

Koreatown Impaired Driving Prevention Project
Fact Sheet
March 2006

Identifying Drinking Related Problems Among Korean Americans

1. CULTURAL BARRIERS: Koreans, like other AAPIs, have low social inhibition to drive after drinking.

Focus on AAPI population (NHTSA, Racial and Ethnic Group Comparisons National Surveys of Drinking and Driving – Attitudes and Behavior – 1993, 1995, and 1997.)

- 13% of AAPIs admitted driving within 2 hours of drinking during the past 12 months. The majority were between the ages of 1-29 years.
- 15% of AAPIs self-reported being over the legal limit when driving during their most recent drinking and driving occasion, the second highest of all racial/ethnic groups.
- Only 36% strongly agreed that people who drive after drinking too much are problem drinkers, the lowest of the four major racial minority groups.
- Only 87% strongly agreed that they should prevent someone that had too much to drink from driving, the lowest of all five racial/ethnic groups.

Focus on Korean Americans

- *Korean males in early 20s to middle age*
 - In a previous NAPAFASA study on alcohol use perception between ethnic populations, Korean Americans, both male and female, between the ages of 16 and 26 were identified as one of the two top priority groups to target for impaired driving campaigns.
- *Distinct Drinking Culture among Koreans*
 - High rates of drinking; strong social acceptance of drinking
 - Frequent lack of alcohol-related law compliance among Korean-owned business
 - Self-identified as "number one" among Asian American Pacific Islander populations in terms of alcohol abuse and self-described as "hard-core drinkers."
- NAPAFASA also found many newspaper articles on the problem of drunk driving in the ethnic newspapers. Such headlines were;
 - "Koreans' 'drinking culture' blamed for youth drunk driving"
 - "Korean drunk driving: 'An incurable disease'"
 - "Life-changing drunk driving."
- *Social Issues*
 - Korean traveling culture vs. U.S. Transportation

- Limited Access to Public Transportation

	Korea	United States of America
Culture of Drinking	Distinct Drinking Culture: low social inhibition to drinking in social and/or business settings, for a purpose of celebration	Korean Americans model after the Korean drinking culture, especially displayed in a geographical location such as the Koreatown in Los Angeles.
Available Alcohol Outlets or Venues	Fairly readily available	Fairly easy access to alcohol outlets in Korean ethnic enclaves such as Los Angeles Koreatown area
Means of Transportation	A variety of existing public transportation such as taxi, subway. Shorter traveling time to destination compared to America	Limited public transportation. Taxi and driver service relatively expensive and inconvenient for traveling long distances. Driving is the most popular and affordable transportation.
Result	Safely get home, no harm to the society or families	Increase in DUI and related crimes, endangers others/self, negative effects to the public image of Korean Americans

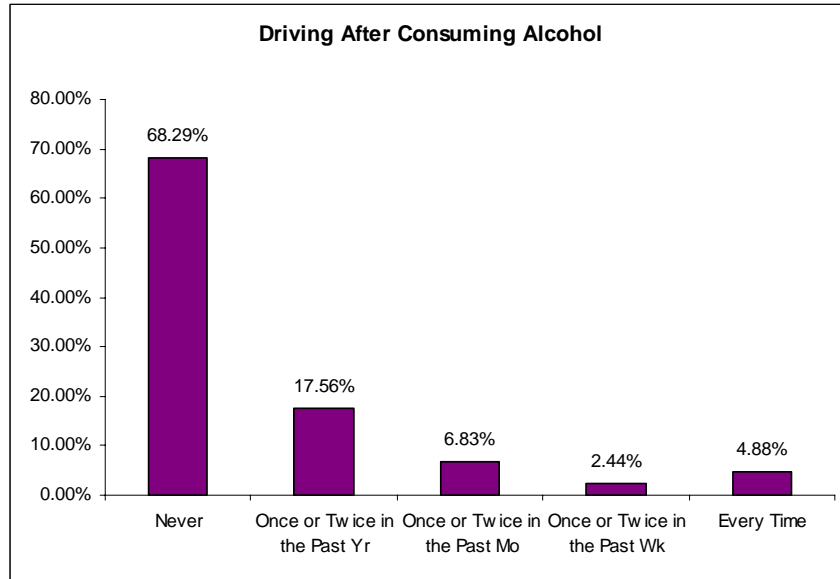
Question: *Where to impact changes?*

- Culture vs. Public transit system
- modifying culture is the key
- giving information leads to current behavior changes in the target population

2. Korean Americans identify DUI as a serious problem but the problem continues to persist.

Korean Americans and Drinking Under the Influence

- Based on Koreatown Impaired Driving Survey which NAPAFASA conducted in September 2005 at the Koreatown Festival, 32% of the survey participants indicated that they have driven after drinking in the past.
- Approximately 3 out of 10 Korean drinkers have driven under the influence.
- 4.88% of the participants indicated that they always drive after drinking revealing the seriousness of DUI problem and lack of awareness in the Koreatown community.



- 13.29% of the participants reported being arrested for a DUI in the past 10 years.
- Over 54% of the survey participants personally knew someone who had been arrested for DUI.

Characteristics of Koreans Committing DUIs

- *Korean male in their 20s-50s*
Based on the Korean ethnic newspapers such as the Korea Times and the Korea Daily news articles which closely cover Korean DUI incidents, most of the Korean DUI incidents involve Korean male in their early 20s to late 50s.
- *Korean Speakers*
Based on anecdotal sources collected from local DUI education training centers such as Korean Community Services and Korean American Family Service Center, most of the DUI arrestees (misdemeanor or felony) prefer speaking Korean over English and consequently more likely to be first generation Korean Americans than second generation.
- *DUI Statistics*
Local sources indicated that there are about average 20 Korean DUI arrests made in a month in Los Angeles County which projects about 120 arrests (both misdemeanor and felony) per year. This data varies from DOJ data which indicated a total number of 54 Korean DUI arrests in the year 2005.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL AVAILABILITY: There are More Numbers of Alcohol Outlets in Koreatown (and owned by Koreans) than in its Surrounding Neighborhoods.

Alcohol Outlets

- According to a study done by KYCC in comparing the city of Beverly Hills to the city of Los Angeles, it became clear that there are more numbers of alcohol outlets in Koreans than in its surrounding neighborhoods such as Beverly Hills.
- There are a total of 345 retail establishments with alcohol licenses in the Koreatown area alone (selected zip codes 90005, 90006, 90010, and 90020) according to the data collected by the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control.
- Of these, 234 outlets are owned by Korean Americans. Moreover, 213 outlets have original license issue date within the past 5 years and 64 outlets have original license issue date within the past year, showing that many of the current alcohol licensees are relatively new. 68% of all alcohol licenses in Koreatown are owned by Koreans.

