determine how coalition members actually reach Alachua County residents and what problems they seem to encounter. This question generated suggestions for improving program process. Question two was asked in order to determine if the coalition was in agreement regarding their new direction. This allowed coalition members to express what PIPSA should focus on. Questions two and three allowed them to brainstorm how PIPSA should go about reducing underage drinking in Alachua County, if they deemed it a necessary direction for the coalition to take. Question five encouraged the coalition members to think about the feasibility of the brainstormed activities and reflect on the importance of each coalition members’ involvement in implementing them. Overall, these five questions allowed coalition members an opportunity to express the new direction the coalition should take and what the coalition’s priorities should be in implementing the activities relating to reducing underage drinking in Alachua County.
1 How does your sector attempt to reach Alachua County residents?
   • How do you broadcast PIPSA’s meaning and activities?
   • What difficulties arise when reaching residents?
   • How do you combat these difficulties?

2 Is underage drinking a problem in Alachua County?
   • If so, why is it a problem here?

3 What resources (from your respective agencies) are available to PIPSA to reduce underage drinking in Alachua County?

4 What activities (from your respective agencies) are available to PIPSA to reduce underage drinking in Alachua County?

5 Are the activities feasible based on your sectors’ resources?

Morgan suggests this to be an appropriate number of questions for a semi-structured focus group, “in a more structured group, the limit should probably be four or five distinct topics or questions, with preplanned probes under each major topic” (Morgan 1997:47). It is important to note that consensus within the focus group is not the goal. In understanding the thought processes, deeper meaning is possible. As Krueger (1988:30) explains:

One of the unique elements of focus groups is that there is no pressure on the moderator to have the group reach consensus. Instead attention is placed on understanding the thought processes used by participants as they consider the issues of discussion.

All focus groups were audio-taped. They lasted approximately 1 hour, but continued until all five questions had been addressed. After all questions from the guide were asked and all “serendipitous questions” were acknowledged, the researcher offered the opportunity for any final comments regarding the discussion. As a final step, respondents were thanked and the tape recorder was turned off to indicate the data collection period was over.
Materials used in focus groups

Two documents were provided to the focus group participants. Both were constructed by the researcher with information derived from executive PIPSA staff prior to the focus groups being conducted. The first document was PIPSA’s service utilization plan, which diagrammed PIPSA activities throughout the course of a one-year period. This was shown to focus group participants to refresh their memories of PIPSA activities. The second document declared and explained PIPSA’s new focus on underage drinking. PIPSA executive coalition members came to consensus on this new priority at the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) coalition training in January 2006. The document suggested that both the social and physical environments in Alachua County contributed to underage drinking (Appendix C). It is important to note that instruments did not affect focus group discussion. It was observed that coalition members did not rely on them or even refer to them.

In addition to the two documents guiding focus group discussion, every coalition member was provided an informed consent form to sign prior to their participation in the focus group. This form explained the purpose of the research study, the time required to participate, potential risks and benefits to participating, the voluntary nature of the study, the right to withdraw from the study at any time, and contact information of the principal investigator and her supervisors if they had any further questions following the focus group. One copy was retained by the researcher and one copy was provided to the participant for their personal records.

Sampling design

The executive members of the PIPSA coalition encouraged involvement in the study. They provided contact information for all coalition members to allow the principal
investigator to contact them and schedule meeting times. Since there are only 70 members total in the PIPSA coalition, it was feasible to invite all of them to participate (Appendix D). Originally, there were nine scheduled focus groups, with each representing a different sector within the PIPSA coalition: Youth Services, Alachua County School Board, Law Enforcement, Business/Media, Federal/State/Local Agencies, Civic/Volunteer, Religious, Healthcare, and Parents. Representatives from each sector were contacted and focus groups were scheduled and rescheduled based on their availability.

Gathering a wide range of coalition members is important to get a comprehensive view of what resources are available and to get input that might not have been represented when the original goals and objectives were developed, eight years ago. Also, within individual sectors, it was easier to focus the discussion on particular issues involving specific issues, rather than discussing underage drinking in Alachua County as a broad issue. Since this approach was more organized than regularly scheduled meetings, it seemed to be more productive to the ultimate goal of understanding what resources their individual sector could contribute, what activities they could plan, what impact this will have on the youth, and if PIPSA is employing a comprehensive approach, from their perspective. They hinted at PIPSA’s program theory at various times throughout the focus group in discussing what new activities could be introduced by the coalition.

The study comprised data from 35 participants from the PIPSA coalition focus groups, with only 19 different individuals, since some participated in more than one focus group. It should be noted that some key leaders from within the community and outside
the community are listed as PIPSA members, but are rarely available to attend coalition meetings (i.e. Senator Rod Smith). They are important to the coalition because of the support and endorsement they give to PIPSA, but are not involved in the workings of the coalition on a regular basis. They may attend PIPSA activities as guest speakers, but are more or less honorary members. Another thing limiting participation was that some members were representing more than just themselves when they attended the focus groups. Even though all coalition members were strongly encouraged to participate, some organizations that had multiple members on the coalition most often sent only one to represent the entire organization. Also, some were unable to attend focus groups due to family obligations, personal illnesses, and conflicting work schedules. So, in reality the coalition has more active members than are included in the study. Therefore, it is important not to solely consider its strength as a coalition based on participation in the focus groups. Limitations regarding this will be addressed in the discussion chapter.

Eight focus groups were conducted throughout the course of the study, instead of the original design of nine focus groups. The civic and volunteering agency sector is comprised of five coalition members. Due to low participation from these members, their focus group was combined with federal, state, and local agencies. Unfortunately, no members from the civic and volunteering agency sector were able to participate in the combined focus group. This limitation will be discussed in fuller detail in the Discussion chapter. All other sectors were conducted separately, consistent with the original design of the study. Some coalition members participated in more than the focus group they were originally scheduled for, if they felt their experience could contribute to additional focus groups (see Table 5 and 6). The principal investigator approved of this, since they
could possibly offer insight that might improve dialogue within the focus group. Limitations regarding this will be discussed in the discussion section.

Patton (1987:15) explains, “within programs an inductive approach begins with questions about the individual experiences of participants. Between programs [or sectors], the inductive approach looks for unique institutional characteristics that make each setting a case unto itself.” As stated in the introduction, the goal for PIPSA was to conceptualize underage drinking in terms of the contributing agencies, determine untapped resources that are available to the coalition, and brainstorm innovative activities to be offered by the coalition.

Analysis Procedures

Grounded Theory: background considerations

Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss originally introduced this methodology as an alternative strategy to more traditional approaches which relied heavily on hypothesis testing and more quantitative forms of analysis. Babchuk (1996:2) suggests, “Grounded Theory is a qualitative methodology which derives its name from the practice of generating theory from research which is ‘grounded’ in data.” Epistemological debates between Glaser and Strauss have introduced different ways of utilizing grounded theory as it was originally intended. There are 3 major differences between Glaser and Strauss and Corbin’s understandings of Grounded Theory. Since they are still recognized today as the leading researchers of this approach, it is important to distinguish between the two, and explain why Strauss and Corbin’s approach is more suitable to this study design.

Glaser critiques Strauss and Corbin’s approach to addressing the initial research problem. Strauss and Corbin believe that “the research question in a Grounded Theory study is a statement that identifies the phenomenon to be studied,” while Glaser stresses
that “the research problem itself is discovered through emergence as a natural byproduct of open coding, theoretical sampling, and constant comparison” (Babchuk 1996:4). Glaser’s approach seems rather idealistic, with the research question stemming from only a basic “wonderment” of the phenomena under study.

Strauss and Corbin stress that theory should inform the coding process, and the previous literature of the social phenomena should not be ignored. Glaser argues that “Strauss and Corbin’s overemphasis on extracting detail from the data by means of a pre-structured paradigm yields full conceptual description at the expense of theory development or generation” (Babchuk 1996:4). Since PIPSA had declared the life course perspective as its theoretical underpinnings, it seemed more appropriate and informative to primarily use theories relevant to this type of literature to guide analysis. Glaser suggests that Strauss and Corbin have a strong emphasis on verification and validation of theory. Babchuk (1996:4) notes, “in Glaser’s opinion, verification falls outside the parameters of grounded theory, which instead should be directed at the discovery of hypotheses or theory.” This highlights Strauss and Corbin’s priority of including the literature of the phenomena under study and referring back to it throughout the analysis process. Strauss and Corbin do not offer a rigid structure with verification and validation of theory at the core of the research, as suggested by Glaser. They allow for the opportunity of relevant literature to provide for a deeper understanding of the important issues the phenomena may be related to, and offer important linkages experts in the field have suggested exist.

