

“TALK. THEY HEAR YOU.”

Early and Promising Evaluation Findings

Methodology

Five pilot sites were selected to pre-test the PSAs and assess the feasibility of the Campaign to generate positive changes in parents' attitudes and self-efficacy to engage in underage drinking prevention behaviors. Concurrently, SAMHSA administered a national web survey to parents with children ages 9 to 15 to establish baseline attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors related to underage drinking. “Control” and “stimuli” follow-up groups assessed longitudinal changes in underage drinking prevention behaviors and attitudes over a 3-month period. A small sample provided qualitative feedback on the content, layout, and delivery of the PSAs.

Sample Size

Baseline survey: 1,759
Follow-up survey: 1,022

General Attitudes about Underage Drinking

- Less than one third of all parents surveyed reported being concerned about their children drinking alcohol.
- Male parents are only slightly more concerned than female parents about their children drinking alcohol (28% male versus 26% female).
- “Having open communication with their children about underage drinking” was what the majority of parents said they could do to prevent their children from drinking alcohol.
- The majority of parents surveyed said they would search the internet if they wanted more information about underage drinking prevention.

Early Campaign Effectiveness

- Parents exposed to the Campaign materials were much more likely to have had a conversation about the dangers of drinking alcohol with their children in the last 3 months (89% of parents in the stimulus group versus 85% of parents in the control group).
- These same parents also were more likely to have had a conversation with their friends' parents about the dangers of underage drinking (88% of parents in the stimulus group versus 81% of parents in the control group).

Positive Feedback on Campaign Materials

- Twenty-four percent of parents exposed to the Campaign materials reported they are likely to seek out additional information about SAMHSA.
- Half of those who received the materials said the PSAs were believable; 40% said they were attention grabbing; and nearly a quarter said the materials were some of the best ads they had seen about underage drinking.
- A third agreed the PSAs made them think about underage drinking in a new way. The same number also agreed the ads were unique.



PARENTS FROM ACROSS THE NATION INFORM NATIONAL UNDERAGE DRINKING PREVENTION CAMPAIGN

PREVENTING UNDERAGE DRINKING THROUGH A COMMUNITY OUTREACH PILOT PROGRAM

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Underage Drinking is a Serious Public Health Problem

Research shows that drinking disrupts students' learning¹ and puts them at risk for other dangerous behaviors.^{2,3} Parents and caregivers are the primary influencers in preventing underage drinking.⁴

"Talk. They Hear You." Prompts Parents and Caregivers to Act

The goal of the Campaign is to reduce underage drinking of children ages 9 to 15 by engaging parents and caregivers in prevention behaviors. "Talk. They Hear You." aims to increase parents':

- Awareness and understanding of the prevalence and risks of underage drinking; and
- Knowledge, skills, and self-efficacy regarding their role in preventing underage drinking.

Campaign Development

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) completed a comprehensive background study, including literature reviews, media content analysis, and an environmental scan to inform the development of the Campaign's public service announcements (PSAs). National focus groups with parents explored attitudes and concerns about underage drinking. One-on-one interviews with children ages 9 to 15 provided insights into the individuals to whom children turn for advice about alcohol.

Key findings from these efforts include:

- Parents are the primary messengers for underage drinking prevention;
- To be successful, parents and caregivers need prompts and conversation starters; and
- Parents and caregivers should take advantage of opportunities to discuss underage drinking as they present themselves.

"Talk. They Hear You." PSAs and Materials

The Campaign PSAs show scenarios of parents and caregivers "seizing the moment" to talk with their children about alcohol, such as while watching a beer commercial on TV. By modeling behaviors, the PSAs reinforce the importance of starting the conversation about alcohol early. The PSAs include :30- and :60-second television spots, a radio spot in English and Spanish, and print advertisements, also in English and Spanish.



FATHER: If any of your buddies ever pressure you to take a drink, just tell them you promised your dad you wouldn't.
SOTTO VOICE: I would do anything to keep you safe.

What's Next?

- **Revise PSAs** to include new versions featuring other ethnicities/races and modeling scenarios.
- **Develop Campaign Tools** partners can use to promote the Campaign.
- **Continue Partnership Efforts** to deepen existing and forge new Campaign partners.
- **Launch the Campaign** on February 4, 2013 during SAMHSA's Prevention Day.
- **Distribute PSAs and Tools for Parents** nationally and online.



WWW.UNDERAGEDRINKING.SAMHSA.GOV

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¹ Bonnie, R.J., and O'Connell, M.E. (Ed.). (2004). Reducing underage drinking: A collective responsibility. National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. From
² Goldberg, J.H., Halpern-Felsher, B.L., and Millstein, S.G. (2002). Beyond invulnerability: The importance of benefits in adolescents' decision to drink alcohol. *Health Psychology*, 21(5), 477-484.
³ Halpern-Felsher, B.L., and Cauffman, E. (2001). Costs and benefits of a decision: Decision-making competence in adolescents and adults. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 22(3), 257-273.
⁴ The Century Council. (2012). What youth say about alcohol. From <http://www.centurycouncil.org/underage-drinking/what-youth-say-about-alcohol> (accessed May 3, 2012).