



RESEARCH SUMMARY
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AMERICANS SAY PUBLIC SAFETY FIRST FOR ALCOHOL REGULATION!

October 2017

Americans are not looking for additional convenience, lower prices or more places to shop when it comes to alcohol regulation. Instead, they want a focus on public safety and better law enforcement. Those are some of the key messages from a recent national poll, commissioned by the Center for Alcohol Policy (CAP).

Why? First, the public is very supportive of alcohol regulation understanding that alcohol is not an ordinary commodity and that reducing regulations could make problems worse. Sixty-three percent said they thought alcohol regulations are "about right" in their state; only 15% said they are too restrictive and 9% said they are too lenient. Second, a sizeable portion of the public has been personally harmed by alcohol. In the CAP poll, 24% said they have experienced a "personal tragedy" because of it. In a 2017 poll conducted by the Gallup organization, 33% said that drinking had been a cause of trouble in their family. Also, 88% say they are satisfied with the "variety of alcohol products available" and 78% say they disagree with the idea that "there are not enough places in my community to buy alcohol." In fact, 62% say increasing outlets would cause more problems. And, 54% disagree with the statement that the "price of alcohol in my community is too high...."

Full report: <http://healthyalcoholmarket.com/wordpress/>

Source: Healthy Alcohol Marketplace

"LIKE SUGAR FOR ADULTS" :THE EFFECT OF NON-DEPENDENT PARENTAL DRINKING ON CHILDREN & FAMILIES

October 2017

Conclusion

- ▶ While relatively small numbers of children in our study reported the most worrying impacts, we identified a clear gradient with more children reporting problems in line with increasing parental consumption.
- ▶ As these findings are drawn from a sample overwhelmingly drinking below the CMO's low risk drinking guidelines, this suggests that such impacts can begin from relatively low levels of parental alcohol consumption.

- ▶ That comparable effects are noted for children seeing their parents tipsy or drunk suggest the way in which parents and their children view episodes of 'tipsy' drinking is quite different from one another. Children do not seem to differentiate between seeing their parents tipsy and drunk.

[Note: The report presents the concept of "tipsy" in the following way: "When someone is tipsy it means that they have drunk enough to be slightly wobbly, feel slightly less in control and might sound a little bit funny. They might be described as being 'a little bit drunk.'"]

- ▶ Echoing previous research, this shows it may be wrong to assume that negative impacts of parental drinking are only associated with higher levels of consumption.

Recommendations for practitioners and policy makers

- ▶ That the Government produce up to date information and advice for parents about parental drinking.
- ▶ That service providers incorporate the issue of parental drinking within existing parenting programmes.
- ▶ That universal services, particularly those which work with children, promote greater awareness of the negative impact that alcohol can have on children and families.
- ▶ That schools reaffirm their key role in educating children about alcohol, and better include parents in this.

Free report: <http://www.ias.org.uk/uploads/pdf/IAS%20reports/rp28102017.pdf>

Source: *Institute for Alcohol Studies*

NATIONAL SURVEY REVEALS MOST AMERICANS ARE UNAWARE OF KEY CANCER RISK FACTORS

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...While a majority of Americans correctly identify tobacco use (78%) and sun exposure (66%) as risk factors for cancer, far fewer are aware of other lifestyle factors that increase their cancer risk. Notably, less than a third of Americans (31%) realize that obesity is a risk factor for cancer, even though it is currently the second leading preventable cause of the disease. In fact, a higher body mass index is associated with increased risk of a number of cancers, including colon, breast, high grade prostate, and uterine cancers. According to a recent analysis by the National Cancer Institute, if current the rates of obesity continue to trend upward, by 2030 there could be about 500,000 additional cases of cancer in the United States than would otherwise be expected.

The research also found that less than one in three Americans (30%) recognize alcohol as a risk factor for cancer, despite the fact that alcohol consumption can raise the risk of certain cancers, including cancers of the mouth, liver and breast.

At the same time, the majority of Americans are not taking some important preventive actions to reduce their cancer risk. Only 48%, each, say they use sunblock or limit their exposure to the sun; 41% say they maintain a healthy weight; and 38% say they limit alcohol consumption in order to prevent cancer... (emphasis added)

Full free text: <http://www.asco.org/research-progress/reports-studies/national-cancer-opinion-survey>

Source: American Society of Clinical Oncology

PAST ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AND INCIDENT ATRIAL FIBRILLATION: THE ATHEROSCLEROSIS RISK IN COMMUNITIES (ARIC) STUDY

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Background: Although current alcohol consumption is a risk factor for incident atrial fibrillation (AF), the more clinically relevant question may be whether alcohol cessation is associated with a reduced risk.

