

BULLET BACKGROUND PAPER

ON

TOOL KIT FOR BUILDING A CULTURE OF RESPONSIBLE CHOICES (CoRC) INTO HEART LINK SPOUSE ORIENTATIONS

PURPOSE

- Heart Link is an AF-wide spouse orientation program designed to “blue” spouses within the first five years of their introduction to life in the Air Force. The alcohol and drug abuse prevention program, Culture of Responsible Choices (CoRC), was introduced in FY 06. The program approach applies to a wide range of human factors that impair mission readiness – including alcohol misuse, illegal drugs, tobacco, fitness (diet and exercise), safety, injury prevention, etc

DISCUSSION

- Irresponsible drinking and/or drug use is incompatible with AF core values
 - FY04 rate of 4.5 drug positives per 1000 tested – relatively low, but still represents cost to the Air Force in lost training, cost of administration of justice, etc
- Alcohol misuse represents a clear and present danger to mission, morale and discipline
 - Average of 5200 alcohol-related incidents/year in the AF for the past 5 years
 - 2 out of 5 Airmen (E1-E3) report that drinking negatively impacts their work performance
 - 33% suicides, 57% sexual assaults, 29% domestic violence, and 44% of motor vehicle accidents are alcohol related
- CoRC is a commander’s program whose focus is on cultural factors related to irresponsible choices concerning alcohol misuse and illegal drug use and their consequences; cultural shift should be responsibility and safety-based, not morality based
- Four core elements involved in change to a culture of responsible choices
 - **Leadership Change:** Involves any and all interventions to assist the leaders on a base to develop awareness of this problem and to understand the value of addressing this problem through the use of science-based prevention strategies.

-- **Individual Level Change:** All Airmen must be responsible for knowing and living the AF Core Values and should have a role in base level CoRC initiatives (establishing a Wingman culture)

-- Direct supervisors promote commitment to responsible alcohol consumption and no illegal drug use, e.g. personal history, peer mentoring, attitudes, knowledge/norms, mid-level supervisor training, responsibility agreement review with supervisors.

-- **Base Community Change:** Enhance awareness of potentially devastating consequences of drug use/positive drug test, e.g. sexual assault, accidental overdose, felony charge, career loss/discharge from AF

-- Persistent and dynamic public messages promoting responsible drinking and busting alcohol myths

-- A CoRC slogan to establish cultural and behavioral norms: “Work Hard/Play Smart”

-- Implement a wide variety of alcohol-free late-night activities for families and singles e.g. direct and indirect drinking and drug-related messages/practices

-- Insert educational information about CoRC into a variety of base venues, e.g. Heart Link

-- **Local Community:** Concentrate efforts at population level for the community that directly targets cultural beliefs, environmental, policy, and activities that promote alcohol misuse or drug use; target is the total community population (on and off base)

-- Develop prevention coalitions with community agencies; enlist support and review possible unintended consequences of policies impacting the community

CONCLUSION: It is important to educate AF spouses and family members on the making responsible choices; the attached slides should be added as part of every Heart Link program.

