Substance Use Programs from Counseling and Health Services

Below are the on campus programs we provide for the students pertaining to this topic and a brief description of each.

**AlcoholEdu/ AlcoholEdu for Sanctions:** This is an online program that all incoming freshmen (AlcoholEdu) have to complete. It is designed to reduce the negative effects of alcohol consumption amongst college age students. There are two parts to this program- Part 1 to be completed before the first day of fall semester classes for freshman, and Part 2 to be completed 30 days after completion of Part 1. AlcoholEdu for Sanctions is similar to AlcoholEdu, but is designed for students who have committed low-level alcohol violation on Rensselaer campus. AlcoholEdu for Sanctions also comes with 2 parts.

**BASICS:** Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students is a program designed to limit excessive college student drinking. It also helps students identify risky drinking behaviors and situations, learn risk reduction drinking strategies, and reflect on students’ own drinking behaviors after receiving a Personalized Feedback Report on students’ drinking behaviors. This is offered as a judicial sanction. This is a two session 2-hour course. Students are judicially sanctioned to this program after committing a higher level alcohol violation on Rensselaer campus.

**Relationship and the Social Scene:** This is part of the incoming freshman student orientation schedule. It explores how students interact with each other outside of the classroom. A part of this program offered by the Health Center is dedicated to substance use. Students are exposed to the dangers of substance use, and given strategies to reduce risky behaviors while members of the Rensselaer community.

**AA Meetings:** Alcohol Anonymous meetings are available on campus for students who wish to engage. The schedule for the meetings for the semester is as follows:

- **Mixed Gender**- Mondays 7:00pm-800PM at Samaritan Hospital, 2215 Burdette Ave. 2nd Fl. Pattison Boardroom (contact: Claudia 518-269-5522)
- **Women’s AA Meetings**- Wednesdays 6:30pm-7:30pm at St. John’s Episcopal Church 146 1st St. Troy, NY. 12180 (contact Tara Schuster 518-276-2305)
- **Young Adult AA Meetings**- Fridays 7:00pm-8:00pm at RPI Chapel & Cultural Center 2125 Burdette Avenue, Troy NY12180 (contact Tara Schuster 518-276-2305)

**Bystander Intervention:** This program is offered to students who request it. All first year athletes are currently mandated to take this program during the spring semester of their first year as a varsity athlete. This program is also offered to Fraternities and Sororities who request it. It helps students recognize potential harmful/risky situations (i.e. sexual misconduct, hazing, bullying, alcohol and drug overdose) involving themselves and/or their peers, and to identify ways to step up as interveners to diffuse the situation.
Health Education Programs: Throughout the course of the academic year, the Health Educators (Tara Schuster and Nii Opare-Addo) and counseling center staff are invited into residence halls, fraternity/sorority houses, and athletic houses to discuss various topics. Drug use and education is one of the topics frequently discussed at these programs. The students request the topic for these programs. Tara Schuster can be reached by email at: schust@rpi.edu and Nii Opare-Addo can be contacted by his email at: oparem@rpi.edu

TIPS for Universities: This program is mandated for all Greek-lettered organizations to complete yearly before being allowed to host any social events. It provides a baseline knowledge and understanding of bystander intervention, and how it can be used to decrease the risk associated with alcohol use, drug use, and/or sexual misconduct at parties/social events.

Speaker Series: As part of the student orientation, Student Health Center brings in Mike Dilbeck to speak to all the incoming freshmen students. Mr. Dilbeck dives into various scenarios where students can be effective intereners for potentially dangerous situations. As part of his presentation, Mr. Dilbeck commits a portion of his time to discussing the effects of alcohol and other drugs. He explores with the students way to be safe and avoid potentially risky situations while enrolled at RPI.

Student Health also brings in a speaker once every year to discuss topics including Sexual Misconduct, Mental Health, and Illegal/Illicit drugs. The speakers for these topics are brought in on a rotational basis or as-needed (i.e. this year we brought in Dan Savage who focused on Sexual Health and Sexual Misconduct).

Greek 101 and Social 101: This is specific to Greek-lettered organizations. Greek 101 is offered to all new rushes each semester on the effects of alcohol and other drug usages, review potential harmful behaviors, and offered resources both on and off-campus that students can turn to for more information. Similar to Greek 101, Social 101 is offered to current members and leaders of the Greek-lettered organization.

Substance Abuse Counselor: Lydia Rest, LCSW is RPI’s substance abuse counselor. She has previously worked at Conifer Park’s inpatient treatment facility on the rehab units as well as detox and withdrawal units. She provides substance abuse assessments through the counseling center and offers individual treatment to those students seeking recovery from alcohol or drug use. She can also offer individualized referrals to other levels of treatment, based on a student’s needs.

Residence Hall Office Hours: On Wednesdays from 2-5pm, our resident substance abuse counselor (Lydia Rest, LCSW) offers drop-in hours at the Office for Living and Learning for those students who cannot make it to the counseling center. Students can utilize these hours for mental health issues as well as substance abuse issues.

Marijuana 101: Students who receive a sanction for marijuana are assigned to an online program called Marijuana 101. They will pay a fee and engage in the online program that offers education and works to enhance motivation around avoiding further drug use. After the student has completed part one of the online program they are directed to meet with Lydia Rest, LCSW
for an assessment. During the assessment we explore motivation for change and the results of the drug assessment. Recommendations are made based on the outcome of the assessment and the student is directed to complete part two of the online program. This whole process can be resolved in 30 days.

-Upcoming Onetime Programs: In April, a fraternity looking to regain its charter is showing the movie, “Chasing the Dragon.” This movie has a huge focus on illegal/illicit drugs, as well as prescription drugs. After the showing, there will be a panel discussion with people from the community who have had history with substance abuse/overdose who will share their stories. -The Alcohol and Other Drugs committee charged by Dr. Ross also was successful in pushing for Public Safety officers to carry Narcan on their bodies to help save lives of those who have overdosed on opioids.

RA training: During RA training over the summer, staff from Health and Counseling educate and train RA’s on how to identify and respond to alcohol and drug violations in the residence halls. This training is then carried over into the Behind Closed Doors series where students are presented with specific role play scenes. One scene involves how to confront and respond to drug and alcohol issues in the residence hall. Substance abuse counselor, Lydia Rest, LCSW is on hand to observe and give feedback during this scene.

Alcohol and Drug Treatment Available Off Campus

Conifer Park Intensive Outpatient: This is an outpatient treatment program that provides group therapy, individual treatment and medication management. They are located at 2435 Sixth Ave Troy, NY 12180 phone: (518) 273-1350

Hudson Mohawk Recovery Center: This is also an outpatient treatment program that provides individual and group therapy. They also provide evaluations for people referred by the court system or other agencies. They are located at 1724 Fifth Ave. Troy, NY 12180 phone: (518) 272-3918

AA and NA meetings in the community: http://aaalbanyny.org/meetings/
Al-Anon meetings: Same website as listed above.