Denzin and Lincoln (2003:279) explain, “Grounded Theory is an iterative process by which the analyst becomes more and more “grounded” in the data and develops
increasingly richer concepts and models of how the phenomenon being studied really works.” Categories and terms are defined by the participants under study, while the researcher begins to link them together in theoretical models. Denzin and Lincoln (2003:280) further note, “the end results of Grounded Theory are often displayed through the presentation of segments of text – verbatim quotes from informants – as exemplars of concepts and theories.” Also, visual mappings of the concepts and their connections allow for a clear presentation of final results. Strauss and Corbin’s approach seems most relevant to the research design after considering the epistemological differences that exist in the field of Grounded Theory. The next section will provide further detail into ways their methodology will guide the analysis of this research project.

**Application of Strauss and Corbin’s Grounded Theory**

While this study was not a formal exercise in grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967), it did follow the grounded theory method in some important respect. The goal was neither to test logically deduced hypotheses nor to provide statistical verification. This study represents an exploratory investigation into the problem behavior of underage drinking in Alachua County, with coalition members contributing their current working knowledge of the issue as it related to their professional experience, and highlighting the important themes that were necessary to address. Elements of Strauss and Corbin’s grounded theory were utilized to analyze this data and create an explanatory scheme of PIPSAs’s approach to the community.

Because this study employs a grounded theory method, data analysis was conducted simultaneously with data collection, with coding following individual focus groups. The constant comparative method was used for data analysis which allowed for comparing incidents and their categories (Strauss and Corbin 1998). This allowed for any
changes in coding to be made throughout the data collection periods, as new information presented itself. The grounded theory method proposed by Strauss and Corbin (1998) was used to guide the coding process. Final coding analyses were presented to the principal investigator’s committee members as a form of “inter-coder reliability”, and to allow for modifications in the interpretations of the data (Miles and Huberman 1994).

**Open coding.** The coding process involved three stages: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. The goal of open coding was to capture emergent categories and organize substantive themes that were found in the focus groups. These categories were abstractions from the raw data and were initially relatively specific concepts that underlie the concrete examples and experiences that made up the data. “They depict the problems, issues, concerns, and matters that are important to those being studied” (Strauss and Corbin 1998:114). The point at this stage was to distinguish between the possible themes considering the possible relevance to theoretical frameworks. Open coding can take on many forms. Strauss and Corbin suggest open coding may be done line-by-line, paragraph-by-paragraph, or document-by-document. The important concept is to begin to separate groups of data into more manageable pieces between units of analysis.

**Axial coding.** Axial coding occurred simultaneously with open coding and helped to refine categories, revealing how they were associated with sub-categories. The various dimensions and properties of a category were explored and detailed in this stage. Analytic tools such as the flip-flop technique and the comparative technique of systematic comparison were used to further refine categories. The flip-flop technique “indicates that a concept is turned inside out or upside down to obtain different perspective on the event, object, or action/interaction” (Strauss and Corbin 1998:94). In other words, the researcher
focuses on opposites and extremes to understand connections between different ways of looking at the same topic. The systematic comparison means, “comparing an incident in the data to one recalled from experience or from the literature” (Strauss and Corbin 1998:95). Theories discussed previously in the literature chapter were used to help distinguish among coalition members’ theoretical underpinnings and deconstruct their thought processes.

**Selective coding.** Selective coding was used to identify core themes that were consistent with the study’s primary focus on coalition members’ approach to reducing underage drinking in Alachua County. Upon completion of all focus groups and all three stages of coding, themes emerged that guided the principal investigator in developing a theoretical framework of PIPSA’s approach to the community, based on the raw data (recorded words of coalition members) collected in the focus groups.

**Limitations Of Study Design**

A major limitation of the study is that some sectors are more represented than others in the PIPSA coalition. The Youth Services sector is comprised of 19 coalition members, while the religious sector has only 2 active members. This either suggests that PIPSA considers some sectors as more important than others, or that participation in some sectors is harder to achieve. This was looked at during the focus groups and will be addressed in detail in the discussion section. Also, time constraints only allowed for one focus group from each sector. More focus groups would have allowed the principal investigator to revisit topics that needed more clarification. Since this was not feasible, the data may be organized in ways that may not have been intended by the coalition members. Detail will be provided in the results chapter regarding topics that coalition members need to discuss at future coalition meetings, such as program process and
impact measurements and what newly suggested activities should be adopted by the
program. It is important to note that additional focus groups would have allowed more
discussions that most likely would have generated new suggestions.

As mentioned earlier, the qualitative design to this study suggests the constructivist
nature it follows. While this can be considered a major strength to the data gathered, it
can also be regarded as a major limitation of the results produced. Only emergent patterns
and themes, or those that are addressed in the focus groups, will be discussed. Patterns
that may seem more relevant but do not appear in the data will not be emphasized in this
study. Also, Krueger (1988) suggests predictive validity and generalizability, usual
sources of a study’s strength, are not appropriate for this research design. While Krueger
(1988) maintains focus groups are generally thought to have high face validity,
researchers should be cautioned as to the results having predictive validity. Readers who
insist on the importance of a study having predictive validity and generalizability may
have difficulty seeing the inherent value in the data gathered with this approach.

This chapter offered the design in greater detail and drew attention to possible
ontological, epistemological, and methodological limitations of the study. The following
chapter outlines thematic patterns found throughout the focus groups after following
Strauss and Corbin’s open, axial, and selective coding.
CHAPTER 5
RESULTS

This chapter outlines four broad patterns that emerged throughout the focus groups. Participants tended to center conversation around the coalition’s theory of change, the culture of drinking in Alachua County, the difficulty in reaching community members, and new strategies for decreasing underage drinking. These patterns will be discussed in further detail in the following sections.

In terms of the results, “facts do not merely embody reality, but must be interpreted” (Vega and Murphy 1990:146). The principal investigator interpreted these results as indicated in previous sections, and patterns within topics were analyzed. As for the presentation of the topics, Morgan (1997:63) explains:

There are three basic factors that influence how much emphasis a given topic should receive: how many groups mentioned the topic, how many people within each of these groups mentioned the topic, and how much energy and enthusiasm the topic generated among the participants. The best evidence that a topic is worth emphasizing comes from a combination of all three of these factors that is known as “group-to-group validation.

These factors will be considered and results will be presented in order of coalition emphasis in this section. Four broad thematic patterns were stressed by participants in the focus groups.

Theory Of Change

There were variations in how coalition members described their approaches to youth. Some viewed underage drinking as a natural act the youth was drawn to, while others saw it as a learned behavior, drawing heavily on social learning theory. It was
suggested that it was “important to separate adults and children” to better target their needs. Certain strategies influence adults and children differently at different points in their lives. The prevalent feeling was that adolescence, and maybe even the pre-teen years, is a critical point in an individual’s life-course where alcohol should not be available. The individual is at a point in their lives where s/he does not understand the consequences of their behavior and how it may affect his or her future. In terms of adolescents, coalition members felt that if programs were in place that changed their social norms and provided activities substituting drinking, rates would decrease.

