



Survey Paints Alarming Picture of Underage Drinking Among Teenage Girls

A new survey released December 12, 2005 reveals that nearly half of all mothers think underage drinking is acceptable in different circumstances. The survey, commissioned by The Century Council, a national not-for-profit organization funded by America's leading distilled spirits producers, found that mothers of teenage daughters underestimate the occurrence of underage drinking among their own daughters and misjudge the seriousness of the issue. In partnership with the Society for Women's Health Research and the Montgomery County Maryland Alcohol Beverage Control Board, The Century Council announced the release of a new program, Girl Talk: Choices and Consequences of Underage Drinking, to address this gap in knowledge and understanding of the prevalence of underage drinking, much of which is based on lack of effective communication between mothers and their teenage daughters. Significant survey findings include the following:

Mothers significantly underestimate daughter's experience with alcohol

- 16% of 13-15 year old girls say they drink with friends, only 5% of their mothers think their daughters are drinking;
- 30% of 16-18 year old girls say they drink with friends, only 9% of their mothers think their daughters are drinking;
- 51% of 19-21 year old girls say they drink with friends and only 32% of their mothers thought they were drinking.

Alarmingly, mothers say underage drinking is acceptable

- Nearly half (49%) of mothers of teenage girls say it is okay for their daughters to drink;
- 38% of mothers say it is okay for their daughters to drink on special occasions;
- 21% of mothers say it is okay to drink under parental supervision at home;
- 20% of mothers say drinking alcohol is a natural part of growing up.

"These data show that mothers start out viewing underage alcohol consumption as a serious problem, yet as their daughters grow older mothers switch their message from "don't do it" to "be safe"; this illustrates a disturbing misperception among moms about the seriousness of problems associated with alcohol consumption by their teenage daughters," said Century Council Chairman, Susan Molinari.

When asked how serious they thought health risks were for teens that drink, 71% of the girls polled stated that they believe the health risks associated with drinking are serious. Putting a finer point on their concerns, the research also uncovered "the five strongest health-consequences that would keep teens from drinking alcohol" according to survey responses of teenage girls ages 13-18. Among the health consequences they identified are the following:

Alcohol poisoning/overdose.	64%
Rape	63%
Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)/HIV-AIDS	52%
Unsafe/unplanned sex	52%
Harm to mental development	39%
Hangover	37%
Pregnancy	45%
Suicide	35%
Harm to physical development	27%
Vomiting	28%
Weight gain or weight loss	28%

In the face of these data, The Century Council developed a new public awareness campaign entitled, Girl Talk: Choices and Consequences of Underage Drinking, to improve dialogue among mothers and daughters. The campaign will help mothers initiate and sustain conversations about alcohol. Girl Talk utilizes the data gleaned from the survey including those health consequences of most

concern to the girls. Girl Talk also highlights the daughters' advice to their moms regarding talking about underage drinking. Girls participating in the survey responded that:

- Moms must be approachable, able to keep an open mind and must not lecture or overreact — "just because I am asking about alcohol does not mean I am drinking alcohol."
- Moms: Keep the conversation real and personal by telling about your own personal and real-life experiences, choices and consequences, and if you don't want to talk about yourself, share the experiences of people you know.
- Be my parent, not my friend. Share your values and set the rules and discuss the social risks of underage drinking beyond just drunk driving.

The Century Council has developed a comprehensive program tailored specifically for mothers and daughters including:

- A website, www.girlsanddrinking.org, for mothers and daughters with additional information on how to have the underage drinking conversation and links to additional national and local resources related to underage drinking.
- Booklets for mothers, detailing how to begin the conversation, sustain the conversation and have an impact as well as information explaining the facts about alcohol, and addressing issues such as peer pressure and creative ways to say "no" to alcohol.
- A Blog, hosted by the Society for Women's Health, for moms and daughters to discuss their experiences and connect with others on this issue. The Blog will be available in January of 2006.
- A media partnership with The N, a nighttime network for teens to further build public awareness among young women about the dangers of underage drinking including sponsorship this week of episodes of Degrassi a critically acclaimed teen drama that follows a group of 10th and 11th graders at Degrassi Community School as they deal with the trials and tribulations of adolescence which feature underage drinking themes.

