



PRAIRIE RIDGE

PREVENTION SERVICES

“CLEAN MIND; CLEAN BODY; CLEAN SPIRIT; DRUG FREE”

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Newsletter

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Youth Exposure to Alcohol Advertising on Television

By Melissa Deckard, CPS

As we all may already know, the Super Bowl is well known for its commercials, almost as much as it is for the game itself. Approximately 98.7 million Americans (151.6 million worldwide) watched the 2009 Super Bowl, making it the largest viewed television event ever; approximately 17.7 million youth were among those viewers. Results from the Drug Free Action Alliance Super Bowl Survey 2009, revealed that two of the top three “most memorable” commercials, according to middle and high school students, were beer commercials.

While these high-priced ads, along with product endorsements from celebrities, can be eye catching and often fun to watch, what messages do they REALLY send to Super Bowl watchers? According to an analysis from the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth at the John Hopkins School of Public Health, youth exposure to alcohol advertising on U.S. television increased 71 percent between 2001 and 2009. Research also suggests the more exposure to alcohol advertising and marketing the greater the likelihood that young people will start drinking, or that they will drink more if they are already consuming alcohol.

For example, on average a young person views 23 ads for alcohol products each month. Specifically, for each additional ad a young person saw (above the monthly youth average of 23), he or she drank 1 percent more. For each additional dollar per capita spent on alcohol advertising in a local market (above the national average of \$6.80 per capita), young people drank 3 percent more.

According to Editor and Chief of the leading ad publication “Advertising Age” reported that only 8 percent of advertising is received on a conscious level; the other 92 percent is subconscious. Advertising is one powerful social message, however, research also reveals that kids whose parents talk to them often about the dangers of alcohol and other drugs are 50 percent less likely to use. Alcohol advertising and marketing is so widespread parents may not be quite sure how to address the topic, here are a few suggestions:

- The next time your family sits down to watch TV; use it as a teachable moment to talk about advertising in general.
- Encourage your teen on the difference between the facts vs. myths and how to become a smarter, responsible consumer.
- Visit the National Center for Alcohol and Drug Information for media literacy education on how to look at ads with a critical eye.

Overall, prevention efforts need to include using interventions that have been shown to reduce the health risks associated with harmful substance use. Counteracting messages in the media, peer pressure, alcohol and drug use and other factors that influence the behavior have also been proven to be effective. Given the information and education, people are capable of making informed decisions. It is important to emphasize that the power lies within our choices.



Alcohol is one of the most available consumer commodities in Iowa

THE

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My Waste Basket is Under the Sink Too!

By Jay Pedelty, CPS

We are all different and we spend a lot of time trying to confirm that for ourselves, but we really need to acknowledge that we are all so very similar in many ways and there is nothing wrong with that. Our waste basket at home is under the kitchen sink. Not everyone's is, but most people keep theirs under or next to the kitchen sink. If I was at someone else's house and needed to throw something away, I'd look under the sink and most of the time I would find the waste basket.

I'm going to go out on a limb here and say that the contents of my medicine cabinet aren't radically different from most other people's medicine cabinet contents either. My wife and I are very healthy for our age. There are no prescription or over the counter drugs that we take with any regularity, but we have had the occasional minor surgery or dental work and the result of that, over the years, is a collection of potentially addictive drugs in the most obvious and insecure venue in the house (see photo on this page).

Unless you monitor everyone that uses your bathroom, you are creating an unnecessary risk for your friends, family, and community if you have unused or out of date prescription drugs in your medicine cabinet. If this seems unlikely to you, then let me ask you a question. Would you feel comfortable with several containers of heroin in your medicine cabinet? Would you be unconcerned letting your children or grandchildren or neighbor use your bathroom?



The reality is that over the last 20 years a wolf in sheep's clothing has crept into medicine cabinets across the nation. Prescriptions for opioid analgesics (pain medications based on parts of/or copies of Opium) have increased tenfolds in the last two decades. Oxycodone (one of the oldest prescriptions in my medicine cabinet) is twice as potent as Morphine. Oxycontin, which is a timed release version of Oxycodone, is often substituted for Heroin. There are too many of these opioid analog pain killers to list in this newsletter, but a useful rule of thumb is that if a prescription drug says "for pain" and you are not currently taking it for the medical issue that it was originally prescribed, it should be properly disposed of.

Prevention coalitions in the North Iowa Area are facilitating the development of standardized, "user friendly" methods of disposing of prescription drugs, but this is going to be a cultural change in the way we treat prescription drugs and those types of changes take time. Until that time, take advantage of drug take back events in your area if they exist or soak pills to mush, adulterate, and add to garbage if they don't.

The problematic use of prescription pain medicine is driven by the same factors as the problematic use of any other mood altering substance. People use because they perceive more benefit than risk, and the substance is available. So... What's in your medicine cabinet?

Questions & Answers:

Question: I heard that teens who reside in rural communities appear more likely than their peers in urban areas to use prescription drugs for non-medical purposes- is this true and why?

Answer: According to a report of the American Medical Association there were no differences between urban and rural youth in rates of any illicit drug use, including marijuana, cocaine, heroin and hallucinogens. However, 13 percent of rural teens reported ever having used prescription drugs for non-medical purposes, compared with 10 percent of urban teens. When the researchers assessed specific medication types, they found rural teens were also more likely to have used pain relievers (11.5 percent vs. 10.3 percent) or tranquilizers (3.5 percent vs. 2.5 percent) non-medically. Data supports that one reason for the higher prevalence of non-medical prescription drug use in rural areas may be the lack of availability of drugs such as heroin that are easily accessed in urban areas. According to the Center for Disease Control's 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, about 20 percent of high school students have taken a prescription drug without a doctor's supervision. That's 1 in 5 — more than the percent of students who had tried cocaine, ecstasy, heroin and methamphetamines combined.

Upcoming Events

March 12, 2011 Youth Diversion Program at Prairie Ridge, Mason City. The program will be from 8:30-5:30 p.m. Saturday.

For more information please contact the Prairie Ridge Mason City Office 1-866-429-2391.

March 12 & 14, 2011 Adolescent Prime for Life at Prairie Ridge, Mason City. The program will be from 8:30-5:30 p.m. Saturday & Monday 4:00-8:00 p.m.

For more information please contact the Prairie Ridge Mason City Office 1-866-429-2391.