

## **Children, Youth Saw Over 30% More Alcohol Ads on Television in 2004 than in 2001**

### *Increase Comes Despite Industry “Reforms,” Public Concern*

Underage youth, ages 2 to 20, saw almost 33% more alcohol ads on television in 2004 than they did in 2001: 196.6 ads per youth per year in 2004, versus 148.0 ads per youth per year in 2001. This increase cuts across both children, ages 2 to 11, and youth, ages 12 to 20:

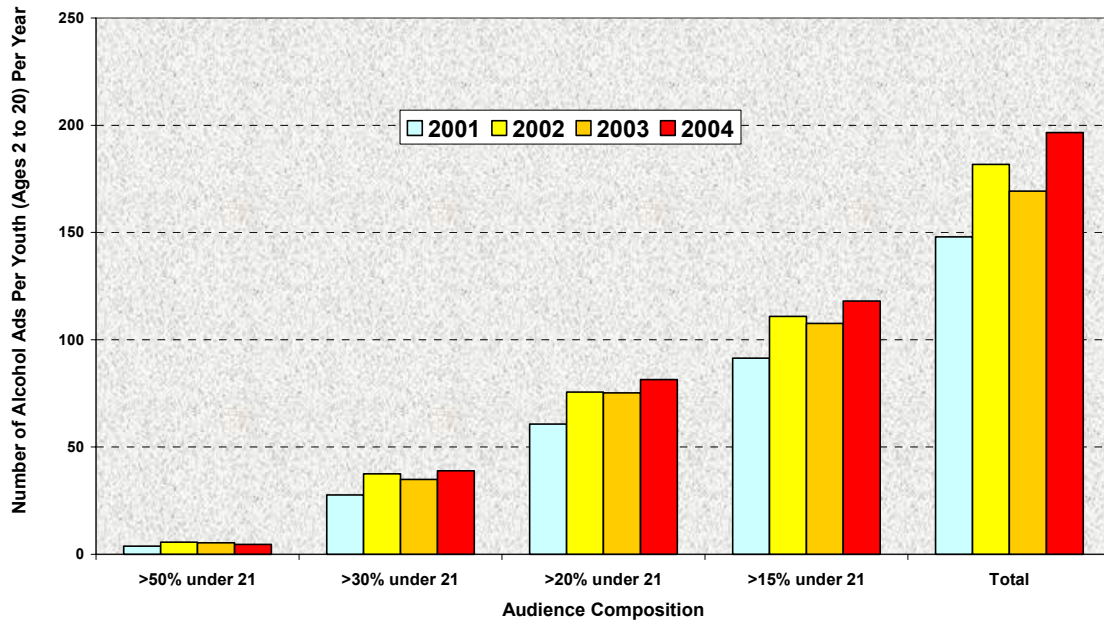
- For the youngest children, ages 2 to 11, the increase in alcohol ads seen was 27.5%: from 96.6 ads per child per year to 123.2 ads per child per year.
- For older youth, ages 12 to 20, the increase in alcohol ads seen was 31.7%: from 209.3 ads per youth per year to almost 275.6 ads per youth per year.

This analysis of the alcohol ads underage youth are seeing on television each year is modeled on the analysis conducted by staff of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) on food advertising on television seen by children in 2004.<sup>1</sup> The FTC staff analysis was released at the FTC Workshop on Marketing, Self-Regulation and Childhood Obesity, held July 14-15, 2005, in Washington, DC.

The upsurge in underage youth seeing alcohol ads on television comes despite increasing concern over the alcohol industry’s marketing practices in recent years. The FTC issued a major report in 1999 calling on the alcohol industry to reform its marketing practices to reduce underage youth exposure to alcohol advertising.<sup>2</sup> In 2003, the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (NRC/IOM) issued their landmark report on underage drinking in the United States, including calls for alcohol industry reform of its marketing practices.<sup>3</sup> Faced with the NRC/IOM report and a second FTC report, the trade associations for the beer and distilled spirits industries adopted new marketing codes ostensibly aimed at reducing the number of alcohol ads seen by underage youth.<sup>4</sup>

