

News Release
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Alcohol Advertisements Seen by Youth on TV on the Rise

12-20 Year Olds' Exposure Increased 38% From 2001-2007

Washington, DC - A comprehensive review of television advertising practices by alcohol companies from 2001-2007 finds an increase in youth exposure to alcohol advertising and relatively few industry-sponsored "responsibility" ads. The [new study](#), released today by the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth (CAMY) at Georgetown University, evaluated advertising trends and identified the best and worst brands with regard to youth exposure to alcohol.

This report shows that more than 40 percent of youth exposure to alcohol advertising came from ads placed on programming with a disproportionate youth (age 12-20) audience -- the highest percentage since CAMY began monitoring youth exposure in 2001.

The report data clearly show the 30 percent threshold established by alcohol trade associations in 2003 has not reduced youth exposure to alcohol advertising on television, nor has it reduced the youth overexposure that occurs when advertisements are on programs with disproportionate youth audiences.

"The sad reality for kids and parents is that the alcohol industry's 30 percent standard is working on broadcast but not cable television," said CAMY executive director David Jernigan. "From 2001 to 2007, the number of alcohol advertisements seen in a year by the average television-watching 12-to-20 year-old has increased which is the opposite of its purpose."

CAMY's data shows advertisers have made some progress with regard to advertising during shows where more than 30 percent of the viewers were under age 21. The percentage of alcohol product advertisements on these programs went from 11 percent in 2003 to 6.3 percent in 2007.

The study's other key findings include:

- **Almost all youth overexposure to alcohol advertising occurs on cable.** Almost two-thirds (63 percent) of the overexposing alcohol ad placements in 2007 were on cable television, which generated 95 percent of youth overexposure to alcohol advertising on television. Of the youth overexposure on cable in 2007, 53 percent came from beer advertising, and 41 percent from distilled spirits advertising.
- **In 2006 and 2007, there were no alcohol industry-funded "responsibility" messages about underage drinking on television.** Over the entire period of 2001 - 2007, youth ages 12 to 20 were 22 times more likely to see an alcohol product advertisement than an alcohol industry-funded "responsibility" advertisement about drinking-driving, safety or underage drinking.
- **Eleven specific brands are responsible for 48.5 percent of the youth exposure to advertising.** For this report, researchers developed a methodology to determine the best and worst performers with regard to youth exposure to alcohol advertising. Among brands responsible for much of youth exposure to alcohol advertising and exceeding the 30% youth threshold are:
 - Miller Lite
 - Corona Extra Beer
 - Coors Light
 - Hennessy Cognacs
 - Guinness Beers
 - Samuel Adams Beers
 - Bud Light
 - Smirnoff Vodkas
 - Disaronno Originale Amaretto
 - Miller Chill
 - Multiple Brands from Mike's Beverages

Alcohol remains the leading drug problem among young people, and underage drinking is responsible for 5,000 deaths among young people each year. Scientific studies show that youth exposure to alcohol advertising contributes to the likelihood of underage drinking.

The National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, the U.S. Surgeon General and 20 state Attorneys General have all recommended eliminating this disproportionate exposure.

In 2003, the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine recommended that alcohol companies move toward a 15 percent threshold for youth audiences, since this is roughly the proportion of youth in the general population. In 2006, Congress passed and President Bush signed into law the Sober Truth On Preventing Underage Drinking Act (or STOP Act) requiring, among other things, that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services report annually on rates of exposure of youth to positive and negative messages youth about alcohol in the

mass media. Although this reporting has been authorized by Congress, funding for it has not yet been appropriated. "Our findings continue to support the elimination of alcohol advertising on programming with more than 15 percent youth audiences. It will save young people's lives and the alcohol industry advertising dollars," said Dr. Jernigan.

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