

Computer-delivered interventions to reduce college student drinking: a meta-analysis

Author(s)

Carey KB, Scott-Sheldon LA, Elliott JC et al.

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Abstract

AIMS: This meta-analysis evaluates the efficacy of computer-delivered interventions (CDIs) to reduce alcohol use among college students.**METHODS:** We included 35 manuscripts with 43 separate interventions, and calculated both between-group and within-group effect sizes for alcohol consumption and alcohol-related problems. Effects sizes were calculated for short-term (≤ 5 weeks) and long-term (≥ 6 weeks) intervals. All studies were coded for study descriptors, participant characteristics and intervention components.**RESULTS:** The effects of CDIs depended on the nature of the comparison condition: CDIs reduced quantity and frequency measures relative to assessment-only controls, but rarely differed from comparison conditions that included alcohol-relevant content. Small-to-medium within-group effect sizes can be expected for CDIs at short- and long-term follow-ups; these changes are less than or equivalent to the within-group effect sizes observed for more intensive interventions.**CONCLUSIONS:** CDIs reduce the quantity and frequency of drinking among college students. CDIs are generally equivalent to alternative alcohol-related comparison interventions.

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