



FEBRUARY 2026 UPDATES

IHEC NEWSLETTER

Newsletter of the Illinois Higher Education Center

FEBRUARY AWARENESS

American Heart Month

This month at IHEC we address heart health and the effects that drugs and alcohol have on one of the most vital organs. Prevention addresses health as a whole, but also the interrelated ways in which the body works. Alcohol and substance use can have long-lasting impacts on physical health when used in excess. Substance use prevention for heart health can look like harm reduction methods, abstaining, moderating consumption and selecting less calorie dense options.

Below are some great resources to use in explaining to students the dangers of substance use on their health specific to heart health.

RESOURCES

<https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/consumer-healthcare/what-is-cardiovascular-disease/illegal-drugs-and-heart-disease>

<https://americanaddictioncenters.org/health-complications-addiction/substance-abuse-heart-disease>

<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/4-facts-know-alcohol-affects-heart>

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/heart-health/cannabis-and-heart-concerns-a-closer-look>

UPCOMING IHEC EVENTS

NONE TO ANNOUNCE AT THIS TIME

AFFILIATE MEETING: THURSDAY
MARCH 26, 2026

DRUG FREE SCHOOLS WORKSHOP
DATE: TBD APRIL, 2026



Our staff is looking forward to implementing this new self-assessment tool for prevention. In this toolkit, professionals will be able to take the assessment, receive feedback based on their score and find relevant resources for each category. Under the “Prevention Assessment” tab on our website, visitors will be able to browse a robust variety of recorded webinars, worksheets, printed publications and more.

After receiving feedback from the rubric, there is an opportunity to book a consultation with one of our staff members to discuss ways to improve campus prevention efforts. For many, this resource will be a stepping stone for the Biennial Review and the Illinois Assessment of College Substance Use Behaviors. Our goal is to be able to utilize this assessment as a pre-post test for many of our affiliates, providing assistance as needed to help improve their prevention efforts.

PROVIDES INSIGHT INTO FOUR MAIN AREAS OF PREVENTION:

- Assessment
- Capacity
- Program Planning
- Compliance

**Use this tool as a pre-assessment
before booking a consult!**





SPRING AFFILIATE MEETING
Research, Biennial Reviews & Programming

MARCH 26, 2026 | 9AM-3:30PM



MORNING SESSION:

- INTROS & NETWORKING
- OUR PROCESSES: IACSUB UPDATES AND RECAPS
- FELLOWS IN THE FIELD (PEER SHARING)

AFTERNOON SESSION:

- BIENNIAL REVIEW: OVERVIEW
- USING DATA AS A CATALYST
- PROGRAM PLANNING FOR SUCCESS

LOCATION:
HEARTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
1500 W RAAB RD, NORMAL, IL 61761

 IHEC@EIU.EDU
 217-581-2019

 Funded in whole or in part by the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Substance Use Prevention & Recovery through a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

SPRING AFFILIATE MEETING

Join us for the Spring Affiliate Meeting in March!

We will be covering a variety of topics with our updating survey methods, utilizing the new self-assessment tool & Biennial Review process. We are welcoming a few of our peers to share their current work in prevention and how they have updated their programming.

During the afternoon session, there will be an opportunity for schools to have a mini consultation with IHEC staff as an introduction in to the new consulting process. If you would like to reserve one of the slots, please reach out to our office ahead of time.

PARTICIPATE IN THE SURVEY? BOOK A CONSULT!

Schedule a Consultation Visit

Once you receive your crosstab data for your institution, we invite you to book a consultation with us. Our team is ready to discuss the data breakdown, potential risks, protective factors, and other relevant outcomes.

What We Offer

- A thorough assessment of biennial review processes
- Evaluation of AOD programming
- Review of your current scope of work

We highly encourage our schools to prepare in advance and collaborate with various offices across campus to ensure a comprehensive experience during the visit.



217-581-2019



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SEEKING APPLICATIONS:

We are taking more applications for our advisory board that meets once a month. This position helps provide guidance, feedback, and ideas for IHEC's professional development. Please contact our office for information!

HOW TO STAY CONNECTED:

We utilize our email list to send updates on upcoming events, free resources, consultation visits and more. To join our email list, reach out to alescamilla@eiu.edu for more information.

FOLLOW US ON OUR SOCIALS!



**Illinois Higher Education Center
for AODV Prevention**



IHEC_EIU

SERVICES

Professional Development Opportunities

Webinars, Trainings, and Certificates

Technical Assistance

AOD Programming

Continuing Education Units

Credit for trainings & webinars

Collaboration & Networking

Annual Meetings & Trainings

Consultation Site Visits

**Assessment, planning, and evaluations
for universities & colleges**

Core Survey Administration

**State-wide administration of CORE
every even year, assisted by IHEC**

CONTACT US:

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**ILLINOIS HIGHER
EDUCATION
CENTER**

**for alcohol, other drug
& violence prevention**

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

February is American Heart Month, with numerous endeavors across schools, colleges and communities all over the country.