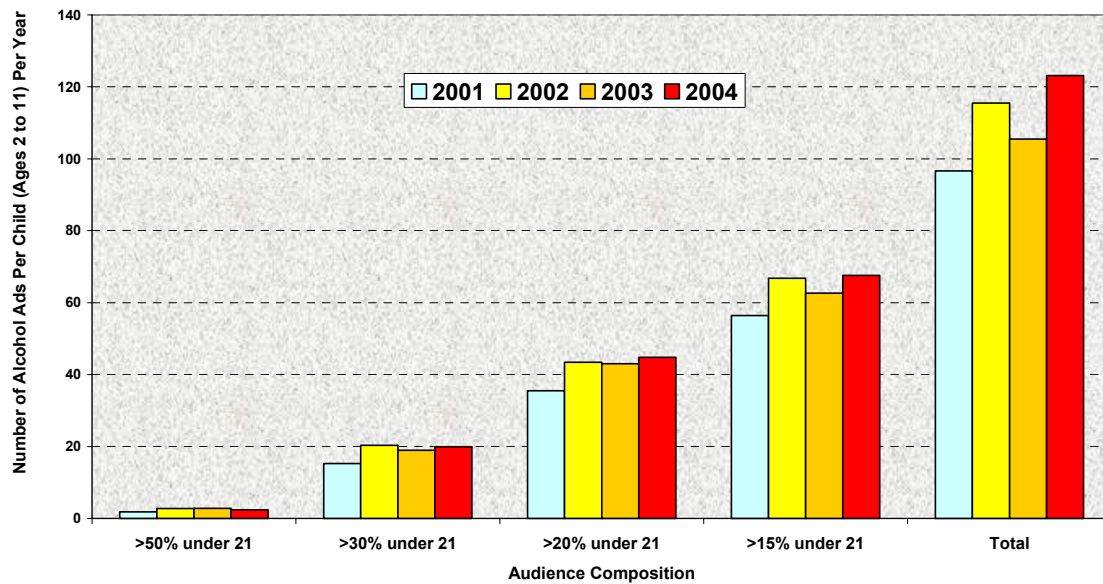
This new analysis suggests not only a lack of progress in reducing the alcohol ads seen by underage youth, but a disturbing trend in the opposite direction.

**Figure 1: Youth (Ages 2 to 20) Saw More Alcohol Ads in 2004 than in 2001 \***



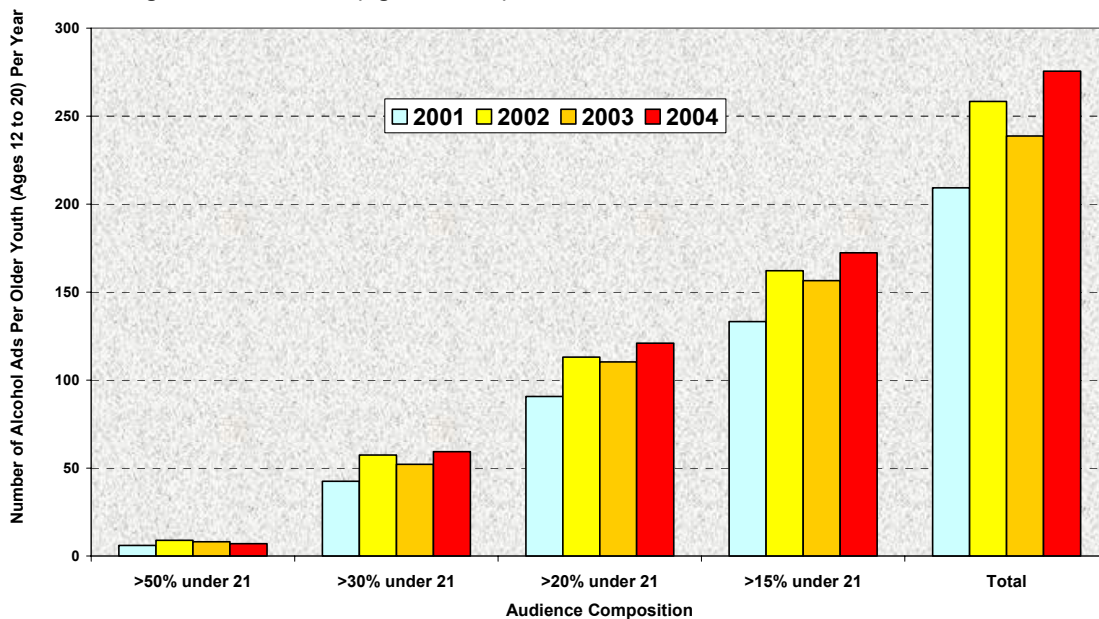
\* This shows the estimated number of alcohol ads viewed by youth ages 2-20 on average, broken out by youth ages 2-20 audience composition for the shows in which these ads aired, i.e., shows with more than 50% youth, more than 30% youth, more than 20% youth, or more than 15% youth.

