

Roseau County business survey results

February 2011

Introduction

The Roseau County Prevention Coalition (RCPC) is one of nine ATOD prevention community coalitions in Minnesota funded by the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division. Its mission is to partner with groups, organizations, and the community, and to work together for the reduction and prevention of underage alcohol, tobacco, and drug use in Roseau County. Hoping to strengthen their collaboration with the business community, the RCPC, in collaboration with Wilder Research, collected information from business owners and managers in the communities of Roseau and Warroad about their perceptions of prevention and the coalition.

Surveys were administered between October 2010 and January 2011. A total of 189 businesses were contacted by mail or telephone; of those, 89 completed the survey for a response rate of 47 percent. The following summarizes the key findings from the Roseau and Warroad business survey.

Description of respondents and businesses

About half of the total respondents identified themselves as the business owner, while one-third self-identified as a manager. About half described their business as either wholesale or retail trade (27%) or a professional service (26%), with the other half representing a wide range of businesses. The majority of respondents (93%) said their business did not sell or serve alcohol. Most (75%) indicated that their business was located in Roseau, while 18 percent owned or managed a business in Warroad. A few (7%) had multiple locations.

The median number of years businesses had been in operation was 20 years, although this ranged from less than one year to 106 years. Most respondents (92%) had no previous professional affiliation with the RCPC, although a few were either current (5%) or former (3%) members of the coalition. About one-

quarter (26%) had participated in RCPC-sponsored prevention activities in the past.

Perceptions of underage drinking

All business owners/managers “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that keeping youth in the community safe and healthy was important to them. The vast majority (98%) opposed underage drinking, and most felt underage drinking has negative consequences for youth (99%) as well as the larger community (94%). Most (96% to 97%) also said it was important to prevent underage youth from drinking and supported underage drinking prevention efforts.

Many owners/managers (85%) felt that underage drinking is a problem in the community, although perceptions differed somewhat across the two cities. While all of Warroad business owners (100%) felt underage drinking in the community is problematic, only 82 percent of those with businesses in Roseau felt it is a problem in their community. Differences were not statistically significant, however.

Perceptions of the RCPC

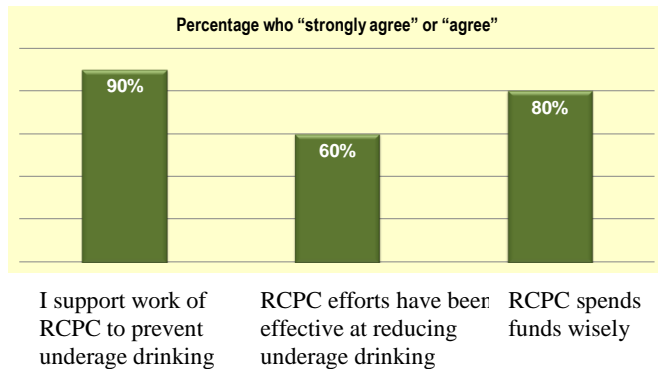
Many respondents were not familiar with the RCPC and its activities. About one-third were “not at all familiar” with the coalition itself or its mission and goals. Nearly half to three-quarters of respondents (43% to 76%) were not aware of coalition activities, such as the Most of Us campaign, the Northwest Minnesota Mentoring Program, compliance checks, beverage server training, the parent safe home directory, and youth prevention programs/curricula. The lack of publicity about the RCPC was cited as the most prevalent concern among respondents.

Despite this lack of familiarity, 9 in 10 respondents were supportive of the RCPC’s prevention efforts. Although some (19%) did not feel these efforts were effective, 6 in 10 thought they were; 21 percent were unsure. All business owners in Warroad (100%) thought efforts were effective, while somewhat fewer Roseau

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respondents (75%) agreed. Differences were not statistically significant, however. Most (80%) also felt that the coalition spent their funds wisely; 18 percent disagreed.

PERCEPTIONS OF COALITION ACTIVITIES



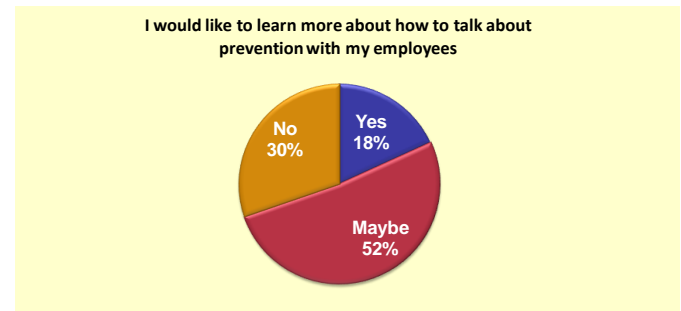
Findings suggest that some businesses hold misperceptions about the RCPC. One-third mistakenly believe that the coalition operates under the direction of Roseau County law enforcement, while nearly one in five (18%) think local taxes are used to support the coalition. While no business owners in Warroad thought local taxes supported the coalition, about half of Roseau respondents (53%) did, a difference that was statistically significant.

Employee beliefs and interactions

All respondents who employ staff and felt they could speak to the issue thought either all (53%) or at least some (20%) of their employees were opposed to underage drinking. Nearly half (46%) had spoken with at least some of their employees about preventing underage drinking, while one-third had not had those conversations; the remaining respondents had no employees or were not sure.

Eighteen percent did indicate interest in learning more about how to talk to employees about prevention issues. About half expressed tentative interest, while 30 percent were not interested.

INTEREST IN TALKING WITH EMPLOYEES



Although not statistically significant, 22 percent of Roseau business owners said "yes," they were interested in learning how to talk to employees about prevention, while in Warroad, no owners (0%) expressed this same level of interest.

Opportunities to partner with businesses

Although many respondents were either satisfied with their current relationship with the RCPC or had no suggestions for enhancing the relationship, some did. The one consistent recommendation was to more broadly advertise the work of the RCPC. A few respondents were open to having the coalition contact them directly to educate them about the RCPC, and offered their assistance.

Next steps

While business owners/managers are generally supportive of RCPC efforts, there are some opportunities for advancing work with businesses:

- Actively publicize the mission of the RCPC
- Engage in an open dialogue with owners and managers about prevention
- Reach out to frontline workers as well
- Identify champions in the community
- Re-evaluate efforts in the future to identify progress made and work still needed

Funding for this evaluation and report was provided by the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division.

For more information

This summary presents highlights of the *Roseau County business survey results report*. For more information about this report, contact Monica Idzelis at Wilder Research, 651-280-2657.

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