Methods and results: We studied participants enrolled in the Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities Study (ARIC) between 1987 and 1989 without prevalent AF. Past and current alcohol consumption were ascertained at baseline and at 3 subsequent visits. Incident AF was ascertained via study ECGs, hospital discharge ICD-9 codes, and death certificates. Of 15,222 participants, 2,886 (19.0%) were former drinkers. During a median follow-up of 19.7 years, there were 1,631 cases of incident AF, 370 occurring in former consumers. Former drinkers had a higher rate of AF compared to lifetime abstainers and current drinkers. After adjustment for potential confounders, every decade abstinent from alcohol was associated with an approximate 20% (95% CI 11–28%) lower rate of incident AF; every additional decade of past alcohol consumption was associated with a 13% (95% CI 3–25%) higher rate of AF; and every additional drink per day during former drinking was associated with a 4% (95% CI 0–8%) higher rate of AF.

Conclusions: Among former drinkers, the number of years of drinking and the amount of alcohol consumed may each confer an increased risk of AF. Given that a longer duration of abstinence was associated with a decreased risk of AF, earlier modification of alcohol use may have a greater influence on AF prevention.

Full free text: <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0185228>

Source: *PLoS One*

MALT BEVERAGE BRAND POPULARITY AMONG YOUTH AND YOUTH-APPEALING ADVERTISING CONTENT

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Abstract

Background: This study examined whether alcohol brands more popular among youth are more likely to have aired television advertisements that violated the alcohol industry's voluntary code by including youth-appealing content.

Methods: We obtained a complete list of 288 brand-specific beer advertisements broadcast during the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) men's and women's basketball tournaments from 1999 to 2008. All ads were rated by a panel of health professionals using a modified Delphi method to assess the presence of youth-appealing content in violation of the alcohol industry's voluntary code. The ads represented 23 alcohol brands. The popularity of these brands was operationalized as the brand-specific popularity of youth alcohol consumption in the past 30 days, as determined by a 2011 to 2012 national survey of underage drinkers. Brand-level popularity was used as the exposure variable to predict the odds of having advertisements with youth-appealing content violations.

Results: Accounting for other covariates and the clustering of advertisements within brands, increased brand popularity among underage youth was associated with significantly increased odds of having youth-appeal content violations in ads televised during the NCAA basketball tournament games (adjusted odds ratio = 1.70, 95% CI: 1.38, 2.09).

Conclusions: Alcohol brands popular among underage drinkers are more likely to air television advertising that violates the industry's voluntary code which proscribes youth-appealing content.

Source: *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*

SHOULD I DRINK RESPONSIBLY, SAFELY OR PROPERLY? CONFUSING MESSAGES ABOUT REDUCING ALCOHOL-RELATED HARM

October 2017

Abstract

'Responsible drinking' campaigns emerged in the early 1970s as a means of addressing hazardous drinking and its related consequences. While these were initially the product of public health agencies and health-related NGOs, they are increasingly being developed and disseminated by the alcohol industry. There is considerable debate as to whether industry-generated campaigns are designed to reduce hazardous drinking and related problems (as argued by their developers) or are designed to avoid government regulation or even to increase sales. The aim of the present study was to explore the way that recent industry-developed responsible drinking campaigns are perceived and interpreted by the general public. That is, do they promote low-risk drinking, promote risky drinking, or just muddy the waters.

Two sub-studies were conducted. The first, a mall intercept study with 180 adults in two Australian shopping districts, explored participants' understanding of slogans/taglines. The second, an online survey with 480 Australian adults, explored understandings and interpretations of television/online commercials.

The results of the two studies revealed diversity in participants' interpretation of the 'responsible drinking' advertisements. Terminology utilised in industry-developed advertisements was found to be ambiguous; for example, what age group was being referred to in the tagline 'Kids and alcohol don't mix', and whether 'Drink Properly' meant not drinking to excess or drinking in a way that made you look more sophisticated.

In Study Two, the government-developed campaign ('Know when to say when') was clearly interpreted as warning against risky consumption of alcohol; whereas the industry-developed campaigns ('How to drink properly', 'Kids absorb your drinking', 'Friends are waiting') were interpreted to have a range of different meanings, including some seemingly unrelated to alcohol.

These findings are consistent with the literature evaluating anti-smoking campaigns developed by the tobacco industry, and previous research showing that industry communications serve to soften public opinion and create the impression of a 'socially responsible' industry but are likely to be less effective than initiatives focused on the availability and promotion of alcohol.

Full free text: <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0184705>

Source: *PLoS One*