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PRESS RELEASE

Dec. 19, 2011, 11:25 a.m. EST

Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth (CAMY) Charts Alcohol Industry's Digital Marketing, Questions Adequacy of Industry's Self-Regulation to Avoid Exposing Youth to "Alcohol Experience"



BALTIMORE, Dec. 19, 2011 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ -- The Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth (CAMY) at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health today released a four-part YouTube movie (<http://www.youtube.com/user/JohnsHopkinsSPH>) charting the alcohol industry's push into digital marketing and raising questions whether the industry's self-regulation is adequately protecting underage youth from

exposure to the "alcohol experience" available on social marketing platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter.

CAMY also published a new brochure today (www.camy.org/digital_brochure) providing a snapshot of its data on underage youth exposure to alcohol marketing in magazines, on radio and television, and on the social marketing platforms, in addition to information on the effect of alcohol marketing on underage youth drinking behavior.

CAMY found, for instance, that ten leading alcohol brands have more than 16.5 million people "liking" their Facebook brand pages, and as of November 2011, ten alcohol brands with youth appeal had uploaded 35,725 photos and 377 videos to their Facebook pages. Fans of brands with youth appeal had also uploaded 15,416 photos and 98 videos to the brand Facebook pages, taking their messages viral. Images of Santa, toys, and sexually suggestive photos as well as those indicating binge consumption of alcohol are on the industry's social media sites despite the industry standards.






CAMY also tested the adequacy of the industry's "age affirmation" technology that is aimed at preventing exposure of this marketing to underage youth, and found it essentially meaningless. "Age affirmation" means a social media site user needs to state their age, but the age is not verified.

Alcohol is the number one drug problem among American youth. Each year, an estimated 4,700 youth die from excessive alcohol use. More young people drink alcohol than smoke tobacco or use marijuana.

In 2003, trade groups for beer and distilled spirits committed to placing alcohol ads in media venues only when underage youth comprises less than or equal to 30 percent of the audience. At least 14 longitudinal scientific studies have found that the more young people are exposed to alcohol marketing, the more likely they are to start drinking or, if already drinking, to drink more.


"Over and over again, youth are more likely to hear, read or see alcohol ads in mainstream media, and brands are now taking their messages from their branded sites to social media platforms such as YouTube, Flickr, Twitter, and Facebook," said David Jernigan, Director of the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth. "As teens are early adopters of social media and there are viral elements of this media, parents need to be


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more aware of this marketing and to educate their children about the real harms of underage drinking in spite of the industry's message of glamour and allure."

The Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth monitors the marketing practices of the alcohol industry to focus attention and action on industry practices that jeopardize the health and safety of America's youth. The Center was founded in 2002 at Georgetown University with funding from The Pew Charitable Trusts and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The Center moved to the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in 2008 and is currently funded by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. For more information, visit www.camy.org.

SOURCE The Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth

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