



Parents Are Heroes

A Newsletter of the Making Sobriety Attractive (MSA) Program,
a Drug-Free Communities Project for Kent County, Michigan

January/February Edition 2009

In this issue:

*Why Parents Oppose
Liquor Ads on Sports
TV

*Take Action to
Stop Alcohol Ads on
Sports Programs

*Did You Know?

Notice: MSA Theatre
Troupe forming at
Kenowa Hills High
School. Contact
tucker98@netscape.com

Painkiller Overdose
Deaths Rising, Study
Says, Dec 11, 2008 A new
study suggests that deaths
from accidental overdoses
of prescription
medications in the U.S.
are on the rise...click on
Journal of the American
Medical Association

Gene May be Linked to
Binge-Drinking
Behavior, 8/21/2003
Researchers have
uncovered a genetic
factor that could
predispose certain youths
to binge drinking,
according to click on the
National Institute on
Alcohol Abuse and
Alcoholism (NIAAA).

Among teens aged 12 to
17, only 5% of non-
drinkers use illicit
drugs, but 60% of heavy
drinkers use ("heavy" =
consumed five or more
drinks on the same
occasion on each of 5 or

Why Should Parents Object to the NBA's Plan to Televise Liquor Ads at Court Side?

Kids watch more sports on TV than do adults. And, kids are more susceptible to the effects of advertising. A great deal of research has shown that the more ads for alcohol teenagers see, the more likely they are to drink and to drink more per occasion <http://www.camy.org/>. **In fact, "alcohol companies use sports to reach adolescents and younger adult sports fans, ensuring strong brand recognition from an early age"** www.marininstitute.org. We MUST stop allowing sports to sell booze to teenagers (and younger kids) and sports organizations have to be more creative --alcohol isn't the only product on which they can make advertising money. But thanks in great part to the already ubiquitous advertising of beer on sports shows, **"the highest prevalence of alcohol dependence [addiction to alcohol, especially to beer] in the U.S. population is among youth ages 18 to 20, who usually began drinking years earlier."** See *The Surgeon General's Call to Action To Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking*; see also "New Alcohol-Free Sports Channel Shows Beer Ads Not Necessary:" at www.jointogether.org/news/yourturn/announcements/2006/new-alcohol-free-sports.html.

Major League Baseball, the National Hockey League, and NASCAR also allow liquor ads, but the National Football League does not. The NBA dropped its ban on liquor ads earlier this month at an annual sales and marketing meeting. George Hacker, director of the alcohol policies project at the Center for Science in the Public Interest, called the NBA's decision to begin showing commercials for alcohol an "act of desperation." We should also call it an "act of exploitation" to the detriment of our children.

A Step Forward in Protecting Our Children: MillerCoors Agrees to Stop Selling Alcoholic Energy Drinks

A settlement announced recently between MillerCoors and a group of state attorneys general will result in the end of the company's practice of selling sweet tasting drinks loaded with alcohol and caffeine, such as Sparks. The company has also agreed **to end misleading and youth-oriented marketing tactics.** Advertising for Alcoholic Energy drinks targets kids through untrue potency claims: they say these drinks "allow you to party all night!" **Combining caffeine with alcohol has been linked to public-health risks, especially among underage drinkers.** However, the elimination of these products DOES NOT have any effect on the practice of serving liquor mixed with drinks like Red Bull at bars and in private homes. The risks of high caffeine combined with alcohol thus persists: These drinks are dangerous because the caffeine masks the effects of the alcohol -- drinkers may not feel impaired, but they are.

- Stop Big Alcohol's Irresponsible Advertising: Tell the Federal Trade Commission that Self-Regulation Does Not Work - <https://secure2.convio.net/tmi/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=187>
- Join the campaigns against combining sports and alcohol advertising: www.cspinet.org/booze/CAFST/ and/or write to your Michigan Attorney General Mike Cox: <http://www.michigan.gov/ag>
- If someone you know, especially a teenager or a member of your community had a bad experience after mixing Red Bull and alcohol, please click here to send that information to help CSPI in its continuing campaign against MillerCoors: <http://members.jointogether.org/campaign/redbull/w76553drpn3kin7?>

more days in the past 30).