Some coalition members stated “altering consciousness is part of the human experience” while some felt that drinking is “healthy in moderation,” possibly at any age. Others agreed, stating “sensation seeking is natural,” and activities that satisfy this innate need must be presented to the adolescent if drinking is to be avoided. Echoing this same idea, one participant stated, “they have access to everything in their house while their parents work”, stressing the “need for summer programs” and suggesting that the community currently has “inadequate resources to keep them busy.” The use of churches and youth groups were suggested as a way to “get the message out that fun can be without substances”. A natural “curiosity leads to use,” with “drinking used as an expression in us”, “an expression of being free”. An attitude of drinking as a “rite of passage” was often stated. One participant stated a “genetic predisposition” guiding behavior, stating that someone is “3 times more likely to become an addict if their parent was an addict.” Also, some coalition members faulted parents today “pushing kids faster socially,” stating not only a “human desire to mature faster,” but a parental pressure as well.
Mention was made in a few focus groups whether “repression breeds” a drinking problem, with repression encouraging youth. Participants pointed to Europe as an example of a healthy environment, unlike the United States, that does not enforce consequences that repress youth for substance use. Others pointed out that it was a myth that Europe does not have problems similar to the United States in regard to substance use, and “consequences don’t repress youth,” but help guide them to healthy behaviors. Europe’s “great transportation system” was highlighted as being a factor contributing to fewer alcohol-related accidents than the United States. Another participant stated Poland’s low acceptable Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) of .02 was a reason for fewer alcohol-related incidents, stating “harsher consequences lead to awareness of acceptable amounts of alcohol and more responsible drinking behavior.” This theme of consequences correcting deviant behavior was found often in focus groups.

Many coalition members emphasized the need for “consequences” and “strict” enforcement of them. A “need to supervise juveniles” was mentioned as well as a “lack of consequences” in our culture. Some suggested the enforcement of consequences as a way to identify those in need to resources and treatment and educate them of the problems related to underage drinking. Also, some participants emphasized the need to get out the “dangerous message” of the “evils of” drinking suggesting its deviant nature. One participant mentioned the need, although seemingly impossible, for a “curfew,” stating “they need to know they don’t have total freedom and liberty to do whatever.” Year-round schooling for adolescents was also suggested as a way to decrease free time for adolescents and monitor them on a continuous basis.
Reasons for preventing underage drinking were varied throughout the focus groups as well. A wide range of feelings were shared, with some coalition members suggesting it was a moral duty to protect the community members, stating “Am I not my brother’s keeper”? Others seemed to highlight the financial benefit the community would receive in protecting its members from underage drinking, with future incarceration and health costs being lessened. Drawing on current research, it was suggested that funding go to underage drinking programs since federal agencies “already know a certain percentage will surely grow up to be alcoholics.” Community members representing local businesses originally faulted individuals for substance abuse problems, but have recently retracted from this notion because of pressures from the University of Florida threatening to attack marketing strategies employed by the owners. Alachua County business owners are currently recognizing underage drinking as a community problem and have recently developed the Gainesville Hospitality Group, which works to monitor responsible business practices relating to the issue throughout the community.

Hints of Catalano and Hawkins’ social learning theory were scattered throughout the focus groups, with some participants stating the necessity for “rewards for those not using” and the impact of the Hippodrome’s HITT program, which “provides protective factors” to youth in the form of a prevention program. Those suggesting a change in the normative structure of underage drinking explained its lengthy process. The Stages of Change Model, employed by health professionals of the University of Florida, states that, “change happens gradually.” This was discussed by coalition members representing the education and health care sectors of PIPSA. “It is unrealistic to have one talk and make a change,” but you “need to develop skills.” The Stages of Change Model teaches students
skills to be able to “approach in a nonjudgmental manner, to get the underlying meaning regarding personal feelings” involving patients with substance abuse problems.

Culture Of Drinking In Alachua County

Many coalition members felt it very important to address the current attitude surrounding drinking in Alachua County. A “more blatant attitude” regarding underage drinking and a “not me attitude” regarding addiction further complicates the issue. “Young people are more talkative about their behavior,” almost proud of it. Also, “younger people are declaring substance abuse issues.”

With the message of drinking normalized on a continuous basis, through video games, pharmaceutical advertisements, music lyrics, and television shows like the Sopranos, mixed messages are sent to youth at risk. One participant talked of the reality show where parents go back to college, stating how parents are practicing misuse of alcohol because “the peer pressure is too great,” even for them. Some emphasized the “new parenting styles” that are contributing to this “privileged generation” that gets what they ask for on a regular basis. Alcohol is readily available, and youth may take alcohol from home to “pharming parties,” where adults are not monitoring their children.

Alachua County is host to Gainesville’s downtown scene, with its density of bars. The leniency of local bars was mentioned repeatedly, with allowing “fake arm bands,” “bouncers letting anyone in” and the fact that “there are just too many people” to monitor on a consistent basis. Some suggested that “kids look and dress older” also, complicating the job of “carding” underage youth. Many cited the “University’s influence” and that students feel “it’s cool” when hanging from street lights (see Appendix B), never realizing the influence this behavior may have on people witnessing it. The college culture is advertised through these pictures. Some explained the university’s “transient
population,” hinting that college kids don’t care about the town because they are only here for a short while (see Appendix B). A few mentioned the City Commissioner’s recent DUI citation and the acceptability “skybox drinking” of notable community members contributing to even more mixed messages regarding drinking.

It was stressed that you “rarely hear of people dying or suffering” from alcohol abuse. Unlike the tobacco campaign, alcohol is not demonized but often glamorized, with “ads equivalent to Joe Camel,” marketing wine coolers as tasting like Kool-aid. Also, it was suggested that beer is too cheap these days, allowing for easy access to minors.

**Difficulties Reaching Community Members**

Coalition members often pointed out some difficulties they have had in reaching the community. “Apathy” from parents and youth, “transportation difficulties,” and a “chaperone shortage” make it difficult to plan activities. Also, increased emphasis on FCAT scores makes it difficult to get into the schools to educate or encourage participation in PIPSA activities. A basic “unawareness of what can be done together” influences the degree of participation.

It was suggested that the public is not present at important events, like town hall meetings. This might suggest poorly advertised events or possible status differentials, which will be discussed in more detail later, do not encourage attendance rates. Ways to address these issues should be looked into further by the coalition. Low attendance at parenting classes may be a result of this as well. Targeting of these populations should be done more effectively. A major problem affecting long-term treatment is the absence of youth residential treatment centers in the area. This makes it difficult for them to receive intensive, focused treatment away from the environment they are using in.
Strategies For Decreasing Underage Drinking

Mirroring current research, the PIPSA coalition places a strong emphasis on education, family-based interventions, and community-college partnerships, since these initiatives have been successful over the years. Funding sources encourage activities to be scientifically-based strategies, further pressuring the coalition to advocate these strategies as well.

The literature, as well as the coalition, suggests that education alone is not enough, but it needs to be interactive. Youth are knowledgeable about drinking but need to feel personal relevance if their behavior is to be affected. “Kids get bored hearing the same thing every year.” One coalition member explains she has students raise their hands, “asking them who has drunk to the point of feeling sick?” She then tells those with their hands up that they have poisoned their bodies.

The coalition also emphasized the need to impact youth through education, done in a variety of ways. Examples such as Mock car crashes and impaired-vision goggles were mentioned as being effective. It was stressed that these messages should be infused in all classes, not just one health class, that the student may or may not remember. Also, graduate health students from the University of Florida have explained the drawbacks of drinking in other ways, such as the caloric content of alcohol and the expenses related to its use. These “in your face consequences” are necessary for impact. The coalition repeatedly stressed the importance of educating earlier age groups. One member explained “patterns of behavior are established at a young age.” Prevention programs should be in place prior to these patterns of behavior becoming set in order to prevent certain behaviors. Another coalition member explained underage drinking prevention needs to be a “generational approach,” with an entire cohort in a twelve year program,
not a 5-year program, which is currently done. “Prevention needs to start earlier,” with 5th and 6th grade youth falling in the middle of the prevention efforts, not the beginning.

Family-based prevention has consistently been cited as effective in decreasing underage drinking. Coalition members explained that in addition to starting early, prevention needs to focus on children and families, building social norms and fostering them throughout the life-course. An affiliate of the PIPSA coalition, The Corner Drug Store, offers these family-based prevention programs. The coalition could work to create a greater awareness of this resource. It was suggested that all people should research their personal history and have the knowledge of what they may be predisposed to. The church was suggested as a great resource for reaching families.