Top 10 Knoxville Drinking Locations for DUI Offenders

According to a 2005 report from the Knoxville Police Department, the following businesses were cited as the "Top 10 Locations" DUI offenders reported they had been drinking or obtained alcohol. The report was presented to City Council Beer Board on November 22 by Officer Jason Booker. The 2005 list is as follows:

36	Michaels
17	Kingston Alley
11	Barley's
9	O'Charley's
8	Tonic
8	Liquid
8	Charlie Peppers
7	Red Iguana
7	Pilot
7	Breakers

2004 Results:

35	Michaels
17	Breakers
11	Kingston Alley
11	Amnesia
9	Tonic
9	Barleys
8	Cotton Eyed Joes
7	O'Hare's
6	Rookies/Peters
6	Red Iguana
6	Old City Bar
6	Hooters
6	Bailey's

"Keep Off the Grass" Receives Positive Administrative Feedback

"In education, we are always seeking the perfect format for information delivery. I believe Keep off the Grass found that perfect format. The combination of the live action, video sections and follow up questions at the end was wonderful."

-Tom Brown, Principal, Holston Middle School

"Our students were very positive about the production. They thought it was informative and very entertaining. The staff agreed. Lots of compliments! Keep off the Grass was the best program yet...I wish our entire student body could see the program."

-Mary Prater, Guidance Counselor, Karns Middle School

"Our students were very positive about the production. They thought it was funny and they learned some things they did not know. Using humor is a great way to reach the kids. They seemed to enjoy the real life situations as well as the funny parts."

-Dana Quick, Guidance Counselor, Vine Middle School.

Evaluation Report Findings for "Keep Off the Grass"

In order to assess the effectiveness of "Keep Off the Grass," UT SWORPS developed a pre- and post-test comprised of 9 multiple choice and true/false questions. One question was developed to ascertain student's perception of harm regarding marijuana. Findings include:

The greatest increase in average scores occurred at Holston Middle (123.7% increase) and Whittle Springs Middle (125% increase).

The school with the highest pre-test average was Vine Middle.

Students in Knox County demonstrated a high perception of harm rate prior to the program.

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**A VERY SPECIAL THANKS TO
THE SCHOOL RESOURCE
OFFICERS (SRO'S) FOR
HELPING TO ADMINISTER
THE PRE AND POST-TESTS!**
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Teen Poll Shows Less Drug Use, More Sex

Fewer Tennessee teens are smoking and using drugs, but more are having sex, a new survey shows.

About 62 percent of teens who took the 2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey - which polled 1,540 students in 45 high schools statewide - say they have smoked a cigarette in their lifetime, but the percentage who smoked regularly or took their first puff before age 13 is on the decline.

The anonymous, 87-question survey was created by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and has been given in Tennessee since 1991.

It polls teens about their sexual activity and tobacco, drug and alcohol use, and also asks questions about what they eat, how much they exercise and whether they're involved in behavior that could lead to unintentional injury or violence.

The percentage who reported ever having sexual intercourse was 55 percent - up from 50 percent two years ago, the last time the survey was done, but well below the 62 percent in 1993.

The percentage who said they've tried marijuana, cocaine, ecstasy, heroin, steroids and methamphetamines was on the decline. Marijuana was by far the most common of drug used. Forty-two percent said they had used marijuana at least once in their lifetime, down from 43 percent in 2003 but higher than the 33 percent in 1993.

Survey results on drinking were mixed. About 75 percent said they've tried alcohol - a statistic that's been fairly flat since the early 1990s. But the percentage of teens who say they took their first drink before age 13, drank on school property or binge-drank went down this year.

Officials say it's important to keep tabs on the choices teens are making. Survey results help officials target prevention and intervention programs.

Results of the health portion of the survey showed that many teens don't eat nutritious foods or exercise enough. About 48 percent say they were trying to lose weight even though weight and height information submitted by each teen showed that only 15 percent were actually overweight.

However, the percentage who say they took diet pills, vomited, used laxatives or went without eating to lose weight went down slightly. And the percentage who exercised to lose weight went up.

"Kids are saturated with media and the marketing of what you're supposed to look like as a teenager," said Stephanie Davis, director of programs for Students Taking a Right Stand, a group for middle- and high-school students. "Teens are under pressure to look like what they see and what they perceive as popular."

