

# EXPOSURE OF HISPANIC YOUTH TO ALCOHOL ADVERTISING

## Executive Summary

Hispanics are the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States. Between 1990 and 2000, the U.S. Hispanic population grew 58%, from 22.4 to 35.3 million.<sup>1</sup> This Hispanic population is also younger than the general population: 40% of Hispanics are under 21, versus 30% of the entire population.<sup>2</sup> The number of Hispanics under the age of 21 grew 61% between 1990 and 2000, totaling 17% of the nation's youth under 21 in 2000.<sup>3</sup>

The Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth commissioned Virtual Media Resources (VMR) to audit the exposure of Hispanic youth to alcohol magazine,

television and radio advertising in 2002. In previous reports, the Center has found wide and pervasive overexposure of all youth<sup>4</sup> to alcohol advertising in magazines and on television and radio. This analysis compares the exposure of Hispanic youth to that of non-Hispanic youth, and the Center finds that Hispanic youth were even more overexposed to alcohol advertising than non-Hispanic youth.

Specifically, the Center finds that in 2002:

- **Hispanic youth saw even more alcohol advertising in magazines than non-Hispanic youth.** His-

panic youth read magazines in both English and Spanish. The bulk of alcohol advertising spending occurs in English-language magazines. In English-language magazines, compared to non-Hispanic youth, Hispanic youth saw 24% more beer and ale and 24% more distilled spirits advertising in magazines in 2002, and 32% more advertising for malt-natives, alcopops and other “low-alcohol refreshers.”<sup>5</sup>

- **Hispanic youth heard more alcohol advertising on radio than non-Hispanic youth.** In the top 10 markets with significant Hispanic

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, “Table 4: Difference in Population by Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin, for the United States: 1990 to 2000,” in *Population by Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin for the United States: 1990 and 2000 (PHC-T-1)*, 2 April 2001, <<http://www.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/phc-t1.html>> (cited 7 April 2003). In January 2003, the U.S. Census reported that the Hispanic population had grown to 37 million, making it the largest “minority” group in the United States. See U.S. Census Bureau, “Census Bureau Releases Population Estimates by Age, Sex, Race and Hispanic Origin,” 21 Jan 2003, <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-16.html>> (cited 21 April 2003).

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, “Table 1: Total Population by Age, Race, and Hispanic or Latino Origin for the United States: 2000,” in *Population by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic or Latino Origin for the United States: 2000 (PHC-T-9)*, 3 Oct 2001, <<http://www.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/phc-t9.html>> (cited 7 April 2003).

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1990 Census of Population: Persons of Hispanic Origin in the United States, 1993*, <<http://www.census.gov/prod/cen1990/cp3/cp-3-3.pdf>> (cited 8 April 2003), 1, 3; see also calculations from U.S. Census Bureau, “P12. Sex by Age [49]—Universe: Total population” and “P12H. Sex by Age (Hispanic or Latino) [49]—Universe: People who are Hispanic or Latino”, *Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-Percent Data*, <[http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DTGeoSearchByListServlet?ds\\_name=DEC\\_2000\\_SF1\\_U&state=dt](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DTGeoSearchByListServlet?ds_name=DEC_2000_SF1_U&state=dt)> (cited 21 April 2003).

<sup>4</sup> For this report, unless otherwise noted, youth are defined as persons ages 12-20, and adults are defined as persons age 21 and over. Overexposure is defined as greater exposure to the advertising by a given segment of the population, relative to their proportion of the total population.

<sup>5</sup> Many of the beverages in this category contain 5% alcohol, more than most beers.

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youth audiences, Hispanic young people were more likely to listen to English-language than to Spanish-language radio. Hispanic youth heard 11% more distilled spirits advertising and 14% more ads for “low-alcohol refreshers,” and as much beer and ale advertising on radio as non-Hispanic youth.<sup>6</sup>

- **Alcohol advertising was placed on a majority of the TV programs most popular with Hispanic youth.** Alcohol advertisers spent \$23.6 million to place ads on 12 of the 15 programs in English and Spanish that were most popular with Hispanic youth in 2002,<sup>7</sup>

including *Vias Del Amor*, *Ver Para Creer*, *That '70s Show*, and *MadTV*.

- **Both Hispanic youth exposure on radio and television and spending on alcohol advertising were concentrated in a few markets.** Five media markets—San Antonio, Los Angeles, Miami, Houston and San Francisco—overexposed Hispanic youth to alcohol advertising on radio relative to non-Hispanic youth. These five markets were also among the seven markets that accounted for 85% of the spending by alcohol advertisers on Spanish-language television.

## Why the Concern

The consequences of alcohol use among Hispanic youth are serious and disturbing. Hispanic young people are more likely to drink and to get drunk at an earlier age than non-Hispanic white or African-American young people.<sup>8</sup> This is particularly true of Mexican and Cuban 12-17 year olds, who are more likely to “binge” drink than the general population in that age group.<sup>9</sup>

Research has shown that young people who begin drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence than those who wait until

*(continued)*

## Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth

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The Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth at Georgetown University 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. Reducing high rates of underage alcohol consumption and the suffering caused by alcohol-related injuries and deaths among young people requires using the public health strategies of limiting the access to and the appeal of alcohol to underage persons.

