

YOUTH EXPOSURE TO ALCOHOL ADVERTISING IN MAGAZINES, 2001 TO 2004: GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS

I. Executive Summary

Youth¹ exposure to alcohol advertising in magazines decreased from 2001 to 2004, but young people ages 12 to 20 were still seeing more beer, distilled spirits and alcopops advertising than adults per capita in 2004,² according to an analysis by the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth of 13,738 ads costing more than \$1.3 billion. Major findings include the following:

- In 2004, youth saw 15% more beer advertising, 10% more distilled spirits advertising and 33% more advertising for alcopops³ per capita than adults age 21 and over.
- This reflects a decline of 31% in youth exposure to alcohol advertising in magazines from 2001 to 2004. At the same time, the number of alcohol ads placed per year fell by only 10%, and adult exposure dropped only 17%, suggesting alcohol companies were able to shield youth from exposure to their advertising without a concomitant drop in their ability to reach the legal-age audience.
- Only 3% of alcohol ads and less than 2% of alcohol advertising dollars in 2004 were spent in magazines exceeding the alcohol industry’s voluntary maximum of 30% for audiences under age 21.
- In contrast, 42% of ads and 48% of spending in 2004 were in magazines that exceeded 15%, roughly the proportion of youth ages 12 to 20 in the general population age 12 and above.
- In 2004, 211 alcohol brands placed ads in the magazines analyzed for this report. More than half of youth exposure to alcohol advertising in magazines came from 22 of those brands, all of which overexposed youth ages 12 to 20 relative to adults age 21 and over. These brands accounted for approximately a third of all alcohol advertising spending in magazines in 2004.

¹ In this report, unless otherwise noted, youth are defined as persons ages 12 to 20, and adults are defined as persons age 21 and over.
² Underage youth are more likely to see on a per capita basis, or be “overexposed” to, a magazine ad for alcohol when it is placed in a publication where the percentage of underage youth in the readership is greater than the percentage of underage youth in the general population. (In 2004, for example, this meant that youth were overexposed to ads in magazines where underage youth were more than 15.3% of the readership.) “More likely to be read by” (as well as percentage measures of youth overexposure and other comparisons of adult and youth exposure to alcohol advertising in this report) is based on “gross rating points,” which measure how much an audience segment is exposed to advertising per capita. Another way of measuring advertising exposure is “gross impressions” (the total number of times all members of a given audience are exposed to advertising). The adult population will almost always receive far more “gross impressions” than youth because there are far more adults in the population than youth. Gross rating points are calculated by dividing gross impressions by the relevant population (e.g., persons age 21 and over) and multiplying by 100. See Appendix B for a glossary of terms used in this report.
³ “Alcopops” are also referred to as “low-alcohol refreshers,” “malternatives” or “flavored malt beverages.” Many of the brands in this category, which includes brands such as Mike’s Hard Lemonade and Smirnoff Ice, have alcohol contents of between 4% and 6%, similar to most traditional malt beverages. (Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau [TTB], “Notice No. 4—Flavored Malt Beverages and Related Proposals,” Federal Register [March 24, 2003]: 14293.) The alcohol industry treats these as a distinct category of alcoholic beverages. This report follows this industry convention.

Table of Contents

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
II. WHY THE CONCERN	2
III. ABOUT THIS REPORT	3
IV. ALCOHOL ADVERTISING IN MAGAZINES, 2001 TO 2004	4
V. YOUTH OVEREXPOSURE TO ALCOHOL ADVERTISING IN NATIONAL MAGAZINES	4
VI. ADVERTISING IN EXCESS OF THE 30% STANDARD	6
VII. ADVERTISING IN EXCESS OF A 15% PROPORTIONAL STANDARD	7
VIII. BRANDS ACCOUNTING FOR MORE THAN HALF OF YOUTH EXPOSURE	8
IX. CONCLUSION	11
APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY	12
APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY OF ADVERTISING TERMS	14
APPENDIX C: ALCOHOL ADS BY PUBLICATION AND YEAR; PUBLICATIONS SORTED BY YOUTH-AGES-12-TO-20 COMPOSITION	15