Throughout the focus groups coalition members pointed to the college and community relationship. Several participants strongly felt that underage drinking was due to the University’s influence on the community. Recently the University’s President has put forth initiatives to decrease underage drinking in the community. Many coalition members felt that the community could benefit from a stronger partnership with the University in these efforts. A University Police Department representative on the coalition was strongly recommended, to foster communication with the Gainesville Police Department and maintain consistency throughout the community in relation to enforcement practices. The University has made it a priority to present to neighborhood associations in an effort to affect community attitudes towards the college community, further encouraging a partnership. No mention was made regarding neighboring community colleges, but these should be considered as well.
This chapter outlined themes coalition members stressed throughout the focus groups. The following chapter will provide more specific activities and resources coalition members addressed throughout the focus groups, as well as priorities the coalition should note when attempting to monitor the process and impact of the program for future evaluations.
Considering the data gathered throughout the focus groups, the following chapter outlines ten overall suggestions for improving program process and program impact, in hopes of strengthening the coalition for future stages of evaluation. All of these suggestions should be discussed at upcoming PIPSA meetings. PIPSA’s main priority should be to vote on what activities the program will continue to implement, considering its new focus on underage drinking. They should consider and vote on new suggestions raised in the focus group. Lastly, they should develop a comprehensive strategic plan, with the help of a researcher, much like the example listed in Appendix F. This should list every PIPSA activity, how the activity relates to decreasing underage drinking in measurable terms, and what the coalition would consider a success or failure based on the measured outcomes. The example in the Appendix is based on PIPSA’s most recent goals and should be revised once new goals have been declared by the coalition. At the end of this chapter will be a summary of the overall suggestions offered in this formative evaluation to PIPSA. They will be listed in order of priority, so attention should be paid to each in the order they are suggested.

**Suggestions For Evaluating PIPSA Process**

Before future evaluations may be conducted with PIPSA, coalition members should make it a priority to document its process, since it currently does not have any baseline data to project goals from. In terms of process, it is necessary for PIPSA to document every event and activity in terms of its content, attendance, and length. The coalition
should come to a consensus on what they consider “successful” from each event, after baseline data have been collected. This should be monitored over the course of the program to chart progress in terms of program implementation. Also, activity announcement methods should be documented and analyzed after baseline data have been collected to evaluate who was invited to the event, how they were told, and when they were told. Over time, the coalition should be able to detect what methods work best for Alachua County, making it a more tailored approach to the community it hopes to address. These methods then may be used to increase participation at events. Some examples of process measures can be found in the appendix in Appendix D.

**Suggestions For Evaluating PIPSA Impact**

Appropriate impact assessments should be made in addition to monitoring PIPSA’s process, to evaluate the performance or impact the program has on the community. Based on data from the three national surveys on substance use, local school-based surveys conducted by PIPSA, and relevant local statistics (arrest rates, DUI rates, and hospital intake rates for alcohol-related incidences), consensus within PIPSA should be reached in regards to “success.” Specific rates and percentages considered successful should be declared yearly to have clear and manageable goals that monitor the progress of the program. Some example impact measures can be found in Appendix E.

**Suggestions For PIPSA Program Improvement**

Suggestions, from both current research and feedback from coalition members, for implementing these goals are provided in this formative evaluation. These range from ways to implement the program to get better attendance to ways to get the coalition to work together in a more collaborative way.
Implement Scientifically-Based Strategies

It is suggested that programs should not employ strategies previously proven ineffective, like school-based initiatives mentioned earlier that are information-only, or those using scare tactics about the dangers of alcohol. While most of the literature relating to underage drinking suggests using scientific-based strategies that have been proven effective, some researchers suggest not limiting strategies to this. Vega and Murphy (1990:145) note:

Yet essential to the success of community-based interventions are novel plans. Practitioners who are community-based should be innovative and willing to try untested strategies. Gaining access to communities and creating sensitive methodologies sometimes requires that unorthodox practices be adopted. Those who are reluctant to take risks and explore novel suggestions-question the prevailing status quo-will not likely be successful at this type of intervention.

This is worthy of note, since focus group participants created new strategies not currently being used by PIPSA. With this in mind, hopefully these ideas will be considered by the coalition as possible alternatives to decreasing underage drinking.

Improve PIPSA Attendance And Dialogue

Ways to improve attendance and dialogue at PIPSA events should also be considered. Significant effort should be made in trying to reach underage youth. Most likely there are community members that would attend activities and meetings if they were aware of them and if it was convenient for them to get to. Vega and Murphy (1990:134) note:

The time and location of board meetings are supposed to be advertised before these sessions are convened. But most often this requirement has not been taken seriously. One notice may be placed in a newspaper that is marginal to a community’s key sources of information. As a result, attendance at these gatherings has been generally low, thereby indicating further to bureaucrats that community members are not interested in public affairs. When those who are not employed by an agency do attend, their presence has been given nominal attention. Surely the
status differentials that are visible at these meetings do not encourage citizens to participate in discussions.

These status differentials that may present themselves at town hall meetings or other PIPSA events are important to consider as well. Underage youth should be given a voice at these events also. This may be done in panel discussions with community members following a PIPSA event. Underage youth can offer valuable insight and further participation if these status differentials are recognized and dealt with in a responsible fashion.

Encourage Collaboration Within PIPSA

The “linking-pin strategy,” as suggested by Vega and Murphy (1990) links departments of an organization, or in this case sectors of a coalition, who were formerly indirectly related and directly join them together. Since the PIPSA coalition is “project driven,” it could utilize this strategy in linking coalition members from varying sectors in an attempt to merge different knowledge bases together. Coalition members mixing together to coordinate activities provides the opportunity for different approaches to be incorporated. PIPSA should not rely on just one sector to organize an activity.

Extend PIPSA Membership

The coalition emphasized its priority of extending membership to segments of the community that are not currently involved, but should be included to strengthen the coalition in number and resources. It is important to note that PIPSA has a large membership, but is missing necessary segments of the population. As mentioned previously, key leaders in the community can generate support and awareness for the coalition.
Foster community-school partnerships

Community-college partnerships. The President of the University of Florida should be invited to join the coalition. Key leaders like, President Bernie Machen would bring great publicity and strength to PIPSA. In addition, collaboration with University of Florida’s new alcohol programs could prove beneficial to the coalition. Community colleges in the area have large numbers of underage students. They should also be represented in the coalition. An added benefit would be the possible use of their facilities. Also, representatives from the University Police Department should be included in the coalition to allow for communication with the Gainesville Police Department, in an effort to maintain enforcement consistency across the community.

Elementary and middle school personnel. Requests to have school nurses join the coalition was met with enthusiasm by coalition members. School nurses were explained to have valuable insight into what happens to adolescents over the course of the school day. In addition, they are in positions to educate adolescents about alcohol. Having a few on the coalition could provide yet another perspective regarding underage people’s practices. Also, any other elementary and middle school personnel who could contribute to the coalition should be invited to join.

Include business community

The PIPSA coalition has been unfunded for the past two years, relying on donations to coordinate program activities. Including more community businesses could result in more money for the coalition and better public relations. A few focus groups suggested participation from the banking community, Shand’s Hospital and Domino’s Pizza would benefit the coalition, as well as encouraging current coalition members to invite their spouses, broadening the resource pool even more. As for the Gainesville
Hospitality Group, coalition members suggested speaking with them regarding the training of bouncers to effective target underage drinking. They recently declared local businesses involved in the group would make it a priority to train wait staff. A push to train bouncers as well is strongly recommended since these employees may serve as a buffer between underage youth and alcohol.

**Involve media**

Involving the media is a necessary step as well. The coalition currently has members representing local news and print media. According to the literature, PIPSÁ’s affiliations with these members should be strengthened. Also, PIPSÁ receives discounted prices for advertisements preceding movie trailers. This should be utilized for upcoming events as much as possible, with donations from local businesses going towards this resource.

**Form youth advisory committee**

The Youth Advisory Committee should be strengthened considering the coalition’s new focus. The “Truth campaign” is evidence of how effective youth can be in changing norms relating to substances. Insight from the Youth Advisory Committee should provide excellent feedback for ways to reach youth, and messages they need to hear if behavior change is to occur long-term. The committee may be more productive if it is comprised of students who participate in few extracurricular activities, to ensure they will be able to hold meetings on a regular basis. Also, it may be more effective if it draws from pools of youth who have histories of alcohol use, so they make speak from experience. Local S.A.D.D. groups may offer assistance to the committee by offering suggestions for getting youth involved and by participating in program activities to draw greater community support.
Target specific populations of youth

As well as extending PIPSA’s network, it should make it a priority to target specific groups of adolescents. One participant suggested not only forwarding PIPSA activity e-mails to more agencies and connections, but extending invitations to those most in need. Focus groups suggested the importance of including juvenile detention centers, halfway, and foster homes, as well as children diagnosed with ADD and ADHD, since the literature suggests these populations have been linked with the alcohol misuse. Also, since prevention needs to start earlier, some mentioned beginning in Head Start programs.