About 19 percent of teens polled said they seriously considered suicide in the past year. The percentage was up slightly, along with the percentage who said they've actually attempted suicide or been plagued over time by feelings of deep sadness.

"One-third say they felt hopeless, so hopeless that they stopped doing some usual activities," said Jerry Swaim, director of school health education for the state Department of Education, which gives the survey every other year.



Youth Spotlight: ROSE PICKRELL

13-year-old Rose Pickrell truly encompasses the spirit of giving. After hearing about a little boy named Arnold that had been separated from his father because of Hurricane Katrina, Rose decided to make and sell ribbons to raise funds for Arnold and his family. Lake City middle school students, parents, teachers and staff raised over \$1,000 to help Arnold's newly relocated family with their expenses while temporarily living in Knoxville.

Last fall, Channel 10 News covered this heartwarming story and the Metropolitan Drug Commission just so happened to be at Lake City Middle School with "Keep

Off the Grass" when Arnold was given the \$1,000 check. Again, Rose was honored by her peers and teachers for her true volunteer spirit.

The Lake City Native also attended our 2005 STAGE Camp and on the last day was given a Leadership award by her peers. During the weeklong camp, Rose was featured in a public service announcement with Citadel Broadcasting that addressed problems associated with underage drinking.

Way to go Rose!

Youth Exposure to Alcohol Advertising

The number of cable network alcohol ads that were more likely to be seen by underage youth than adults rose by 97 percent between 2001 and 2004, according to a new study by the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth (CAMY) at Georgetown University, which urged greater efforts to protect underage youth from alcohol marketing.

CAMY conducted an analysis of more than 1 million television ads placed between 2001 and 2004 on broadcast, cable and local television. Experts say that alcohol advertising and alcohol promotional activity contributes to underage drinking by portraying alcohol consumption in an appealing and glamorous way. CAMY recommends tighter controls on alcohol advertising especially during popular youth viewing times.

Key findings of the analysis include:

*Overall spending on alcohol advertising on television grew from 2001 to 2004. Annual expenditures grew from \$774 million to \$915 million between 2001 and 2004 and totaled almost \$3.5 billion during this period. Spending on cable advertising grew dramatically. Distilled spirits advertisers increased the number of ads they placed on cable networks by 5,687 percent, from 645 ads in 2001 to 37,328 in 2004. At the same time, beer marketers also substantially increased their advertising on cable networks. The number of beer ads was up 113 percent during this period, from 38,810 ads to 82,559. Youth exposure to alcohol advertising shifted to cable television.

*On cable television, youth were exposed to three ads for every four seen by adults in 2001. By 2004, that ratio increased to nearly four for every five. Overexposure of youth to alcohol advertising overall remains constant. Youth overexposure to alcohol advertising occurs when youth are over-represented in the audience viewing an alcohol ad relative to their presence in the general population, and thus are more likely per capita to see the ad.

*Throughout this period, the percentage of alcohol ads on television that were more likely per capita to be seen by underage youth than adults remained relatively stable, with 23 percent falling into that category in 2004. Almost half of youth exposure to alcohol ads on television in 2004 came from overexposing ads.

*Teen programming remains popular with alcohol advertisers. The CAMY analysis shows that alcohol advertising was seen on all of the 15 shows most popular with teen audiences, ages 12 to 17, each year from 2002 to 2004.

For more information on youth exposure to alcohol advertising, visit CAMY's website at www.camy.org.

"Conference in the Smokies" sponsored by ETAADAC

The East Tennessee Association of Alcohol & Drug Abuse Counselors (ETAADAC) is sponsoring the first annual Conference in the Smokies: "Smoky Mountain School on Core Functions" from April 12-14 at the Park Vista Hotel in Gatlinburg.

The three day conference is designed to provide the necessary training on the 12 Primary Core Functions needed for an individual to become a competent, qualified Licensed Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselor, and to address the issues facing counselors preparing for the Tennessee State Board Exams. Registration cost is \$175 for ETAADAC members and \$200 for non-members.

Any questions regarding the conference should be directed to Donna Mitchell at (865) 329-0363, ext. 108 or djmitchell@utk.edu.

FAKE ID TRAINING TO BE HELD IN FEBRUARY

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY 21 AND 22 TO ATTEND A FREE FAKE ID TRAINING SPONSORED BY THE METROPOLITAN DRUG COMMISSION.

