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Solutions to Community Alcohol Problems

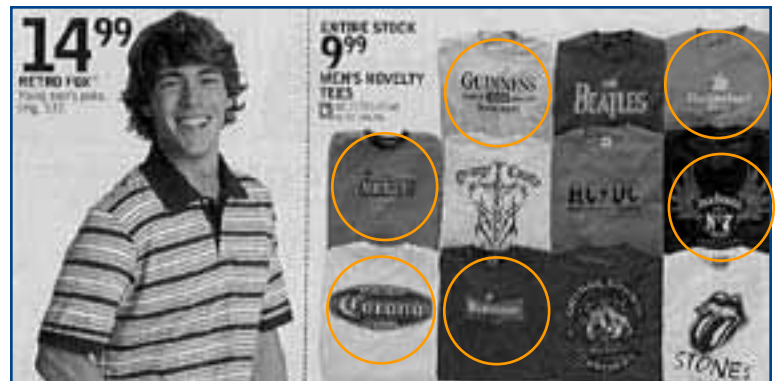
Back to School With Jack Daniels?



In August, JC Penney released its catalog for back-to-school clothes and accessories featuring T-shirts decorated with logos for Jack Daniels, Budweiser, Miller Lite and Guinness. The moderately priced (\$9.99) shirts are described as “men’s novelty tees,” but they appeared on the same pages with “young men’s, boys’ and girls” fashions worn by models who appear high school age at the oldest. (Community partners have noticed similar brand labeled clothing at Target and several other stores.)

What you can do:

Visit your local JC Penney, Target, Sears or other stores to see if they’re selling alcohol brand clothing for young people. Speak to the department manager and ask that the items be removed from the store.



Spread the word to parents, clergy, pediatricians and others who share your concern about promoting alcohol to underage youth. For details visit www.MarinInstitute.org



We are an alcohol industry watchdog and a resource for solutions to community alcohol problems.

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Don't Let Bud Have the Last Word on Underage Drinking



Anheuser-Busch, the world's largest brewer, has been working hard to deflect responsibility from its own role in this country's underage drinking problem.

This summer the company helped its alcoholic beverage distributors get letters to the editor published in local community papers promoting Anheuser-Busch's latest answer to underage drinking.

The letter, and similar versions of it, appeared in newspapers across the country including *The Reporter* (Vacaville, California) and *The Daily Nonpareil* (Council Bluffs, Iowa) touting Anheuser-Busch's public education campaign aimed at adults, "Prevent, Don't Provide!" The letters cite the 2003 National

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Budweiser teamed up with New Line Cinema to promote beer to underage viewers in the hit comedy *the Wedding Crashers*.

Minnesota Joins Together to Keep Advocacy Alive



Although Minnesota Join Together (MJT)'s funding ended last year, the coalition continues to work on a purely volunteer basis to advance policies that keep alcohol out of the hands of young people. MJT, whose members include youth, adults, and organizations across the state, has focused on reducing the availability and access of alcohol for young people for more than 10 years.

Minnesota was one of many states funded through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Reducing Underage Drinking Through Coalitions project. When that project ended in 2004, the coalition underwent some

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Thumbs up... to the **Youth Leadership Institute** in San Rafael, California for helping to pressure retailer Abercrombie and Fitch into discontinuing it's line of t-shirts promoting binge and underage drinking. The clothing company, popular with teens, produced t-shirts with phrases such as, "If you can read this, you need another cocktail," and "Together we can get the planet trashed."



Thumbs Up... to the **Indiana Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking** and their collegiate partner the **Indiana Collegiate Action**

Network for their work on the passage of State Bill 382: Alcohol Server Training. The bill, which went into effect July 1, requires that all 100,000 open-container servers (bar tenders and wait staff) in Indiana be trained in Responsible Beverage Service (RBS). It also makes RBS training a prerequisite for liquor license receipt or renewal, and because licenses must be renewed every two years, 100 percent compliance is ensured by 2008.



Thumbs Up... to **Judy Cushing, Pam Erickson** and the rest of the **Oregon Partnership** for

pressuring Anheuser-Busch into taking down billboards that mixed Bud Light with jet skiing. The Partnership alerted the media, who contacted Anheuser-Busch following the tragic death of an intoxicated young man in a local boating incident. Only then did the beer maker announce plans to remove the misguided billboards.