Consider Adding Additional Activities To The PIPSA Program

Some alternative strategies to decrease underage drinking were presented in the focus groups and should be given adequate consideration in upcoming PIPSA meetings. If these are added to PIPSA’s strategic plan, goals and objectives should be declared and instruments measuring their process and impact should be developed.

Provide thrill-seeking activities

Some participants suggested thrill-seeking activities to be offered to youth, such as rock-climbing, ropes courses, and sky-diving. These are meant to replace the thrills of drinking and satisfy the natural need for excitement.

Host an annual Alachua County Health Fair

An organized health fair was suggested, acknowledging resources available to community members, as well as future town hall meetings, that will be funded by Nationwide Insurance. Coalition members explained that “events plant the seed.”
Use school facilities during “off” times

Some coalition members explained that during the summer months or holidays, school facilities could be used for PIPSA events or other programming, since “the liability insurance has already been paid.” Sports activities could be planned for the gyms and reading and board game tournaments could be offered in the libraries. The coalition also mentioned the need for more after-school programs, especially for middle-school children. Suggestions included sports programs, youth groups, and theater and dance programs that have “better focus” to encourage youth to participate in a variety of activities.

Increase excise tax

The coalition should make it a priority of getting the excise tax increased. “Current excise taxes and prices are too low not only by historical, but also and more importantly by the standard that prices (inclusive of tax) should reflect the full social cost of production and consumption: if an item is under priced, then too much will be purchased and consumed” (Bonnie and O’Connell 2004:241). Some coalition members mentioned the significance of beer being so cheap to adolescents, with many holding part-time maybe even full-time work positions. This change could slightly affect access for some youth and should be discussed within the coalition.

Showcase all PIPSA efforts

Organization is essential to the success of the PIPSA coalition. Some participants mentioned the necessity of coalition members communicating effectively, spreading the word of their respective agency’s activities to encourage greater involvement in the coalition. A stationary PIPSA bulletin board or a circulating calendar of PIPSA events was strongly suggested as a way for everyone to keep in contact regarding upcoming
events. These issues should be discussed in further detail at upcoming PIPSAA coalition meetings as possibilities in expanding the program to better reach youth at risk.

**Draft Process And Impact Instruments**

These previously mentioned suggestions should be addressed throughout the upcoming PIPSAA meetings. As a coalition, members should decide which activities are feasible to implement and prepare forms that will allow for documentation noting the process and impact of these activities. I would recommend a researcher’s help who is familiar with evaluation to help with instrument design. After a predetermined period of time, the coalition should have considerable baseline data to project goals and objectives relating to these activities. These goals and objectives should be agreed upon by the coalition and documented. Program growth can be monitored in terms of these measurements. An overall program strategic plan, listing all goals and objectives with activities directly relating to them, should be the finished product. An example of a strategic plan, based on PIPSAA’s previously declared goals and objectives is available in Appendix F. The strategic plan is a summary of program process and how these goals directly relate to the programs impact on its clients, which are in this case underage youth in Alachua County. It needs to answer why this is a good plan to reach underage youth, including not only coalition member’s professional expertise, but the literature on decreasing underage drinking and scientifically-based strategies that have proven effective in reaching this population.

**Base Instruments On A Comprehensive List Of PIPSAA Activities**

As a final note, it is crucial to record all activities and resources the PIPSAA coalition offers to Alachua County. Focus group data suggested activities and resources indirectly related to the coalition. These need to be included in the evaluation of the
program as well, since they may be contributing to alcohol misuse awareness, and more specifically PIPSA awareness. PIPSA’s strategic plan should show the extensions of the coalition. It is also important to note that Alachua County is the highest funded county in District 3 because of its population. The coalition should make it a priority to be fully aware of where this money is going, and where it may be better directed.

All programs affiliated with the coalition should be acknowledged in the evaluation. PIPSA needs to include the “Too Good For Drugs” research-based program survey instruments as an indication of coalition awareness as well as the D.A.R.E. program law enforcements officers in the coalition administer to area elementary and middle schools. Also, mock car crashes performed by law enforcement should be included since the Sheriff’s Department and Gainesville Police Department are affiliated with the coalition. Instruments measuring the impact of these educational programs should be drafted by the coalition, with researcher help, implemented and monitored.

Information regarding DUI checkpoints, relating to underage drinking, and Prom Night educational initiatives should be documented in terms of its process and impact of the coalition as well. Advertisements for checkpoints may be in the form of commercials, billboards and radio announcements, creating awareness and publicity about enforcement activities. This context is important to record, to note the process and determine the impact it has had on the community. It may be determined that more commercials are related to fewer underage drinking arrests, leading the coalition to encourage law enforcement to spend more on commercial advertising.

Programs like the Afternoon of Learning, where college students in the medical field go into middle schools and teach over fifteen thousand students a year, the
Hippodrome’s HITT prevention program, and the Corner Drug Store’s family-based prevention programs should all be included in terms of the coalition’s process and impact, since they all are considered affiliated with PIPSA. Even church announcements to the congregation regarding substance abuse activities should be reported and documented by coalition members. Future Town Hall Meetings and Alcohol Summits need to be documented in terms of its process and impact also. Actions from the Gainesville Hospitality Group, such as the signing of the business covenant, should be documented to show strides the affiliates of the PIPSA coalition are making.

Include Newly Suggested Resources In Coalition

Coalition members offered the idea of enforcement seizure money being donated to PIPSA, since this money is often redirected anyway. Law enforcement’s support of the coalition’s message suggests they may be willing to contribute to the funding of some activities. Law enforcement coalition members should work on getting seizure money donated to the PIPSA coalition. Movie theater trailer discounts may also ease the budget of PIPSA. Advertisements should be directed through discounted sources as much as possible. Future community focus groups, town hall meetings, and PIPSA coalition meetings should be announced in venues such as this.

Resources that are not in the traditional form should also be considered by the coalition. Coalition members mentioned the University of Florida’s political capital it may offer to the coalition if it were to be more involved in their activities, further emphasizing the need for fostering the community-university partnership. Also, key leaders in the community affiliated with the coalition could be a valuable resource as well and should be used to further increase the awareness and participation, encouraging other members of the community to contribute to the coalition.
Encourage Better Communication Between Coalition Members

Not only should all of these activities and resources be documented, but the coalition should have a working knowledge of what is occurring in the community. Comprehensive announcements at coalition meetings and disbursements of coalition minutes are crucial to keeping everyone who was not in attendance updated. If people do not feel they are contributing members of the coalition, and they are not aware of activities affiliated with the coalition, a detachment, much like the coalition has seen in the past, may occur with its members. This detachment could have significant affects in terms of its resources, which have a direct influence on the strength and impact of the coalition.

The following table will provide a summary of the suggestions offered to PIPSA. It should be noted they are numbered in order of priority. After these suggestions are addressed the coalition should be at a stage where they may begin to document program process and impact, according to their strategic plan, which outlines their specific program goals.
Table 7: Formative Evaluation Suggestions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF IMPROVEMENT (numbered in order of priority)</th>
<th>SOURCE OF SUGGESTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS (to ensure services are delivered to its intended populations in Alachua County)</td>
<td>(Lit.=Literature, FG’s=Focus Groups, R=Researcher)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2. Extend PIPSA Membership
- Foster Community-School Partnerships
  - Community-College Partnerships
    - Invite Bernie Machen
    - Invite University Police Dept.
  - Invite Elementary & Middle School Personnel
    - Invite School Nurses
    - Invite School Principals/Counselors
- Include Business Community
  - Invite Banking Community
  - Invite Shand’s Hospital
  - Invite Domino’s Pizza
  - Invite Gainesville Hospitality Group
- Involve Media
  - Use Discounted Movie Trailers to Advertise PIPSA Events
- Form Youth Advisory Committee
  - Include Youth Not Involved in Extracurricular Activities/Draw from Youth Who Have Histories of Alcohol Use
- Target Specific Populations of Youth (those listed below plus any other pop. linked with alcohol misuse)
  - ADD/ADHD classes
  - Juvenile Detention Centers