THE TRAINING IS OFFERED TO LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT, BUSINESSES, RESTAURANTS, BARS AND MERCHANTS, BUT ANYONE IS WELCOME TO ATTEND.

LOOK FOR MORE DETAILS TO ARRIVE IN THE MAIL CONCERNING THE AGENDA.

New Free Multicultural Resource Materials for Parents

The National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign is releasing three new publications that coalitions and community organizations can offer to parents and caregivers to help them talk to their kids about drugs and alcohol. The new publications include a general audience parenting guide, a guide for the African-American community and a bilingual guide for Hispanic families, written in both Spanish and English. You can order or download these free materials from www.TheAntiDrug.com.

These new resource materials outline skills parents and caregivers can use to keep kids drug-free. The "Keeping Your Teens Drug-Free" guides describe the health hazards and signs and symptoms of use of many risky substances, including marijuana, alcohol, meth, inhalants, prescription drugs and steroids. They also discuss challenges parents may face; how parents are a positive influence on their kids; opportunities for parents to start a dialogue with their teens; monitoring techniques; and what parents can do and say to keep their children drug-free.

Your organization can help empower parents and caring adults to communicate with their teens by encouraging them to check out one or all of these free parent guides:

"A Guide for Hispanic Families" / "Una Guía Para las Familias Hispánicas" This Spanish/English bilingual brochure, specifically written for Hispanic parents and caregivers, addresses effective monitoring, communicating and other parenting techniques that will help parents raise healthy and happy teens. Order or download at www.theantidrug.com/news/resourcelist.aspx?id=4.

"A Guide for African American Parents and Caregivers" This valuable brochure outlines ways parents and caregivers can draw on the strength of the African American community to assist in raising healthy teens. Order or download at www.theantidrug.com/news/resourcelist.aspx?id=3

Mental Health and Drug Use Disorders on the Rise

A recent Institutes of Medicine report listed mental health and substance abuse as the leading cause of combined disability and death of women and the second highest of men. Despite this alarming trend, a stigma persists in our communities about mental health conditions, preventing many from seeking treatment. To learn more about co-occurring disorders, contact the Mental Health Association at (865) 584-9125.

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE for information about starting or maintaining a Drug-free Workplace Program; parent resources; treatment options; general drug descriptions, including warning signs and effects; and local and national research about drug use.

www.metrodrug.org

This project is funded under an agreement with TCCY



Announcements

Helen Ross McNabb Center has begun a program for problem gamblers at its CenterPointe facility on Ball Camp Pike. The six- to eight-week Intensive Outpatient Program for Problem and Compulsive Gamblers, for men and women older than 18, is funded by a grant from the Tennessee Department of Health. It's based on a 12-step program model that includes group counseling, motivational interviewing and cognitive behavioral therapy, along with other supportive therapies. If you think you may have a gambling addiction, take a self-test at www.mcnabbcenter.org. For an appointment or to request treatment, call Leigh Williams, (865) 523-4704.

The Metropolitan Drug Commission's website has received a facelift! Updated sections include: Alcohol Screening, Drug Information, Drug-Free Workplace, Parenting, Teacher's Corner, Prevention Theatre, STAGE Camp and Reach Out Now: Talk to a 5th Grader about Alcohol. New sections include: Health and Legal Consequences to Underage Drinking, Faith Community Prevention, Hands-On Tools, Youth Ages 9-13 and Alcohol Compliance. Please visit www.metrodrug.org for more information.

New Assessment and Referral Center

Homegrown Family Outreach, a branch of Blount County Children's Hospital, now offers Polysystemic Assessment and Referral. Services include:

*Biopsychosocial, Alcohol and Drug Assessment with recommendations and appropriate referral--\$40.

*SASSI--\$20

*Anger Management Classes (4 per month)--\$10 per class

*Substance Abuse Education Classes (4 per month)--\$10 per class.

For more information, call (865) 681-6323 or visit www.bcchome.com.

MDC in Action

During the second quarter (Oct-Dec), the MDC serviced the community by providing:

144	Treatment Referrals
9,215	Prevention Materials & Resources
475,311	Website Hits

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To submit an announcement or article to the *Metropolitan Drug Commission's ALERT*, please call (865) 588-5550.



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