Get Ready for National Binge Drinking Day



Football season has barely begun, but Michigan is already bracing for its turn as host of the Super Bowl at Detroit's Ford Field on Sunday, February 5, 2006.

Increasingly recognized as our nation's unofficial binge drinking holiday, Super Bowl Sunday is a peak day for many of alcohol's second-hand impacts: DUI crashes and alcohol-related violence on the day of the game, and high absenteeism at work the next day. That's why the Michigan Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking (MCRUD) is working with community leaders from around the state to share strategies for reducing the potential toll of alcohol problems.

In general, laws enforced by each state's alcohol control agency usually function as the community's first line of defense against alcohol problems. Past Super Bowl host cities temporarily suspended some liquor laws—like drinking in public—in the entertainment zone surrounding the stadium. The Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) has no plans to relax any existing laws, and it expects to carefully scrutinize applications for 40 special event licenses. But prevention leaders anticipate that the MLCC may need community support to maintain current controls.

To learn more about Michigan's prevention strategy for the Super Bowl call **MCRUD** at **800-968-4968**. For help in your community, and to connect with others engaged in the Marin Institute's Super Bowl campaign, contact **Laurie Leiber**, at **415-456-5692 ext. 207**.



Community leaders in Michigan are working to prevent alcohol-related problems when the next Super Bowl comes to Detroit's Ford Field.

Youth Taking Action on Alcohol



Communities across the country are increasingly finding that young people can play a critical role in preventing alcohol problems. In an effort to identify and advance effective strategies for including young people in the fight against community alcohol problems, the Youth Leadership Institute and the Marin Institute convened a national “Youth Taking Action on Alcohol” retreat in Santa Fe, New Mexico this past summer.

At the retreat, youth leaders and adult allies from around the nation gathered to share their insights and help catalyze a national movement centered on effectively engaging youth in solving community alcohol problems through environmental prevention strategies. “The experience, insight, vision, and voice of young people are great resources, especially concerning solutions to alcohol problems,” said Kaitlin Ketchum, 19, a retreat participant.

The retreat was comprised of a diverse group of youth and adults, representing various states, organizations and cultures. Using the participants’ experience and insight, the event organizers and co-sponsors plan to produce a short, visionary report on the role of youth development and action in the prevention of alcohol problems. The youth retreat was modeled on the approach that the Marin Institute used to create “Solutions to Community Alcohol Problems,” a popular action guide, and participants identified the need for a similar tool focused on youth.

Through brainstorming and discussion, the group concluded that one of the most effective ways to engage youth in preventing community alcohol problems is to focus on the alcohol industry and its often shameless targeting of young people. The outcome of the

retreat was participants’ proposal for a three-part approach to engage young people in targeting the alcohol industry. First, the convening of a national youth summit focused on developing a strategy for fighting the industry. Second, the creation of an action guide for engaging youth in prevention. Third, a media campaign to expose the alcohol industry’s targeting of young people and inspire youth across the country to reject the industry’s irresponsible tactics that target them.



Lft to Rt: Thania Balcorts, California Youth Council member and Vicki Hebert, Dover, New Hampshire Police Department intern.



Lft to Rt: Kaitlin Ketchum, Marin Institute intern and Maxwell Hayman, Youth Leadership Institute board member.



Lft to Rt: Barbara Bloomberg, New Mexico alcohol policy advocate and Poorva Pandey, student and Marin Institute Board Member.

Community Prevention



Leaders Honored

Too often, the leaders who dedicate themselves to working for healthier and safer communities go unappreciated. That's why the Marin Institute recently chose four San Francisco Bay Area leaders in the fight against community alcohol problems to receive Community Prevention Leadership Awards for their efforts.

The awards were presented during a June ceremony at the Marin Institute, where board members, staff, and members of the community gathered to celebrate these leaders for their efforts to combat community alcohol problems. California Assemblyman Joe Nation also attended, and he applauded both the Marin Institute and the awardees, whom he presented with certificates of recognition from the State Assembly.



Ed Kikumoto of the Alcohol Policy Network received the **Bay Area Leader Award** for his tireless efforts helping residents of Berkeley and Oakland deal with problem alcohol outlets in their communities. As a community organizer, Ed has developed an effective empowerment model for working with community residents trying to address

problems with poorly operated and/or irresponsible alcohol outlets in their neighborhoods.