### 3. Include Newly Suggested Resources in Coalition
- Seizure $ (from drug raids)
- Co-sponsor University Events to Save $
Table 7. Continued

5. *Draft Process and Impact Instruments*
   - Create an Instrument for Every PIPSA Activity and Begin to Document

6. *Base Instruments on a Comprehensive List of PIPSA Activities*
   - Create a Strategic Plan (with all PIPSA activities matching goals directly)

8. *Encourage Better Communication between Coalition Members*
   - Create a Bulletin Board Showcasing All PIPSA-related Events

9. *Encourage Collaboration within PIPSA*
   - “linking-pin strategy”

7. *Improve PIPSA Attendance & Dialogue*
   - More Effective Advertising of PIPSA Events
   - Be Careful of Status Differentials

**IMPACT IMPROVEMENTS (to improve program impact on underage drinking in Alachua County)**

1. *Implement Scientifically-Based Strategies*
   - Early, Interactive, Family-Based Approaches

4. *Employ Alternative Strategies Suggested by Coalition Members*
   - Thrill-seeking activities
   - Host an Annual Alachua County Health Fair
   - Use School facilities during “off” times
   - Increase excise tax
This chapter outlines specific suggestions of program improvement for the PIPSA coalition. This study offered a formative evaluation of the program and stressed what needs to be done in order for program evaluation in the future to produce results that are tied directly to PIPSA program activities. The following chapter provides a summary of results of the study and discusses possible limitations and benefits it may have had.
CHAPTER 7
DISCUSSION

This chapter presents a summary of both the thematic results found in chapter five and the formative evaluation suggestions from chapter six. It offers limitations and benefits the study may have had and concludes with PIPSA’s theory of change, as presented by coalition members throughout the focus groups. Possibilities in future research regarding this study are presented as a final note.

Summary Of Results

The coalition appears to be knowledgeable and capable of effective approaches, according to current research, in decreasing underage drinking in Alachua County. Monitoring newly declared evaluation standards will contribute to the coalition showing its effectiveness in the community. Until this is accomplished, it is difficult to comment on the progress the coalition has brought to the community. Use of untapped resources, like additional money from police confiscations, and unused facilities like the school cafeteria during summer months, may allow for additional coalition activities, which in turn should lead to an increase in PIPSA awareness and participation. Overall, the coalition’s emphasis is on educating community members in the hopes of changing the normative “party” culture Alachua County presents to its youth. Early, interactive education is a key strategy that the coalition has suggested in decreasing underage drinking in the community.
Limitations Of Study

Participation

A major limitation of the study lies in the participation of coalition members. Not all coalition members’ opinions were included in the study. Even though various techniques were employed to attract participation (i.e. e-mail, personal phone calls from executive coalition members), less than half of the coalition membership was able to contribute to the focus groups. Study results may not include feedback from crucial segments of the PIPSA coalition that may hold varying perspectives than those presented. The study included thirty-five participants, with feedback coming from nineteen different coalition members. Individual work experiences inspired some coalition members to attend more than the focus group they were originally listed by. These nineteen members who participated in the study may hold very different views than those not taking part in it. In short, twenty-seven percent of the coalition were able to offer their views, but these may be dramatically different than the other seventy-three percent whose views were unable to be included in the study.

Incomplete Representation Of PIPSA Coalition

The civic and local agency sector, because of its limited number of coalition members and their inability to participate in scheduled and rescheduled focus groups, was unable to be represented in the study. Therefore, valuable insight from these coalition members is excluded from the results. This sector includes representatives from Alachua County’s Black on Black Crime Task Force, the Rotary Club, and Black Aids Services and Education. The Black on Black Crime Task Force representatives contribute to the coalition by expressing at-risk minority youth input, and assisting with recruitment of minority coalition members. The Rotary Club representatives specialize in locating local
resource for fundraising, grant writing and evaluation. A representative from the Black Aids Services and Education offers the coalition a minority health perspective. Without their valuable input, the results are further limited.

**Question Influence**

Considering those who participated in the study, questions asked in the focus group may not have provided them the opportunity to respond in an accurate and thorough way regarding their conception of the social issue of alcohol use in underage youth.

**Limited Multivocality**

Also, multivocality was not encouraged by the study design. Participants were asked to respond in a way that reflected their respective agency and the sector they were listed as in the coalition member roster. Coalition members may not have felt comfortable speaking from other perspectives they may hold through various other roles they play (i.e. parent, community member, or addict). Although some transcended these boundaries by speaking of their other roles, with sectors sometimes overlapping, the majority spoke from the role they were expected to represent. Therefore, results may not include all perspectives that coalition members may have, but may show only their perspective from the professional occupation they currently hold.

**Researcher Influence**

It is important to note the influence the principal investigator may have contributed to the focus groups, outside of interpreting results. Considering the researcher’s affiliations with the University of Florida, coalition members may have been hesitant to suggest the college culture’s contributions to underage drinking in the community. On the other hand, coalition members may have been reminded of the college culture by the presence of the researcher. Many times coalition members apologized when pointing to
the University as problem in the community. Also, because of the researcher’s closeness in age to college students and the youth, coalition members may not have disclosed information about their practices, possibly assuming this was common knowledge to her. Therefore, age may have also influenced the results of the study.

**Benefits Of Study**

**Collaboration**

This study offered coalition members an opportunity to express their perspectives on the social issue of underage drinking and rework their conceptions in light of fellow coalition members’ perspectives. In the process, it encouraged suggestions for improving the program to better reach community members, particularly youth, considering the new focus. Also, it helped “put a human face” on the coalition.

**Member Checking**

In addition, this study allowed for “member checking” (Krueger 1988). Underage drinking was declared a problem by executive coalition members at a coalition training prior to the focus groups. This study presented this idea in the focus groups to validate if the coalition members agreed. If they did not this study would have suggested a new focus for the coalition, based on the results. The prevalent feeling from the coalition members was that underage drinking in Alachua County should be the top priority of PIPSA. Consensus seemed to be that changing youth’s norms regarding underage drinking would result in a generational change in norms for the future.

**Community Assessment**

The strategic planning framework advocates first assessing community needs and resources, analyzing the problems and goals of the community and understanding the model of change the coalition hopes to employ. By accomplishing this stage, the study
allowed the coalition to get closer to the evaluation stage, which is important to the coalition in terms of monitoring progress and future funding opportunities.

**Informative And Exciting Nature Of Study**

This study also served to get people informed and excited about the new direction the coalition should take. Many coalition members were apologetic of their limited involvement in the coalition recently, and brainstormed throughout the focus groups of ways they could contribute better, offering promises of more productive participation for the future.

**Conclusion**

**Theory Of Change**

This study gave insight into the theory behind the Alachua County community-based coalition, PIPSA, from the coalition members’ perspective. Mostly these involved agency approaches to decreasing underage drinking in the community, employing scientifically-based strategies to educate community members, distract them with activities that encourage alcohol-free behavior, and to reward them if they are participating in “healthy” activities, but make them understand the consequences they may be subjected to if they participate in “unhealthy” behaviors.

**Future Research**

Future research focusing on community members’ perspectives will broaden the conception of the social issue of underage drinking present in Alachua County. It is highly advised to give community members a chance to offer their ideas. Morgan (1997:29) states, “by hearing the perspective of the program participants themselves, is wiser than simply assuming that the program worked for the reasons that its designers intended.” Input from community members may address strengths and weaknesses within
the program, which coalition members were unwilling or unable to address. Also, they may provide innovative approaches in dealing with substance abuse. Their involvement in the program construction process may further integrate community members into the program, and extend PIPSA awareness and participation.
APPENDIX A
PROTECTIVE AND RISK FACTORS

Protective Factors

Community Rewards for pro-social Involvement
Family Attachment
Family Opportunities for Pro-social Involvement
Family Rewards for Pro-social Involvement
School Opportunities for Pro-social Involvement
School Rewards for Pro-social Involvement
Religiosity
Social Skills
Belief in Moral Order

Risk Factors

Low Neighborhood Attachment
Community Disorganization
Personal Transitions and Mobility
Laws and Norms favorable to Alcohol
Perceived Availability of Alcohol
Poor Family Supervision
Poor Family Discipline
Family History of Antisocial Behavior
Parental Attitudes Favorable toward Alcohol Use
Parental Attitudes Favorable toward Antisocial Behavior
Poor Academic Performance
Lack of Commitment to School
Rebelliousness
Friends’ Delinquent Behavior
Friends’ Use of Alcohol
Peer Rewards for Antisocial Behavior
Favorable Attitudes toward Antisocial Behavior
Favorable Attitudes toward Alcohol Use
Low Perceived Risks of Alcohol Use
Early Initiation (of Alcohol Use and Antisocial Behavior)
Sensation Seeking
APPENDIX B
GAINESVILLE’S DRINKING SCENE

Figure B-1: Gainesville’s Drinking Scene Picture 1
Figure B-2: Gainesville’s Drinking Scene Picture 2
APPENDIX C
FOCUS GROUP HANDBOUTS

Project Title: Partners in Prevention of Substance Abuse (PIPSA) Evaluation Program

Purpose of the research study:
The purpose of this study is to evaluate the process and impact of the PIPSA coalition in Alachua county. I plan to invite no more than 70 coalition members to focus groups throughout the course of this study.

