

Alcohol Ads Aim at Ethnicity

S.D. Countywide Project to Prevent Alcohol and Other Drug Problems • May, 2002

Alcohol industry advertisements often exploit important cultural symbols, especially in Latino and African-American communities, and promotions are targeted toward specific ethnic groups in order to boost and maintain profits.

Alcohol ads portray drinking as a way to achieve success, sexual appeal and social status. But while they are inundated with messages that glamorize drinking, African-American and Latino communities face numerous health and safety threats that stem from alcohol abuse.

CONCERN ABOUT ALCOHOL PROMOTIONS

- 92% of African-Americans and 72% of Latinos residing in San Diego County believe the alcohol industry targets specific groups of people with their advertising, marketing and promotions (San Diego Alcohol Survey, December 2001, commissioned by the Institute for Public Strategies).
- 68% of Latinos and 66% of African-Americans believe these specific groups are negatively affected or harmed by being targeted by the alcohol industry.
- In January, 2002, concerned about the alcohol industry's influence in their community, the San Diego Cinco de Mayo Con Orgullo Coalition rejected a \$10,000 donation from a major brewing company.

THE INDUSTRY'S ADVERTISING TACTICS

- A St. Ides malt liquor ad on African-American-oriented television featured Rapper Ice Cube saying: "Get your girl in the mood quicker, get your jimmy thicker, with St. Ides Malt Liquor." Yo-Yo, a female performer, rapped: "St. Ides in the house. Ladies try this. Puts you in the mood. Makes you wanna oooh!"
- A Budweiser ad repeats the popular Mexican nationalist phrase "Como Mexico no hay dos" ("There's only one Mexico") and adds, "Como

Budweiser tampoco" ("Budweiser, too").

- A survey by the San Francisco Department of Planning in 1986 found that 62% of billboards in African American communities and 42% of billboards in Latino communities advertised alcohol and tobacco, compared to the citywide average of 36%.

IMPACT OF ALCOHOL ON MINORITIES

- Just under half of all African-Americans killed in motor vehicle crashes had been drinking, according to data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System for 1990-1994.
- Alcohol is a factor in the three leading causes of death for African-Americans between the ages of 15 to 24.
- One study of homicides determined that alcohol was found in the bloodstream of fully 70 percent of Mexican-American male victims between the ages of 25 and 35.
- Research shows that a concentration of alcohol ads depicting Latinas as sexual objects lead to increased violence against Latinas between the ages of 15 and 18 years old (SACNAS News).

T*his fact sheet was produced by the Institute for Public Strategies, a nonprofit organization advancing public health through changes in policy and community norms. For more information, call (619) 474-8844 or visit www.publicstrategies.org.*