Wendy Todd of the Youth Leadership Institute (YLI) received the **Bay Area Youth Ally Award** for her role as an adult ally to young people committed to preventing alcohol-related problems in Marin County. As Director of Prevention at YLI, Wendy recently helped a team of Bay Area youth organize a community access survey project which found that the

most common sources of alcohol for young people are parents and friends.

“As a community, it’s important to recognize the prevention efforts of young people and those adult allies who support them,” says Wendy Todd, “it’s an honor to receive that recognition from the Marin Institute.”



Marin County Supervisor **Susan L. Adams** received the **Marin Leader Award** for her unwavering responsiveness to community concerns about alcohol problems. A Marin County Supervisor since 2003, Susan has made numerous contributions to the field of public health in Marin County and California.



Renee Sayles of the Marin Youth Health Advisory Council (MYHAC) received the **Marin Youth Leader Award** for her work on addressing underage access to alcohol and other drugs in Marin County, and the messages young people receive about alcohol and other drugs. Renee, a recent graduate of San Rafael High School, is a dedicated leader of MYHAC and

Breaking the Link, a project designed to reduce alcohol-related sexual assault.

Academy of Sciences report finding that two-thirds of teens report getting alcohol from parents or other adults. What Anheuser-Busch and its distributors don't tell you is that the same report also called on alcohol companies to refrain from marketing practices that have substantial underage appeal and to take more care in placing ads to reduce youthful exposure. But, while Anheuser-Busch encourages adults to be more responsible, the maker of Budweiser and Bud Light exposed more than 25 million underage viewers to beer ads during the Super Bowl alone, and continues to use films popular with teens, like *Dodgeball* and *The Wedding Crashers*, to market its brands.

Likewise, Anheuser-Busch positions its Budweiser.com Web site as a popular entertainment destination for young people. It has an animated video of dancing lizards and frogs—proven popular with kids—downloadable



Anheuser-Busch still uses kid-friendly mascots like dancing frogs and lizards on Budweiser.com

Before Anheuser-Busch tries to earn brownie points by telling individuals to “do their part” it should start by cleaning up its own act.

Budweiser mobile songs, screensavers and ring tones, as well as personalized email accounts (e.g., yourname@Budweiser.com). Even the Marin Institute's 20

year-old intern was able to register on the site, using a fake date of birth, and get a Budweiser.com email address.

The Marin Institute responded to Anheuser-Busch's letter writing campaign by alerting its activists and others in the field and encouraging them to send a letter of their own to local papers. Taking the lead, Linda Pratt, a prevention advocate in Solano County, California and member of the Marin Institute Board of Directors, adapted our sample letter, and got it published in two California papers: *The Reporter* (Vacaville) and *The Daily Republic* (Solano County).

Underage drinking is a big problem and there is plenty of responsibility to go around. But before Anheuser-Busch tries to earn brownie points by telling other people to “do their part” we think the brewer should clean up its own act. For starters, Anheuser-Busch should stay out of PG-13 movies and cut all the animal acts. To send a letter of your own visit www.MarinInstitute.org/take_action/action_alerts/bud.htm

Talking Back to Irresponsible Alcohol Ads



People are using **Talk Back**, our online advertising complaint system, to tell alcohol companies what they think of their promotions. Below are examples of two letters created by **Talk Back** users to the Beer Institute. Go to www.MarinInstitute.org/talkback to quickly craft a customized letter of your own.



The letter of complaint written by Lisa R. referred to this Coors billboard of a young looking surfer girl in San Diego, California.

July 06, 2005

RE: Coors Surfer Girl Ad

To the Beer Institute:

I am writing to register a formal complaint regarding a Billboard for Coors Light that was seen in the Mission Beach, Downtown, and La Jolla areas of San Diego on July 3, 2005. I believe that the ad in question violates the following section(s) of the Beer Institute Advertising and Marketing Code:

- underage youth: broadcast ad placement

The ad in Mission Beach was right next to Belmont Park - a family boardwalk where there are lots of children around.

- high risk: alertness and coordination

As a surfer, I am fully aware of the amount of alertness and degree of coordination that this sport involves. I believe that this ad portrays a surfer girl drinking before she goes out to surf because she's holding her surfboard and wearing her wetsuit. I don't want the young surfers to see this and associate alcohol with surfing or any other sport.

- underage youth: young looking models

The model here looked very young.