The American College of Sports Medicine

says that Impairment of information process detracts from athletes' ability to react rapidly to changes in the game: loss of reaction time, hand-eye coordination, accuracy, balance, and complex coordination. Alcohol has NO BENEFICIAL effect on athletic performance, but has many effects that are DETRIMENTAL. click on www.msse.com/pt/pt-core/template-journal/msse/media/0682.pdf

What/Who is MSA?
The MSA Project is Sponsored by the *Kent County SA Prevention Leadership Coalition* and Implemented by the *ALERT Labs (Alcohol Laboratories for Education, Research, and Training) Group*.^{*} MSA is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services through SAMHSA's "Drug Free Communities Support Program:" see www.alertlabs.org

To send us Questions, Suggestions, and Comments, click on info@alertlabs.org

To see previous MSA Newsletters, click on http://www.alertlabs.org/program.php?program_id=2

Did You Know

One Drink a Day for Women Raises Risk of Cancers, February 24, 2009

- Researchers found that moderate drinking was **linked to 13 percent of breast, liver, rectum, and upper respiratory/digestive tract cancers** for women. Overall, each additional drink increased the cancer risks, and the type of alcohol did not seem to matter.
- For women who drank and smoke, the risk of developing **mouth and throat cancers** increased also. [Journal of the National Cancer Institute](#).

The risk of cancer appeared the same whether women drank wine, beer or any other type of alcohol. www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/02/24/AR2009022402361.html Heavier drinking, by either men or women, also increases the risk for these kinds of cancers.

More Teens 'Learning a Lot' about Drug Risks From Parents, February 27, 2009

37 % of teens reported learning a lot about the risks of drugs from their parents, a significant **16 percent increase from the previous year** and the first major increase since the inception of the study. Research consistently shows that **teens who learn a lot about the risks of drugs at home are up to 50 percent less likely to use**, yet many parents have difficulty [talking with their kids about drugs and alcohol](#).

Red Flag: Parents Still Not Discussing Abuse of Prescription and Over-The-Counter Medicines -- Despite the increase in parent-teen discussions, only 24% of teens report that their parents talked with them about the dangers of [prescription \(Rx\) drug abuse](#) or use of medications outside of a doctor's supervision; just 18 percent of teens say their parents discuss the risks of abusing over-the-counter (OTC) cough medicine.

Teenagers Who Work, Popular Kids, and Affluent Kids Most At Risk for Alcohol and Other Drug Use Disorders

Employed youths were more likely than youths who were not employed to have used alcohol (35.9 vs. 24.4 percent), to have engaged in **binge alcohol use** (24.6 vs. 15.2 percent), and to have used an **illicit drug** (19.4 vs. 15.6 percent) during the past month. Parents are sometimes led to believe that if their children are **involved in school activities** such as **athletics**, or have **part-time jobs**, they are less likely to get involved with alcohol and other drugs (AOD). Recent research, however, indicates that the opposite is true. Parents need to be just as vigilant with their active children as with those who are less involved in school activities or work. According to recent research, **affluent children** are also at especially high risk. [Young Americans Say Alcohol, Marijuana, Cigarettes, and Lottery Tickets are Easily Accessible. http://oas.samhsa.gov/2k6/employedYouth/employedYouth.htm](http://oas.samhsa.gov/2k6/employedYouth/employedYouth.htm).

Seven Of The Top 10 Drugs Being Misused By High-School Seniors Are Legal Prescription Or Over-The-Counter Medications. The 2008 [Monitoring the Future](#) report released this week shows that **15.4 percent of 12th-grade students reported nonmedical use of legal prescription or over-the-counter medications**, including **11 percent who misused Vicodin** and **4.7 percent who misused Oxycontin**. The annual report is based on surveys of about 50,000 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-graders nationally.

The **ALERT Labs Group**: *Project Director, Nancy L. Harper, Ph.D., Dean of Social Sciences and Professor Communication(ret.), Director, ALERT Labs Consulting; Project Coordinator, Shannon D. Welsh, M.Ed., Welsh Advertising; Project Evaluator, Donald (Tex) Bryant, M.S. & M.Ed., Director of Bryant Statistical Consulting, STARR Counselor for screening and intervention, Geoffery L. Stevens, LMSW, DeMey Southeast Clinic, Pine Rest Christian Services; Project Theatre Coordinator, Carla Jackson, Certified in Secondary Education and Peer Mentoring/Listening.*