

*Parents, guardians and adults play a huge role in the lives of young people. You are important role models who influence behavior by what you say and what you do.*



The following information is provided to help you talk with the young people in your life about how media reaches and influences alcohol use among young people.

## IS THIS REALLY A PROBLEM?

The information below will give some background about alcohol use and how the alcohol industry reaches young people with their messages. To dig deeper, check out the Resources listing.

### Media Facts – Why you need to question the alcohol industry message

- **From 2001 to 2005, alcohol companies spent \$4.7 billion to place 1.4 million ads for alcoholic beverages on TV. Exposure to those ads increased by 41% for youth ages 12 to 20.** *Source:* Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth (CAMY) at Georgetown University, December 2006.
- **Young people who view more alcohol advertisements tend to drink more alcohol.** Each additional advertisement viewed per month increased the number of drinks consumed by 1%. The same percentage increase, 1% per advertisement per month, applied to underage drinkers (those younger than age 21) as well as legal-aged drinkers. *Source:* Univ. of Conn. study published in the January 2006 issue of Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine.
- **The more money the alcohol industry spends on advertising, the more young people drink.** Young people drank 3% more per month for each additional dollar spent per capita in their market. *Source:* Univ. of Conn. study published in the January 2006 issue of Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine.
- **Young people hear more radio ads for alcohol than people of legal drinking age do.** *Source:* CAMY at Georgetown University, RADIO DAZE: alcohol ads tune in underage youth. April 2003.
- **Youth are 239 times more likely to see TV ads promoting alcohol products than industry spots discouraging underage drinking.** *Source:* DROWNED OUT: Alcohol Industry "Responsibility" Advertising on Television 2001-2005, CAMY at Georgetown University.
- **In just one year, beer makers introduced two-dozen brands of hard lemonade, which have quickly caught the attention of drinkers worldwide.** *Source:* Dow Jones News Service. September 29, 2000.
- **Three "alcopop" ads are seen by the average underage person for every four seen by the average adult.** *Source:* University of Connecticut study published in the January 2006 issue of Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine.
- **The average underage person saw two beer ads for every three seen by the average adult on television in 2003.** *Source:* University of Connecticut study published in the January 2006 issue of Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine.



- **Advertising is common in gas station/convenience markets where 75% of teenagers shop weekly.** Alcohol marketing at the point of sale (interior and exterior signage, floor displays and alcohol-branded functional objects such as counter change mats with an alcohol company logo) often includes low height alcohol ads that are in the sight line of children and adolescents as opposed to adults. *Source:* Terry-McElrath, Y.M., Harwood, E.M., Wagenaar A.C., Slater, S., Chaloupka, F.J., Brewer, R.D., and Naimi, T.S. Point-of-Purchase Alcohol Marketing and Promotion by Store Type - United States, 2000—2001, MMWR 52(14): 310-313 April 11, 2003.

### Alcohol Facts – The most widely used drug in America...and Vermont

- **Alcohol is the drug most widely used by America's young people ages 12 to 20,** and underage drinking is responsible for 5,000 deaths per year in this age group. *Source:* U.S. Surgeon General.
- **Youth who start drinking before the age of 15 are four times more likely to develop alcoholism at some point in their lives, than those who begin drinking at 21.** *Source:* National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 1998.
- Underage drinking is a factor in nearly half of all **teen automobile crashes**, and contributes to **youth suicides, fatal injuries and homicides** (the leading causes of death). *Source:* American Medical Association, 2001.
- Underage drinking is linked to two-thirds of all **sexual assaults and date rapes** of teens and college students. And, is a major factor in unprotected sex among adolescents. *Source:* American Medical Association, 2001.

### RESOURCES

- *Start Talking Before They Start Drinking Family Guide* – Available from Stop Underage Drinking. (Download from <http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/parents.aspx>.)
- *Talking to Your Kids About Alcohol* – Easy to use tips for talking to kids and information about alcohol and prevention. (Download from Western CAPT at <http://captus.samhsa.gov/western/resources/prevmat/index.cfm>.)
- <http://camy.org> – The Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth at Georgetown University monitors alcohol industry marketing practices to focus attention and action on practices that jeopardize the health and safety of America's youth. Includes research reports, fact sheets, marketing information and ways to take action.
- <http://www.nmmjp.org> – The New Mexico Media Literacy Project was founded in 1993, and is one of the largest media literacy organizations in the US. Their mission is to cultivate critical thinking and activism in our media culture to build healthy and just communities.
- <http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov> – This site is a portal to federal resources and information on underage drinking, including parent and community guides.
- <http://healthvermont.gov> – The Vermont Department of Health web site. The Substance Abuse Programs (ADAP) section includes many resources, including underage drinking prevention resources (<http://www.healthvermont.gov/adap/aam2006/resources1.aspx>).
- [www.questionthmessage.com](http://www.questionthmessage.com) – The official campaign site for the Question the Message campaign. Check out the About this Campaign section, which includes information for parents.