**Figure 2: Children (Ages 2 to 11) Saw More Alcohol Ads in 2004 than in 2001 \***



\* This shows the estimated number of alcohol ads viewed by children ages 2-11 on average, broken out by youth ages 2-20 audience composition for the shows in which these ads aired, i.e., shows with more than 50% youth, more than 30% youth, more than 20% youth, or more than 15% youth.

Figure 3: Older Youth (Ages 12 to 20) Saw More Alcohol Ads in 2004 than in 2001 \*



\* This shows the estimated number of alcohol ads viewed by older youth ages 12-20 on average, broken out by youth ages 2-20 audience composition for the shows in which these ads aired, i.e., shows with more than 50% youth, more than 30% youth, more than 20% youth, or more than 15% youth.

Analyzing the increase in alcohol advertising seen by underage youth, ages 2 to 20, by alcohol type shows that the most striking increase is for distilled spirits:

- In 2001, a young person between the ages of 2 and 20 saw, on average, 1.0 distilled spirits ads on television, and in 2004 that increased to 31.2, a 2,915.7% increase.
- For the youngest children, the increase was from 0.6 ads per child per year to 16.6 per child per year, a 2,775.8% increase.
- For older youth, ages 12 to 20, the increase was from 1.6 ads per child per year in 2001 to 46.9 ads per child per year in 2004, a 2,874.0% increase.

For beer advertising, the increases are more modest on a percentage basis but also reflect the beer industry's already significant presence on television at the start of this period:

- For youth, ages 2 to 20, the increase was 119.5 ads per youth per year in 2001 to 149.6 ads per youth per year in 2004, for an increase of 25.2%.
- For the youngest children, the increase was 24.5%, from 77.7 beer ads per child per year in 2001 to 96.7 beer ads per child per year in 2004.
- For older youth, ages 12 to 20, the increase was 21.9%, from 169.4 beer ads per youth per year in 2001 to 206.5 beer ads per youth per year in 2004.

