

News Release
For Immediate Release
June 19, 2003

Contact:
info@camy.org

African-American Youth Overexposed to Alcohol Advertising

Alcohol companies placed ads on the 15 television shows most popular with underage African-American youth

Washington, DC - Alcohol companies placed ads on the 15 television shows most popular with underage African-American youth and consistently exposed underage African-American youth to more alcohol ads than non-African-American youth in magazines and on radio in 2002, [according to a new report](#) from the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth at Georgetown University.

The marketing of alcohol products in African-American communities has, on occasion, stirred national controversy. The Center's study is the first systematic review of alcohol advertising directed to the nation's second-largest minority group.

"African-American youth have historically had lower rates of alcohol use and abuse than other youth, and African-American communities have been proud of that," said David Satcher, M.D., director of the National Center for Primary Care, Morehouse School of Medicine, and former U.S. Surgeon General. "That is what makes the Center's report striking and upsetting. African-American parents, teachers, health professionals and clergy do not need to have their hard work and success in protecting their children undermined by the alcohol industry's advertising and marketing."

"This report clearly shows that African-American youth are being overexposed to alcohol advertising," said David Jernigan, research director for the Center. "In previous reports, we found significant overexposure of all youth compared to legal-age adults to alcohol advertising in magazines and on television and radio. This new report gives parents of African-American youth cause for concern."

In auditing the exposure of African-American youth, ages 12 to 20, to alcohol advertising in magazines and on television and radio in 2002, the Center found that:

Alcohol advertising was placed on television programs most popular with African-American youth. Alcohol advertisers spent \$11.7 million in 2002 to place ads on all 15 of the programs

most popular with African-American youth, including *Bernie Mac*, *The Simpsons*, *King of the Hill*, *My Wife and Kids*, and *The Wonderful World of Disney*.

Alcohol advertising in magazines overexposed African-American youth. Compared to non-African-American youth, African-American youth saw 66% more beer and ale advertising and 81% more distilled spirits advertising in magazines in 2002, and 45% more advertising for malt alternatives, alcopops and other "low-alcohol refreshers." This means that 96% of African-American youth, on average, saw 171 alcohol ads, whereas 83% of non-African-American youth, on average, saw 111 ads.

Alcohol advertising on radio overexposed African-American youth. African-American youth heard 12% more beer advertising and 56% more ads for distilled spirits than non-African-American youth. Two formats 'Urban Contemporary and Rhythmic Contemporary Hit' accounted for almost 70% of the alcohol advertising reaching underage African-American youth on radio.

While African-American teens drink less than other youth, there is evidence from public health research that, as they age, African Americans suffer more from alcohol-related diseases than the rest of the population. Alcohol use plays a substantial role in the three leading causes of death among African-American youth: unintentional injuries (including motor vehicle fatalities and drownings), suicides and homicides.

Background on the Report: The Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth (CAMY) commissioned Virtual Media Resources (VMR) to audit the exposure of African-American youth to alcohol advertising in magazines and on radio and television in 2002. In previous reports, the Center has found widespread and pervasive overexposure of all youth to alcohol advertising in magazines and on television and radio. This analysis compares the exposure of African-American youth to that of non-African-American youth.

###