I request that you review this ad against the Beer Institute Advertising and Marketing Code and inform Coors of this complaint. I look forward to hearing how Coors will address my concerns and avoid similar irresponsible advertising in the future.

Sincerely,

Lisa R.

San Diego, CA

July 20, 2005

RE: Regular Guy/Mail Order Bride Ad

To the Beer Institute:

I am writing to register a formal complaint regarding a Radio commercial for Bud Light that was heard on FM Radio 97.3 KLLC San Francisco, July 18, 9:45am. I believe that the ad in question violates the following section(s) of the Beer Institute Advertising and Marketing Code:

- poor taste: general

- misleading content: social or personal problems

I found this radio ad's portrayal of women to be especially offensive and in poor taste. Referring to a mail order bride, the ad says, "Some men look in catalogs for furniture, you look in catalogs for someone to clean the furniture." The ad also makes references to paying this woman (a mail-order bride) for sex and implying that all she will do is spend her husband's money.

I was appalled to hear this ad, especially when human trafficking of women and prostitution still plague our world. Making light of these issues is unacceptable.

Demeaning women is not clever marketing and I suggest Anheuser-Busch take a good hard look at what its ads are saying to millions of men across America. I sincerely hope that its aim is not to equate abusing and objectifying women with consuming Bud Light.

I request that you review this ad against the Beer Institute Advertising and Marketing Code and inform Anheuser-Busch of this complaint. I look forward to hearing how Anheuser-Busch will address my concerns and avoid similar irresponsible advertising in the future.

Sincerely, Kaitlin K.

San Francisco, CA

significant changes. “It’s been quite a transition,” summarized MJT co-chair Howard Epstein. “Still, we’ve been able to keep the coalition together and make progress on two of our priority legislative issues—increasing the excise tax on alcohol and preventing wine sales in grocery stores.”

Increasing Minnesota’s excise tax on alcohol has been difficult in the state’s political climate; the governor has publicly opposed creating new taxes or raising existing ones. Nevertheless, MJT members found that grassroots support for increased taxes was strong. “This issue—increasing taxes—became a bridge between MJT and county and city governments, who have seen their funding go down in the last few years,” noted Epstein.

Members of the MJT coalition continued their advocacy efforts, backed by local supporters. “The partnership is a good fit for everyone: Minnesota Join Together carries the big message while local governments, community groups, and law enforcement rally behind it and provide vital grassroots support,” said Epstein. This joint effort resulted in what Epstein describes as a small win: the Governor supported a continuation of an existing sales tax on alcohol. “Although it’s not exactly what we wanted, it’s something to build on,” noted Epstein.

Partnership was a key component in addressing another ongoing legislative issue: allowing wine sales in grocery stores. Minnesota law allows wine and distilled spirits sales only in state licensed liquor stores. MJT members felt strongly that allowing wine to be sold in grocery and convenience stores would result in greater



Minnesota Join Together and the Youth-In-Action coalition, seen here on the steps of the Minnesota State Capitol, have advanced policy advocacy goals by working with legislators.

*“The partnership is a good fit for everyone: Minnesota Join Together carries the big message while local governments, community groups, and law enforcement rally behind it and provide vital grassroots support.”
-- MJT co-chair Howard Epstein*

access for young people—and consequently, an increase in underage drinking. “This became a case of strange bedfellows,” laughed Epstein, “since we ended up

working alongside the state liquor association to defeat the proposition.”

How did that happen? Minnesota Join Together found that the Minnesota Licensed Beverage Association (MLBA) also opposed an effort by the state Grocers’ Association to expand wine sales into grocery stores. MJT was approached by representatives of the MLBA to cooperate on this issue, based on years of effective policy work and MJT’s reputation with state policymakers. Although their reasons were very different—public safety vs. diminished profits—MJT decided that the risk to young people’s health and safety was significant enough to partner with an industry group on this issue. The proposition was defeated again in the 2005 legislative session, as it had been for the last four years.

Despite losing funding and the associated infrastructure, Minnesota Join Together members are already planning for advocacy efforts in the future with no intention of slowing down anytime soon. “It’s a lot of work to keep a group like this together,” said Epstein. But rather than dissipate the group’s efforts, the transition has served to concentrate it. “We’re all interested in passing policy that promotes a healthier and safer Minnesota,” said Epstein. “It’s what keeps us coming back, year after year.”

Contact **Minnesota Join Together** by visiting www.miph.org/mjt