Figure 4: Alcohol Ads by Type Viewed by Youth (Ages 2 to 20), 2001 to 2004

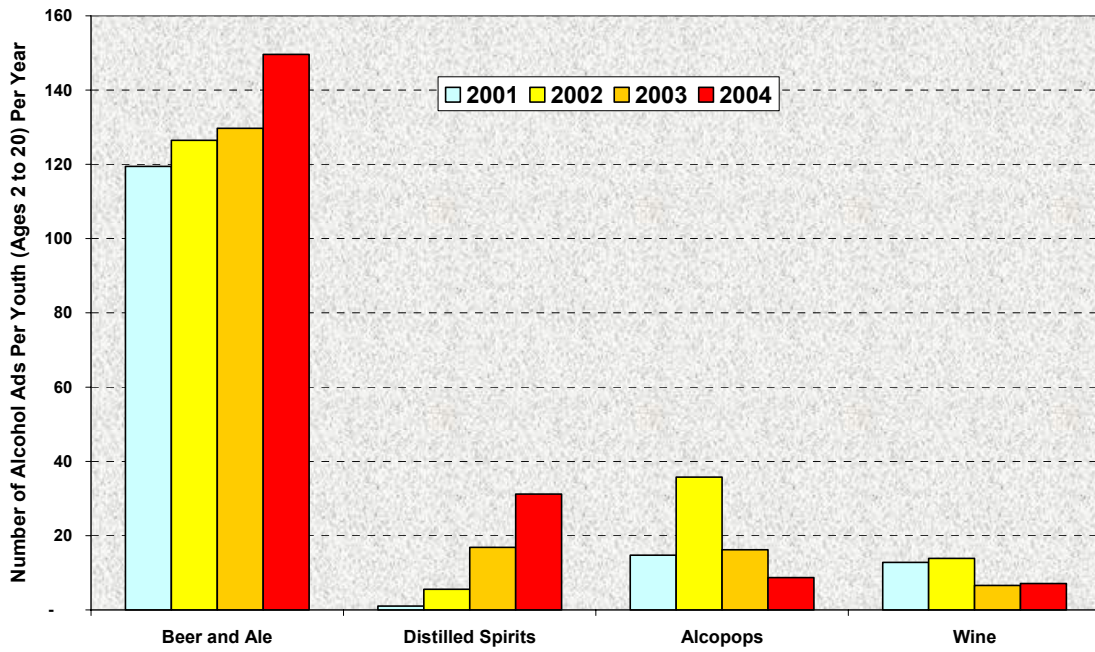
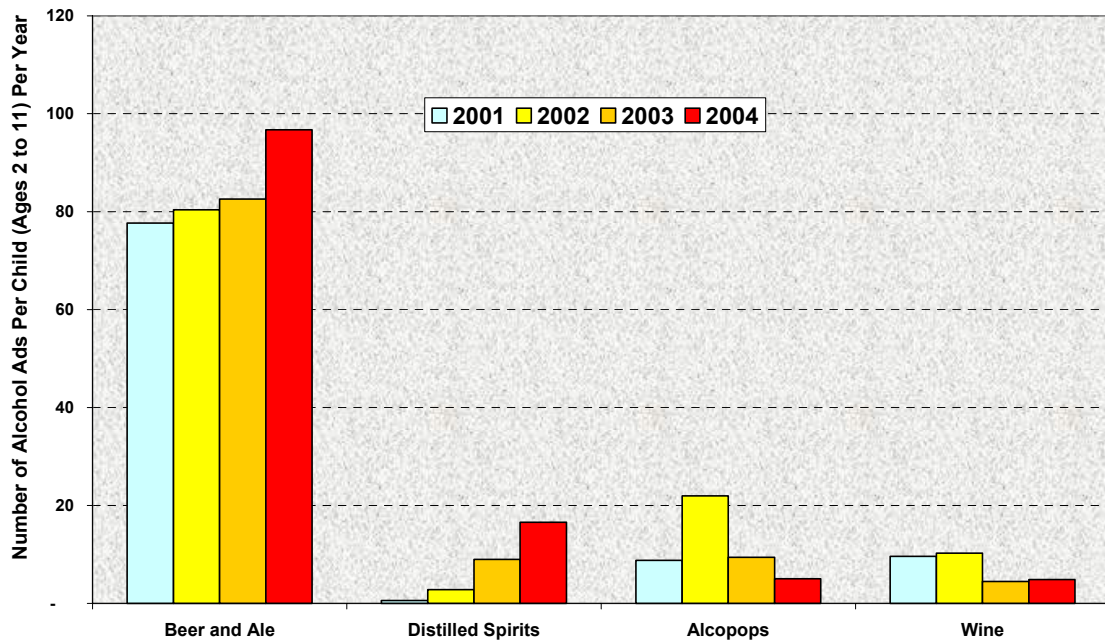
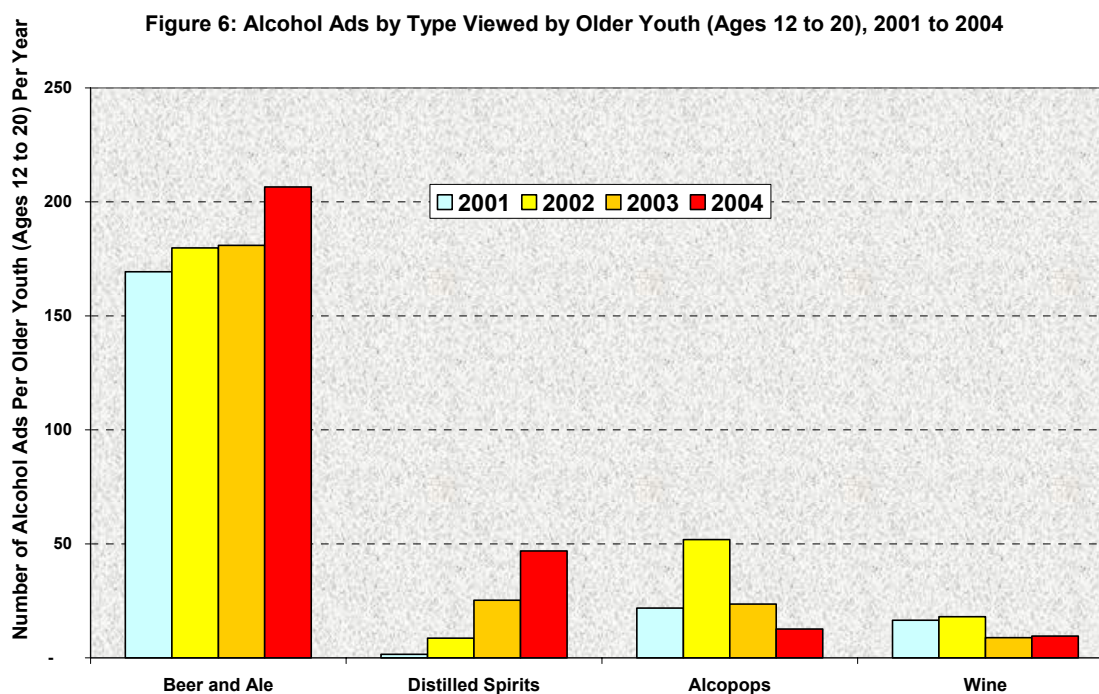


