HUMOROUS BEER COMMERCIALS LURE CHILDREN, RESEARCHER SAYS
[ORLEANS Edition]
Times - Picayune
New Orleans, La.
Oct 22, 1998

Authors: Michael Dougan San Francisco Examiner
Pagination: A17

Abstract:

Lively advertisements inspire young Americans to drink beer, but experts attending a medical conference here say there are ways to inoculate children against the influences of publicity.

Joel Grube, of the Prevention Research Center in Berkeley, told the American Academy of Pediatricians Tuesday that his research established a direct relationship between awareness of beer commercials on television and the propensity to drink among 470 San Francisco-area students in grades seven through 10.

"Kids who said they liked the ads that they saw and paid more attention to the alcohol ads were more likely to drink," Grube said.

Copyright Times Picayune Publishing Company Oct 22, 1998

Full Text:

Lively advertisements inspire young Americans to drink beer, but experts attending a medical conference here say there are ways to inoculate children against the influences of publicity.

Joel Grube, of the Prevention Research Center in Berkeley, told the American Academy of Pediatricians Tuesday that his research established a direct relationship between awareness of beer commercials on television and the propensity to drink among 470 San Francisco-area students in grades seven through 10.

"Kids who said they liked the ads that they saw and paid more attention to the alcohol ads were more likely to drink," Grube said.

"The two attributes that seemed to be getting kids' attention were humor and ads that had youth-oriented music -- rock, country-western or, in one case, hip hop," he said.

Peter DeBenedittis, of the New Mexico Media Literacy Project in Albuquerque, told the pediatricians that alcohol advertising "targets children and encourages them to be alcoholics."
He said "the whole point of alcohol ads is to make them believe that it's perfectly normal to be a binge drinker. This is why you see small dogs and frog puppets and comedians."

DeBenedittis, who said he has lectured more than 10,000 schoolchildren on how to "deconstruct" advertising to see how symbols are used to lure children, said that such teaching can reduce the tendency to drink.

He cited a Washington State University study that he said showed "media training for third-graders significantly reduced their intention to drink" and made them less likely to collect promotional products, such as clothing, that advertise alcoholic beverages.

The beer industry has consistently denied that it aims advertising at underage drinkers, a topic under investigation by Congress. The Federal Trade Commission, at the request of Congress, is studying whether alcohol advertising and consumption of alcohol by minors are related.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction or distribution is prohibited without permission. ---9400149027989892+++---