

## **Oregon Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Prevention Program**

### **What:**

**Oregon's FAS** prevention program focuses on reducing the incidence of alcohol-exposed pregnancies. In order to be successful, the target audience focused on women at two public universities in Oregon, University of Oregon, and Western Oregon University. The premise was that when a woman engages in risky or binge drinking, is sexually active and doesn't use birth control, she is at greater risk for becoming pregnant and having a baby with birth defects or brain damage caused by heavy drinking, such as Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. We also know that most women who drink alcohol will continue to drink until their pregnancy is confirmed, four to eight weeks after conception.

With funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities, Oregon developed an intervention called Oregon BALANCE, with an accompanying social marketing campaign called Don't Open This. The intervention was based on a counseling technique called Motivational Interviewing. The social marketing campaign was conducted for a three month period of time at both universities to increase enrollment into Oregon BALANCE and to create awareness regarding binge drinking and alcohol-exposed pregnancy.

### **How:**

Oregon BALANCE was operated out of the Student Health Centers at both universities. Women were recruited into the intervention via their use of the health center, as well as through the social marketing campaign. Women also received gift cards of \$45 for participating and completing the intervention. Counselors conducted two sessions for women using the Motivational Interviewing Counseling approach.

Outreach for the social marketing campaign included the development of a variety of campaign tools such as posters, fact cards, stickers, and a website, [www.DontOpenThis.org](http://www.DontOpenThis.org). Materials were distributed around the campuses, and campaign coordinators were hired part time at each campus.

**Results:**

**Demographics:**

<b># women screened</b>	<b>841</b>
<b># women screened eligible</b>	<b>544</b>
<b># women eligible and contacted</b>	<b>493</b>
<b># women completed session I</b>	<b>265</b>
<b># women completed session II</b>	<b>215</b>

**How women were recruited:**

<b>Reached through “Don’t Open This” – 32%</b>	<b>Reached through other means – 68%</b>
Fact card or poster Website Campus paper Bar or restaurant Radio Class Dorm/sorority presentation  210 responses	Health center Friend or acquaintance Other (not specified or no answer)  444 responses

Women who said the BALANCE interview and Blood Alcohol Table got them thinking and being more careful – 95 (93%)

Women who discussed what they had learned in Balance with their friends – 39 (38%)

Those who claimed to have reduced their drinking at the Second Interview – 52 (51%)

### **A Success Story:**

“After our conversation I really am conscious of how much I drink each time I’m out with friends. I haven’t gone past three drinks in a long time and I try to drink them slowly. I’ve been listening to my body and I’ve started to talk to some of my friends about alcoholism.” --Participant

### **Conclusion:**

Participants entering the intervention were heavy drinkers. Oregon BALANCE documented a decrease in drinking in the intervention population, although from the beginning, participants were effective at using contraception.

### **Funding Source:**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
5 year Cooperative Agreement – September 30, 2004 – September 29, 2009  
\$300,000/yr