Figure 5: Alcohol Ads by Type Viewed by Children (Ages 2 to 11), 2001 to 2004





## February 2006

<sup>1</sup> P.M. Ippolito, "TV Advertising to Children, 1977 v. 2004" (PowerPoint presented at the FTC workshop on Marketing, Self-Regulation and Childhood Obesity, Washington, DC, July 14, 2005). Available at <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/workshops/foodmarketingtokids/presentations/pippolito.pdf> (cited 16 Dec 2005).

To replicate the FTC analysis, the number of GRPs for each brand was divided by 100 to provide the average number of exposures per person for the demographic group. The GRPs were divided by 100 for each year between 2001 and 2004; for each type of alcohol; and for ages 2 to 11, ages 12 to 20 and ages 2 to 20. The total number of GRPs was also calculated for placements where the composition was greater than a given threshold—for example, where more than 50% of the audience was under age 21. The original analysis looked at ads on programming with youth audiences >50%, >30%, >20% and >15%. Therefore, the sum of GRPs for each of those thresholds was calculated for each year.

For example, in 2004 there were a total of 20,652 GRPs for ages 12 to 20 for beer and ale. This is equivalent to 207 ads for every person aged 12 to 20 ( $20652 / 100 = 206.52$ ). For distilled spirits, the GRPs from 2001 to 2004 increased from 158 to 4,689, and the ads per person increased from 2 to 47. GRPs represent the total number of impressions in relation to the population: 100 GRPs is equivalent to one exposure per person, 200 equals two per person, etc.

In practice, some people see many ads and some see none, which is why reach and frequency help to show the true exposure of a given ad campaign. Similarly, the FTC analysis shows the average number of food ads per child per year, although some children see many more ads than others.

<sup>2</sup> Federal Trade Commission, *Self-Regulation in the Alcohol Industry: A Review of Industry Efforts to Avoid Promoting Alcohol to Underage Consumers* (Washington, DC: Federal Trade Commission, 1999).

<sup>3</sup> National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, *Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility*, R.J. Bonnie and M.E. O'Connell, eds (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2004).

<sup>4</sup> Beer Institute, "FTC Report Highlights Best Practices: Threshold Raised for Advertising Placements," 9 Sept 2003. Available at [http://www.beerinstitute.org/pr/pr\\_090903.htm](http://www.beerinstitute.org/pr/pr_090903.htm) (cited 14 Nov 2005); Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, "Liquor Industry Strengthens Advertising/Marketing Guidelines: New 70% Adult Demographic, Applies to All Drinks, Includes Public Reports," 9 Sept 2003. Available at <http://www.discus.org/mediaroom/2003/release.asp?pressid=112> (cited 14 Nov 2005).