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Cigarette ads have all come down from the billboards only to be replaced by alcohol advertising

Cigarette ads have all come down from the billboards only to be replaced by alcohol advertising. Hence, beer and hard liquor ads now dominate billboards.

Clearly, the time has come for the American public to deal with drinking as it does with smoking: as a public enemy to be eradicated.

"The nation long ago realized how 'Joe Camel' was being used to encourage children to smoke cigarettes. Once it recognizes that alcoholic beverage companies use the same tactics, perhaps we can generate enough public outrage to make some real progress in fighting America's No. 1 illegal drug problem among youth."

Ben Brown, Deputy Commissioner for Substance Abuse Programs

Let's keep all evil advertisements for addictive and deadly drugs out of sight. Money should be spent on the needy, not on liquor or tobacco.

Here is why college students should live in dorms that ban alcohol and smoking

Students who live in dorms that ban alcohol and smoking are less likely to binge drink, drive with a drunk friend or fall behind in school work, according to a study by researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health.

The finding is based on analysis of the first national survey of substance abuse and college housing. The study's authors say their findings could become a serious weapon in combating the scourge of binge drinking that afflicts so many college students.

"The best bet for students who come into college and want to avoid the secondhand effects of drinking, like having their studying interrupted or having property vandalized, is to request substance-free residences," said Henry Wechsler, the study's lead author and director of College Alcohol Studies at the Harvard School of Public Health.

"While some heavy episodic drinkers live in these residences, it's clear that students who live there experience fewer alcohol-related problems than those who live in unrestricted housing," Wechsler said.

After surveying more than 2,500 students at 52 colleges, the researchers found that while a third of students living in substance-free residences drank excessively, the proportion of excessive drinkers was more than half of students living in unrestricted housing.

Students who said they didn't drink heavily in high school were less likely to guzzle alcohol if they lived

in substance-free housing, researchers said. Heavy drinking among that group of students nearly doubled if they lived in unrestricted dorms, according to the study.

"By not exposing incoming students to the drinking that exists in residences on some college campuses, students may be less inclined to pick up these behaviors," Wechsler said.

.... Researchers say that students who aren't surrounded by excessive drinking are less likely to get in trouble with campus police, drive drunk or have unprotected sex.

However, while most campuses provide substance-free housing, the demand for such dorms exceeds the supply, researchers say.

One in three college students in the United States today live in housing designated as substance-free or alcohol-free. But 20 percent of those students not living in such regulated dorms say they would like to.

"In my opinion, any student who wants to live in a substance-free dorm should be able to," Wechsler said. "Given the national problem with unsafe drinking, this should be an imperative."

By David Abel, The Boston Globe

NOTE: Better yet, seek a college that bans alcohol altogether. "Students at ban colleges are more likely to abstain from alcohol completely. Three in ten students (29 percent) at ban schools abstain compared to only one in six students, 16 percent at non-ban colleges.

.... schools that ban alcohol experience a much lower rate of the secondhand effects of binge drinking. Students are less likely to be insulted, injured, experience unwanted sexual advances, or be otherwise negatively affected by other student's drinking. "The higher quality of campus life for students residing on these campuses is a major advantage offered by ban schools," Wechsler said.

Join Together Online, April 12, 2001

Fiber Stalls High Blood Pressure

May 15, 2002 -- Eating a high-fiber diet may not only keep you regular, but it may also keep your blood pressure in check. A new study shows that encouraging Americans to eat more foods high in dietary fiber may be a cost-effective way to prevent and lower the prevalence of high blood pressure on a national scale.

About one in five Americans has high blood pressure, defined as blood pressure above 140/90. Left untreated, hypertension can prematurely age the

(Over, please)

body's organs and lead to heart attack, stroke, or kidney failure.

Researchers studied information from 9,057 men and women over age 40 who participated in the Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Study (NHANES III) and divided them into three groups according to how much fiber they consumed: high, medium, or low total dietary intake.

The study found that 47% of the people in the low intake group had hypertension compared with 44% of those who were in the high consumption group. Although the authors say the differences between the two groups may not be statistically significant, they are significant in terms of the number of people affected, since high blood pressure affects nearly 50 million Americans.

In addition, the differences between the groups were greater among women and people between the ages of 40-54. Nearly one in three women in the low-fiber group had high blood pressure vs. only about one in five in the high-fiber group.