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### Virtual Media Resources

The Center commissioned Virtual Media Resources to conduct this analy-

sis. Virtual Media Resources is a media research, planning, market analysis and consulting firm based in Natick, Massachusetts, serving communications organizations and marketers in a wide variety of market segments and media. VMR was established in 1992 to provide an independent research firm serving advertising agencies, and has grown to service over 100 clients across the US and Canada, including retail, publishing, financial, automotive, public health and other fields.

### Acknowledgements

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<sup>6</sup> Radio data are based on a sample drawn from one weekday per week in 19 markets by Media Monitors Incorporated (MMI).

<sup>7</sup> These are the 15 primetime, regularly scheduled programs drawing the largest numbers of Hispanic youth in February 2003.

<sup>8</sup> L.D. Johnston, P.M. O'Malley, and J.G. Bachman, *Monitoring the Future National Survey Results on Drug Use, 1975-2001, Volume 1: Secondary School Students* (Bethesda, MD: National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2002), Table 4-9.

<sup>9</sup> “Binge” is defined as drinking five or more drinks on the same occasion (at the same time or within a couple of hours of each other) at least one day in the past 30 days. SAMHSA, Office of Applied Studies, *National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, 2000 and 2001*, <[http://www.samhsa.gov/oas/nhsda/2k1nhsda/vol3/Sect2v1\\_PDF\\_W\\_55-69.pdf](http://www.samhsa.gov/oas/nhsda/2k1nhsda/vol3/Sect2v1_PDF_W_55-69.pdf)> (cited 17 April 2003), Table 2.66B.

(continued)

they are 21, while those who start to drink prior to age 14 are more likely to experience alcohol-related injury.<sup>10</sup> Alcohol use contributes to the three leading causes of death among Hispanic 12-20 year olds: unintentional injuries (including car crashes), homicide and suicide.<sup>11</sup> Hispanic high school students are more likely than non-Hispanic white or African-American students to report riding in a car with a driver who had been drinking.<sup>12</sup> Alcohol was the most common drug for

which Hispanics 18-24 years of age sought addiction treatment in 1999.<sup>13</sup>

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has noted that, “while many factors influence an underage person’s drinking decisions, including among other things parents, peers, and media, there is reason to believe that advertising plays a role.”<sup>14</sup> Research studies have found that exposure to and liking of alcohol advertisements affect young people’s beliefs about drinking, intentions to drink, and actual drinking behavior.<sup>15</sup>

## About This Report

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VMR adhered to industry-standard methodologies in conducting this analysis, using standard industry sources including Competitive Media Resources (CMR), Simmons Market Research Bureau (SMRB), Hispanic Magazine Monitor, Media Monitors Inc. (MMI), and Arbitron Ratings. Further information on sources and methodology used may be found in Appendix A.

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- <sup>10</sup> B.F. Grant and D.A. Dawson, “Age at onset of alcohol use and its association with DSM-IV alcohol abuse and dependence: Results from the National Longitudinal Alcohol Epidemiologic Survey,” *Journal of Substance Abuse* 9 (1997): 103-110; R. Hingson et al, *Age of drinking onset and unintentional injury involvement after drinking* (Washington, DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Jan. 2001).
- <sup>11</sup> National Center for Health Statistics Vital Statistics System, “10 Leading Causes of Death, United States: 2000, All Races, Hispanic Both Sexes,” from *WISQARS Leading Causes of Death Reports, 1999-2000*, <<http://webapp.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/leadcaus10.html>> (cited 8 April 2003); American Medical Association, “Facts about Youth and Alcohol,” <<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/3566.html>> (cited 8 April 2003).
- <sup>12</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance—United States, 2001,” *Mortality and Morbidity Report (MMWR)* 51(SS04) (June 28, 2002) <[www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5104a1.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5104a1.htm)> (cited 8 April, 2003): 1-64.
- <sup>13</sup> Drug and Alcohol Services Information System, *The DASIS Report: Hispanics in Substance Abuse Treatment: 1999* (Office of Applied Studies, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): 20 Sept 2002) <[www.samhsa.gov/oas/2k2/HispanicTX/HispanicTX.htm](http://www.samhsa.gov/oas/2k2/HispanicTX/HispanicTX.htm)> (cited 7 April 2003).
- <sup>14</sup> Federal Trade Commission, *Self-Regulation in the Alcohol Industry: A Review of Industry Efforts to Avoid Promoting Alcohol to Underage Consumers* (Washington, D.C.: FTC, 1999), 4.
- <sup>15</sup> Joel Grube, “Television alcohol portrayals, alcohol advertising and alcohol expectancies among children and adolescents,” in *Effects of the Mass Media on the Use and Abuse of Alcohol*, eds. S.E. Martin and P. Mail (Bethesda: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 1995), 105-121; S.E. Martin et al, “Alcohol advertising and youth,” *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research* 26, no. 6 (2002): 900-906.