What will you be asked to do in this study:
You will be asked to participate in a focus group. You will be asked questions regarding your knowledge of the coalition and strategies to improve the program, as well as your experiences working with the program.

Time required:
The interviews will last between approximately 60 minutes.

Confidentiality:
Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. All focus groups will be tape recorded. The data from the focus groups will be analyzed by the Principal Investigator using qualitative data analysis techniques. Identifiers will not be used on the actual data transcriptions; they will only have a code number on them. A list of identification numbers with the participant names will be kept separately in a locked filing cabinet behind a locked door. The tapes will be destroyed once they are transcribed.

Potential benefits and anticipated risk:
There is no compensation for participating in this study. There are no anticipated risks to you for participating in this study. Anticipated benefits include providing coalition members a chance to voice their opinions about the structure of the program and any strategies to improve it. Any possible improvement of the program may result in a higher degree of drug abuse prevention.

Voluntary participation:
Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to answer any question and you may end your participation at anytime. There is no penalty for not participating.

Right to withdraw from the study:
You have the right to withdraw from the study at anytime without consequence.

Whom to contact if you have questions about this study:
Principal Investigator:
Kelly Dever, Department of Sociology, University of Florida, 3219 Turlington Hall, P.O.
Box 117330, Gainesville, FL 32611, (352) 392-0265 ext. 163, dever06@ufl.edu

Supervisors:
Barbara Zsembik, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Associate Chair, Department of
Sociology, 3219 Turlington Hall, Phone: (352) 392-0251, ext. 226, zsembik@soc.ufl.edu
Jodi Lane, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Criminology, Law and Society, 212
Walker Hall, Phone: (352) 392-1025, ext. 212, jlane@crim.ufl.edu

For questions about your rights as a research participant:
Please contact the IRB at 352-392-0433 or PO Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611.

Agreement: I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily agree to participate
in the procedure and I have received a copy of this description.

Participant: ___________________________________________ Date:
_____________________________________________________

Principal Investigator: _______________________________ Date:
_____________________________________________________
Figure C-1: Alachua County Problem Diagram
Figure C-2: PIPSA'S Service Utilization Plan
**APPENDIX D**
EXAMPLE PROCESS MEASURES

**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING FORM**

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## COALITION MEETING FORM

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<th>Length of Mtg?</th>
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*Reasons for meeting not held (include month)*

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______________________________
**MEETING ATTENDANCE ROSTER**

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<tr>
<th>Partner Agencies</th>
<th>Name of Attendee</th>
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<td>Alachua County Court Services</td>
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<td>Alachua County Health Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alachua County Sheriff’s Office</td>
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<td>Alachua Learning Center, Inc.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alachua County Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beasley Middle School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big Brothers/ Big Sisters of Greater Gainesville</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black on Black Crime Task Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boys and Girls Club of Alachua County</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cedar Ridge 4-H Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>Center for Cooperative Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children’s Home Society</td>
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<td>Department of Children and Families</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of Juvenile Justice</td>
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<td>Drug Enforcement Administration</td>
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<td>FADAA</td>
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Families Against Drugs
FDLE Gainesville Branch Office
Gainesville Housing Authority
Gainesville Job Corps Center
Gainesville Police Department
Gateway School
Hippodrome State Theatre
HRH Insurance
Juvenile Assessment Center
Makare Publishing
Martin Luther King Commission
Meridian Behavioral Healthcare
Metamorphosis
NE Florida Education Consortium
Office for a Drug Free Community
Office of the State Attorney
PACE Center for Girls
People in Transition Counseling
PK Yonge Developmental Research School
Planned Parenthood
Putnam County Sheriff’s Office
Santa Fe Community College
School Board of Alachua County
Seminole County Sheriff’s Office
Shands Heathcare
Shands at Vista
S. J. Lawrence Consulting
Suwannee County School Board
Suwannee River Area Health Education Center
United Church of Gainesville
United Way of Alachua County
United Way of Suwannee Valley
University of Florida
Worthington Pediatrics
*Additional*

Creation Two (after-school program for youth)

Department of Health and Human Services
COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES FORM

Community Representatives invited to address gaps in the current coalition membership?

1. Name: __________
   Title: __________
   Topic: __________
   Date: __________

2. Name: __________
   Title: __________
   Topic: __________
   Date: __________

3. Name: __________
   Title: __________
   Topic: __________
   Date: __________

4. Name: __________
   Title: __________
   Topic: __________
   Date: __________

5. Name: __________
   Title: __________
   Topic: __________
   Date: __________

Total: __________
EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP FORM

07/06- 06/07

1. Workshop Subject: ___________
   Date of Presentation: ___________
   Length of Presentation: ________
   Facilitator: _______________

2. Workshop Subject: ___________
   Date of Presentation: ___________
   Length of Presentation: ________
   Facilitator: _______________

Additional Workshops

3. Workshop Subject: ___________
   Date of Presentation: ___________
   Length of Presentation: ________
   Facilitator: _______________

4. Workshop Subject: ___________
   Date of Presentation: ___________
   Length of Presentation: ________
   Facilitator: _______________
STATE AND NATIONAL CONFERENCE FORM

National
PIPSA representatives sent:
1. Name: ____________________
   Signature: __________________
   Dates of conference: __________

2. Name: ____________________
   Signature: __________________
   Dates of conference: __________

State
PIPSA representatives sent:
1. Name: ____________________
   Signature: __________________
   Dates of conference: __________

2. Name: ____________________
   Signature: __________________
   Dates of conference: __________
YOUTH COALITION SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBER ROSTER

Members:
1. ______________
2. ______________
3. ______________
4. ______________
5. ______________
6. ______________
7. ______________
8. ______________
9. ______________
10. ______________
VOLUNTEER SPEAKER’S BUREAU MEMBER FORM

Members:

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

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________________________________________

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<th>Meeting minutes disseminated?</th>
<th>Other Communication?</th>
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REGIONAL ALCOHOL SUMMIT FORM (2006)

Date: ______________
Location: __________
Attendance (based on registration):
   Adults _______
   Youth _______
Theme: ___________
RED RIBBON WEEK FORM (2006)

Activities:
Poster Contest
# of participants __________
# of schools represented ________

Essay Contest
# of participants __________
# of schools represented ________

Lectures
# of student participants __________
# of adult participants __________
# of schools represented ________
FAMILY DAY FORM

1. # of families registered ____________________
LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES FORM

1. How many letters sent out? ____________
2. How many articles from coalition members were published? ______________
APPENDIX E
EXAMPLE IMPACT MEASURES

PIPSA AWARENESS/PARTICIPATION/ALCOHOL USE/ATTITUINAL SURVEY

I. Demographic Information
1. Date: _____________
2. Gender: ___________
3. School:____________
4. Age: ______________
5. Grade: ____________
6. Race/Ethnicity: _____

Social Information:
1. Have you ever been arrested?  
   For what? ______________
2. What neighborhood do you live in? ______________
3. What social organizations are you part of?

4. Grade Point Average (weighted)/Average grade (if middle/jr. high):_______
5. Do you attend church regularly? □ no □ yes
6. Do your friends use alcohol? □ no □ yes
7. Is alcohol available at your school? □ no □ yes
8. How many days of school did you miss last year?