For both men and women in the study, whole grains, such as oats, whole grain breads, and cereals provided the majority of fiber intake compared with other sources such as fruits and vegetables.

"Grains provide about 36% of normal dietary fiber. Therefore, choosing these grains might be a better solution for people trying to meet the guidelines for fiber [intake], says study author Priscilla Samuel, PhD, of the John Stuart Research Laboratories at Quaker Foods and Beverages.

By Jennifer Warner, WebMD Medical News

Many who have no children of their own could lavish affection upon orphans instead of upon pets

People who have no children of their own should be aware of the following:

AIDS, war, exploding landmines, poverty, and famine have created a tragedy of 16 million orphans in the world. Studies and news reports indicate that this number is expected to triple in the next few years. Life for these parentless children is desperate. They are forced to beg for food. They are often the victims of sexual predators and violent assaults because there are no adults left to care for them.

Why not open our hearts and homes to these helpless ones?

PLEASE NOTE: "...Many who have no children of their own could do a good work in caring for the children of others. Instead of giving attention to pets, lavishing affection upon dumb animals, let them give their attention to little children... Place your love upon the homeless members of the human family. ...Many would thus be greatly benefited themselves."

The Ministry of Healing, p. 203

Casinos have provided for seniors what we as a society have not done

Twenty years ago, Atlantic City and Las Vegas were America's two gambling meccas, but casinos have now spread across the nation. A federal study found that the percentage of 65-and-over Americans who recently gambled jumped from 20 percent in 1974 to 50 percent in 1998, a surge unmatched by any other age group.

Experts on compulsive gambling are alarmed. They worry that senior gamblers, many of them on fixed incomes, are more vulnerable to financial devastation than younger gamblers, and less willing to seek timely help for addiction.

"A 30-year-old can make it back. If a 75-year-old loses everything, they're dead in the water," said Ron Karpin, a

specialist in senior gambling with the Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey.

...Even critics of the gambling industry concede that casinos make seniors feel welcome. Surveys indicate that casino outings are the most popular type of day trip for retired Americans.

"The gambling industry has provided for older adults what we as a society have not done," said Pat Fowler, executive director of the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling.

"For most of them, it's an exciting, safe, user-friendly outing," she said. "The message is, 'We value you; come on in. We'll get the wheel chair, we'll bring the refreshments to you.' They can't find that kind of reception in many areas in our society."

HealthCentral.com (April 04, 2001)

PLEASE NOTE: When all has been done that can be done in helping the poor to help themselves, there still remain the widow and the fatherless, the aged, the helpless, and the sick, that claim sympathy and care. Never should these be neglected.

.... There is a blessing in the association of the old and the young. The young may bring sunshine into the hearts and lives of the aged. Those whose hold on life is weakening need the benefit of contact with the hopefulness and buoyancy of youth. And the young may be helped by the wisdom and experience of the old. Above all, they need to learn the lesson of unselfish ministry. The presence of one in need of sympathy and forbearance and self-sacrificing love would be to many a household a priceless blessing." *The Ministry of Healing, pp. 201, 204, 205*

Our nation's Drug Czar has a blind spot when it comes to liquor (booze)

WASHINGTON—The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) goofed when it chose NASCAR driver Jimmy Spencer to carry its anti-drug message to America's youth, since both Spencer and NASCAR have lucrative deals pushing beer. That, according to the nonprofit Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), is the latest in a series of missteps by so-called "Drug Czar" John Walters, whose agency has come under fire for leaving alcohol off its anti-drug agenda.

"As beer promoters, Jimmy Spencer and NASCAR are the wrong messengers," said George Hacker, director of CSPI's Alcohol Policies Project. "They're no better than the Budweiser frogs as anti-drug spokesmen. It really shows that the drug czar has a blind spot when it comes to booze."

NOTE: NASCAR has a \$7.5 million sponsorship deal with Busch Beer. Other drivers have their own lucrative sponsorship deals. Jimmy Spencer's car, featured in a photo on ONDCP's "Campaign Update", sports a Budweiser decal. His web site features pictures of Jimmy, wearing a Budweiser cap, standing beside cases of Busch Beer. It also includes an online store where beer-can "coolies" and shot glasses are for sale. This mixed message can't fail to confuse kids! Promoting the Campaign's anti-drug message alongside promotions for beer tells kids that illegal drugs are bad, but beer is OK. *Join Together Online, 8/20/2002*

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