

In The Know

A monthly newsletter to keep you current and In The Know on topics related to the Prevention of Substance Abuse

Alcohol Marketing and Youth

Does advertising have an impact on the choices that we make? Absolutely; if you have found yourself at McDonald's after seeing or hearing an ad for them, it has impacted your choice. If you have purchased a new product after seeing it advertised on TV, the advertising worked. For example, the Snuggie—the blanket with sleeves; from TV marketing alone over 4 million were sold in a five-month span, creating a pop-culture item (USA Today, Lifestyles, 2009). Is it everything the ads made it out to be? I'll let you be the judge of that.

But let's look at another area of advertising and the impact that it has specifically on youth. A recent presentation on alcohol marketing given

by David H. Jernigan, Ph. D.; Associate Professor at Johns Hopkins (Bloomberg) and the Director of the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth (CAMY) brought to light many startling revelations regarding marketing of alcohol. Just in magazine advertising alone CAMY's research found that youth ages 12-20 saw per capita 10% more beer ads and 16% more alcopops (alcohol beverages with added flavoring, usually fruit juice) compared to adults 21 and over. This research also shows that this exposure (78%) is from ads placed in magazines that have a disproportionate youth audience. If you look at magazine exposure for adolescent females only, the results show that

they are exposed to 68% more beer advertising and 95% more alcopops advertising per capita than adult women.

What about television marketing? In 2009 alone, 315,581 alcohol product commercials were aired in the US. It is also noted that these ads accounted for more than 44% of youth exposure to alcohol advertising on TV (CAMY, 2010). From all the advertising in magazines and television alone it is no wonder that underage drinking accounts for almost 20% of the US alcohol market. A 2006 study conducted by the University of Connecticut was able to draw the conclusion from data collected that young people who view more alcohol ad-

vertisements drink more alcohol.

The alcohol industry did attempt to help reduce the consumption rates of alcohol among adolescents by airing responsibility ads. From 2001-2009, youth 12-20 were 22 times more likely to see a product ad for alcohol on television than an alcohol industry "responsibility" ad. Technology has come a long way and will continue to grow. With that comes easier outlets for industries to have an impact on the choices that you and your teens will make. Be sure that you use teachable moments like advertisements to talk with adolescents to help them understand that what they are being told is not always the truth.

Learning to think for ourselves

When you are flipping through a magazine or watching a commercial, you do not normally consider all the logistics of the advertisement, normally it's just, "I want that" or "I want to do that." Media literacy is the ability to analyze the many messages that our various technologies and advertisements throw at us on a daily basis. The next time you watch a commercial, think about what it is telling you. For example, most people

would think that this is merely a cigarette advertisement. But using media literacy, you can figure out who this ad is targeting and what they are saying will happen to you if you use this product. This tobacco advertisement is targeting teen girls; there is a lot of pink and a young female is eating a lollipop. The company wants teen girls to think that smok-



ing these cigarettes will taste good, like candy, and will make them look pretty and cool like the one in this ad.

It is imperative to realize what the media is subliminally telling us. Will these cigarettes really taste sweet and make you look great? Do all cute girls smoke? Parents need to talk to their teens about media literacy so that their

children do not fall victim to the many messages that media have everywhere. Next time you see a commercial, billboard, magazine advertisement or hear something on the radio, think about who is being targeted, how it's being done, and what the messages is. Looking at advertisements with your child is a great way to take advantage of teachable moments to have them use media literacy and help them learn to think for themselves.

Do you or someone you care about need help because of Drugs, Alcohol or Gambling call:

1-877-8HOPENY (1-877-846-7369)

24 hours a day, 7 days a week * Free & confidential information and referrals.

In The Know and By The Numbers

A brief look at current statistics and figures relating to the issues of marketing and youth.

- The Federal Trade Commission (FTC), Self-Regulation in the Alcohol Industry stated that among other things, media and advertising may influence an underage person's drinking decisions.
- The FTC reported that underage youth saw 33% more alcohol ads on television in 2004 than they did in 2001.
- A national study published in 2006 concluded that the monthly average of alcohol ads youth see is 23, for each additional ad they saw, youth drank 1% more (CAMY, 2006).
- For each additional dollar per capita spent on alcohol advertising in a local market, youth drank 3% more (CAMY, 2006).
- In 2005, alcohol advertisers spent \$2 billion on alcohol advertising in most media avenues such as television, radio, print and billboards (CAMY, 2005).
- CAMY analyzed the increase in alcohol advertising seen by underage youth and found that in 2001, a young person saw, on average, 1.0 distilled spirits ads on television. In 2004 that number increased to 31.2 ads, a 2,915.7% increase.
- According to comScore Media Metrix, during the last six months of 2003, 55 alcohol websites tracked almost 700,000 in-depth visits from underage youth.
- The CDC reports that the three most heavily advertised cigarettes are Marlboro, Newport and Camel, they are also the most preferred brands of cigarettes for youth.
- In 2006, cigarette companies spent \$12.4 billion in advertising and free promotional giveaways in the United States (CDC, 2009).
- 74% of total marketing expenditures were spent to give price discount payments to retailers or wholesalers that reduced the price of the cigarettes they were selling (FTC, 2009).

Steuben Council SCA on Addictions

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Catholic Charities
Steuben County

The Council Corner

A look Steuben Council on Addictions and the projects they are working on

Beginning in 2012, tobacco packaging will look drastically different. Photographs will appear on cigarettes showing things such as illnesses caused by using tobacco, a hole in the throat with smoke



coming out, a deceased smoker, a mother and her baby covered in smoke, and a baby hooked up to tubes. Reports show that the shock value does work with some populations, especially youth. Smoking and chewing will become even more unappealing as these new packages are unveiled

by the fall of 2012.

Steuben Council on Addictions presents several Tobacco Awareness and Introduction to Tobacco Cessation programs in Steuben County. Prevention Edu-

cators present Tobacco programs at MATCH, St. James Mercy Hospital, Maple Leaf House, Kinship Community Residence, Loyola Recovery Foundation, GED, and Steuben County Middle Schools and High Schools. It is our mission to give vital information about tobacco and encourage wellness

in our community. We hope to invoke change by preventing youngsters from starting and by having tobacco users set a quit date.

We are appreciative of the materials and trainings provided through the Tobacco Cessation Center at Arnot Health. Our prevention and awareness programs are enhanced by the brochures, information, and New York State Quit Cards provided. The Tobacco Cessation Center also facilitates tobacco trainings and informational conference calls. Thank you for your continued support and educational opportunities.

Steuben Council on Addictions is a division of Catholic Charities Steuben. In The Know is a regular monthly update about alcohol, tobacco and other drugs to help in the prevention of substance use and abuse. For more information on In The Know contact Stacey O'Dell, Prevention Educator at (607) 776-6441, x. 205 or sodell@dor.org.