II. Awareness
   (open-ended questions)
   1. What do you know about Partners in Prevention of Substance Abuse (PIPSA)?

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

   2. Have you ever heard of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PIPS A Activity</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. PIPS A Educational Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. PIPS A Youth Drug Summit</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. PIPS A Youth Advisory Committee</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. PIPS A Letter Campaigns</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
E. PIPS A Red Ribbon Week –Poster contest  □ □
F. PIPS A Red Ribbon Week –Essay contest  □ □
G. PIPS A’s Family Day  □ □

III. Participation
1. Have you ever participated in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PIPS A Activity</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. PIPS A Educational Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. PIPS A Letter Campaigns</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. PIPS A Red Ribbon Week –Poster contest</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. PIPS A Red Ribbon Week –Essay contest</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
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<tr>
<td>G. PIPS A’s Family Day</td>
<td>□</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

IV. Marketing
1. Have you ever seen/heard:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. E-mail announcement re: above activities</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Flyer re: above activities</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Banner re: above activities</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. School announcement re: above activities</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Commercial re: above activities</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Letter re: above activities</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
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V. Alcohol Use/Attitudinal Survey

(Instructions: Read each statement. Check off the answer that best shows how you feel.)

YES! = You REALLY agree with the statement
yes = You sort of agree with the statement
no = You sort of disagree with the statement
NO! = You REALLY disagree with the statement

1. a. I have tried to smoke a cigarette at least once in my life. □ □ □ □ □
   b. PIPS A activities/workshops have influenced my decision. □ □ □ □ □

2. a. It is OK for kids my age to drink beer and wine. □ □ □ □ □
   b. PIPS A activities/workshops have influenced my decision. □ □ □ □ □

3. a. I think I might drink some beer or wine in the next year. without my family knowing. □ □ □ □ □
   b. PIPS A activities/workshops have influenced my decision. □ □ □ □ □
4. a. Cigarette smoking is good for my body.
   b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision.

5. a. Lots of people my age smoke.
   b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision.

6. a. I hate school.
   b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision.

7. a. I love my family.
   b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision.

8. a. I can get cigarettes to smoke if I want to.
   b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision.

9. a. I tried at least one drink of beer or wine in my life.
   b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision.

10.a. It is OK for kids my age to smoke marijuana.
      b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision.

11.a. I think I might smoke cigarettes in the next year without my family knowing.
      b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision.

12.a. It could hurt me to drink a lot of beer or wine all at once.
      b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision.

13.a. Lots of people my age smoke cigarettes.
      b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision.

14.a. My teacher likes me.
      b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision.

15.a. My family loves me.
      b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision.

16.a. I can get marijuana to smoke if I want to.
      b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision.

17.a. It is OK for kids my age to smoke cigarettes.
      b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision.

18.a. Lots of people my age drink beer and wine.
b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision. 

19.a. I like school.  
b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision. 

20.a. Smoking marijuana is good for my body.  
b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision. 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO!</th>
<th>no</th>
<th>yes</th>
<th>YES!</th>
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</table>

21.a. I like to talk to my family.  
b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision. 

22.a. I can get beer or wine to drink if I want to.  
b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision. 

23.a. I think I might smoke marijuana in the next year without my family knowing.  
b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision. 

24.a. I disobey my teachers.  
b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision. 

25.a. I have tried to smoke marijuana at least once in my life.  
b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision. 

26.a. School is a happy place.  
b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision. 

27.a. I listen to my family.  
b. PIPSA activities/workshops have influenced my decision.
Educational Workshop Survey

Topic: _________________

Presenter: _______________

Date: ________________

PRE-TEST
I. Demographic Questions:
   1. Name___________
   2. Age: ___________
   3. Race/Ethnicity: ____________
   4. School/Job Position: ________

II. Open-ended Questions:
   1. What experiences do you have with this issue/topic?
      _____________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________
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   2. What do you expect to get out of this workshop?
      _____________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________
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Educational Workshop Survey (POST-TEST)
Instructions: Please rate the presenter based on the following scale.
(Likert Scale – 1=poor or not likely; 2=fair or somewhat likely; 3=good or likely; 4=excellent or highly likely; 5=not applicable)

I. Presenter Evaluation:
1. Presenter was knowledgeable regarding course content? ______
2. Presenter answered questions clearly and completely? _____
3. Presenter gave clear instructions for each exercise? _____
4. Presenter defined terms and concepts clearly? _____
5. Presenter was well prepared and organized? _____

II. Presentation Content:
1. I will be able to implement the concepts learned in my work? ________________________
2. The training was relevant to my needs? ______
3. Presentation objectives were stated? ______
4. The content fulfilled the presentation objectives? ______
5. Length of the presentation was appropriate? ______
6. Presentation had the right combination of theory and practice? ___
7. The logic and sequence of topics was appropriate? _____
8. Do you feel like you know more about this topic than when you came in? _____

Open-Ended Questions:
1. What did you learn?________________________________
2. Is this relevant to you? Why or Why not?
   ______________________________________________________
3. What topics would you like to see in an educational workshop in the future?______________________________
4. Do you have any additional comments about this workshop?
   ______________________________________________________
Primary Agency Goals (Process):

1. To continue to coordinate the efforts of the Partners in Prevention of Substance Abuse (PIPSA) Coalition to develop and provide a full continuum of substance abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment programs.
   
   **Objectives:**
   - Hold monthly PIPSA Executive Council meetings
   - Hold Bi-monthly meetings with the full Coalition
   - Conduct on-going program evaluation of the progress of the Coalition and its prevention, intervention and treatment components

2. Increase collaboration among youth, families and other citizens, and local and state anti-drug initiatives in the planning and development of community anti-drug efforts.
   
   **Objectives:**
   - Invite additional community representatives to address gaps in the current coalition membership (performance criterion – not set)
   - Host two community workshops on substance abuse prevention per year
   - Send two PIPSA Coalition members to national and state conferences to network and gain ideas
   - Develop a Youth Coalition to be a sub-committee of the PIPSA coalition
   - Develop a Volunteer Speakers Bureau as part of the PIPSA coalition
   - Establish and maintain the relationship with the Higher Education Coalitions through the UF Campus Alcohol and Substance Abuse Resource Center

   
   **Objectives:**
   - Host one Regional Drug Summit per year
   - Red Ribbon Week Activities (poster and essay contest, recognition luncheon)
   - Participate in Family Day
   - Encourage Legislative Activities (letter campaigns, Op Ed pieces)

Primary Client Goals (Impact):

1. To reverse the trend and stop the increase in alcohol use in Alachua County.
   
   **Objective:**
   - To decrease by 5% the alcohol use trend (past 30 day use) by Alachua County students.
2. To reverse the trend and stop the increase in marijuana use in Alachua County.  
**Objective:**  
✓ To decrease by 5% the marijuana use trend (past 30 day use) by Alachua County students.

**Secondary Client Goals** (Impact):  
1. Increase awareness of the PIPSA program  
   **Objective:**  
   ✓ Any increase in awareness from time 1 and time 2  
2. Increase participation at PIPSA activities  
   **Objective:**  
   ✓ Any increase in participation at PIPSA activities between time 1 and time 2  
3. Educate workshop attendees regarding substance abuse issues  
   **Objective:**  
   Performance criterion dependent on goals of workshop & pre/post surveys
LIST OF REFERENCES


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Kelly Ann Dever is a second-year graduate student in the Department of Sociology at the University of Florida. Her current work focuses on program development and evaluation research that address public health and community-based approaches to the prevention of health problems, particularly substance abuse issues. Prior to graduate school, she worked at a social science research company, Westat, as an interviewer. Her research there included studies contracted by the Centers for Disease Control, the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Roswell Park Cancer Institute, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the United States Department of Education, and the Treasury Department. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree at Stetson University in 2002 from the Department of Sociology. During her studies there, she worked for Stetson’s Institute for Social Research (SISR), conducting telephone interviews for various projects. Kelly is planning to begin her Ph.D. course work in the fall semester of 2006. In addition, she will gain valuable teaching experience, since she has been asked to teach an introductory level sociology class of University of Florida undergraduates.