

Avoiding counterproductive results: An experimental pretest of a harm reduction intervention on attitude toward party drugs among users and nonusers.

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Abstract

In two experimental studies, the authors tested written health education materials on the personal acceptance of party drug use. Following a harm reduction strategy, the materials provided information on minimizing potential hazards associated with drug use. Among users and nonusers, potential aversive effects of these materials were examined on measures of attitude, intention, and outcome expectancy toward party drug use. Participants were recruited in the city center of Maastricht, The Netherlands, in nightlife settings that were popular among young people. In the first experiment, a leaflet on ecstasy use was evaluated among ecstasy users and nonusers. Results showed neither health promoting effects, nor counterproductive results on the outcome measures. In the second experiment, the effects of two different formats (leaflet vs. infocard) about two different kinds of party drugs (ecstasy vs. GHB) were compared within a non using population. Again, results showed no positive changes on the outcome measures toward ecstasy use as a result of exposure to the ecstasy materials. However, exposure to the GHB materials

resulted into a more negative attitude, toward GHB use (leaflet and infocard) and lower estimates of the likelihood of positive outcomes of use (infocard). The study's limitations and implications are discussed, including the need for experimental pretesting. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2009 APA, all rights reserved)

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