The Center on
Alcohol Marketing and *Youth*

May 9, 2006

Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth
 Georgetown University
 Box 571444
 3300 Whitehaven St. NW, Suite 5000
 Washington, D.C. 20057
 (202) 687-1019
www.camy.org

II. Why the Concern

According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, close to 11 million young people ages 12 to 20 drank alcohol in the previous 30 days in 2004, and more than 7 million reported binge drinking (defined as consuming five or more drinks on a single occasion) during the same time frame.⁴ Every day, 5,400 young people under 16 start drinking alcohol,⁵ while three teens die from drinking and driving,⁶ and at least six more die from other alcohol-related causes, such as suicide, homicide, drowning and falls.⁷ Alcohol causes one out of four deaths among males ages 15 to 20 and one out of six deaths among their female peers, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.⁸

Alcohol use also has adverse effects on young people's chances later in life.

Evidence from both imaging and skills testing has shown that heavy drinking during adolescence affects the development of and levels of activity in young people's brains.⁹ The younger one starts drinking, the greater the risks are: those who begin drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to become dependent on alcohol than those who wait until they are 21,¹⁰ seven times more likely to be in an alcohol-related motor vehicle crash, and at least 10 times more likely to be involved in alcohol-related violence.¹¹

Evidence is growing that youth exposure to alcohol advertising plays a role in underage drinking. One recent study followed young people over time in 24 media markets and found that for every additional alcohol ad they viewed over an average of 23 per

month, they drank 1% more. For every additional dollar per capita spent on alcohol advertising in their respective media markets (over an average of \$6.80), the same group drank 3% more.¹² Another recent study used econometric analysis to estimate that a 28% decrease in youth exposure to alcohol advertising would result in a 4% to 16% drop in youth drinking and an 8% to 33% drop in youth binge drinking.¹³

When it examined the issue of alcohol advertising and youth in 1999, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) concluded that, "While many factors influence an underage person's drinking decisions, including among other things parents, peers, and the media, there is reason to believe that advertising also plays a role."¹⁴

⁴ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *Results from the 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings* (Rockville, MD: Office of Applied Studies, 2005), 25. Available at <http://oas.samhsa.gov/NSDUH/2k4nsduh/2k4Results/2k4Results.pdf> (accessed April 25, 2006).

⁵ Calculated using the 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. J. Gfroerer of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, e-mail to David H. Jernigan, PhD, 3 February 2006.

⁶ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, *Traffic Safety Facts 2004 Data* (Washington, DC: National Center for Statistics and Analysis, U.S. Department of Transportation, 2005), table 6. Available at <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/pdf/nrd-30/NCSA/TSF2004/809905.pdf> (accessed March 14, 2006).

⁷ Calculated using Alcohol-Related Disease Impact (ARDI) data. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Alcohol-Attributable Deaths Report, United States 2001: Medium and High Average Daily Alcohol Consumption, Youth <21 due to Alcohol Exposure by Cause and Gender." Available at <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/ardi> (accessed February 8, 2006).

⁸ Calculated using Alcohol-Related Disease Impact (ARDI) data, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Dr. Robert Brewer, CDC, e-mail to David H. Jernigan, PhD, 29 March 2006.

⁹ S.A. Brown, S.F. Tapert, "Health Consequences of Adolescent Alcohol Involvement," in *Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility, Background Papers* [CD-ROM] (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2004), 383-401.

¹⁰ B. Grant, D. Dawson, "Age of Onset of Alcohol Use and Its Association with DSM-IV Alcohol Abuse and Dependence: Results from the National Longitudinal Alcohol Epidemiologic Survey," *Journal of Substance Abuse* 9 (1997): 103-110.

¹¹ R. Hingson, D. Kenkel, "Social, Health, and Economic Consequences of Underage Drinking," in *Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility, Background Papers* [CD-ROM] (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2004), 363.

¹² L.B. Snyder, F.F. Milici, M. Slater, H. Sun, and Y. Strizhakova, "Effects of alcohol advertising exposure on drinking among youth," *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine* 160 (2006): 18-24.

¹³ H. Saffer, D. Dave, "Alcohol advertising and alcohol consumption by adolescents," Abstract, *Health Economics Early View* (13 February 2006). Available at <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/abstract/112410704/ABSTRACT> (accessed March 28, 2006).

¹⁴ 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), 4.