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Today's children are being bombarded with sexual images

"Long before they can read, today's children are bombarded with sexual images in their music, on television and in movies. And if you think children aren't affected, think again, one expert says.

.... According to a recent study by the Kaiser Family Foundation, the average American child spends more than 38 hours a week on video games, music, TV, reading and their computers — nearly the equivalent of a full-time job.

And the report notes that 68 percent of the material the children watch contains sexual content, up from 56 percent just two years ago.

'The kind of increased sexual images that children are seeing in the media and in their toys has a parallel with when they get a little older,' Levin says. 'They start becoming sexually active earlier.'

In fact, research shows that during the 1970s and '80s, an increasing proportion of kids were having sex in their early teens. By the mid-'90s, more than 24 percent of girls and 27 percent of boys had had intercourse by age 15.

.... 'Whether or not they understand the nuances of what's going on, they're absorbing all of that information,' said Bob Salant. 'And perhaps it's not going to affect them today, but who knows how it's affecting their behavior patterns in the next couple of years.'

Sexual material is so entwined in pop culture that even the most vigilant parent would have a hard time keeping their children away from it.

.... Finally, know that taking the middle ground requires taking charge of what they're exposed to. You can't raise kids in a bubble, but parents have to take more responsibility and say 'no' more often, Murphy says."

abcNEWS.com / April 9, 2002

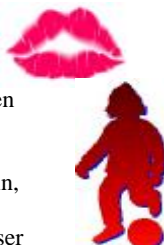
"This is an age when corruption is teeming everywhere. The lust of the eye and corrupt passions are aroused by beholding and by reading. The heart is corrupted through the imagination." *AH p. 408*

Alcohol More Strongly Linked to Violence than Other Drugs

"A new study shows that alcohol, more so than illegal drugs, is linked to violent behavior, ASubscribe reported Jan. 23.

Researchers at the Robert Presley Center for Crime and Justice Studies at the University of California at Riverside conducted a comprehensive review of the scientific literature on illicit drugs, alcohol, and violence. They found that a quarter of violent assailants were under the influence of alcohol, compared to less than 10 percent were under the influence of illegal drugs like heroin, cocaine, or PCP.

In cases of homicide, researchers found that alcohol is "overwhelmingly" the drug most frequently mentioned. "The



stereotype is of the drug-crazed criminal," said Robert Nash Parker, the lead investigator for the study and a professor of sociology. "The reality is something quite different."

Parker added, "If you really want to have effective policies related to drugs, if you want to have fewer bad outcomes in terms of health, welfare and violence, the drug you want to focus on is alcohol. The evidence is pretty powerful and pretty convincing if someone is willing to look at it."

The study's findings are the basis for a report in "Prevention File: Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs," a quarterly magazine published by The Silver Gate Group. —*Join Together Online, 1/28/2002*

"Houses of prostitution, dens of vice, criminal courts, prisons, almshouses, insane asylums, hospitals, all are, to a great degree, filled as a result of the liquor seller's work." *Temperance, p. 24*

We have "the solemn responsibility of calling the attention of others to the significance of the increase of drunkenness and crime" (Ibid., p. 27). We must raise our "raise their voices in protest against the sanctioning of the liquor traffic by legal enactment" (Ibid., p.27).

R-Rated Films May Affect Whether a Kid Drinks or Smokes

"In a study published last week in the journal *Effective Clinical Practice*, researchers found that children in grades 5 through 8 who were allowed to watch R-rated movies were times more likely to smoke or drink alcohol than those were not allowed.

And these results were not related to how strict parents were about other things.

Given that an R rating means the material is restricted for people under the age of 17, it is amazing that only 16 percent of the children in this study said they were never allowed to watch R-rated movies.

One of the strongest findings in this study was the strength of the correlation between R-rated movie watching and the percentage of kids trying alcohol.

While this statistic doesn't prove that one causes the other, it certainly implies that viewing "adult" material — in which adults often act irresponsibly and more like children — isn't good for kids to watch.

Parents need to take the influences on their children seriously. The findings of this study are very strong and should compel parents to think twice before allowing their children to view R-rated movies.

—*abcNEWS.com/Feb. 19, 2002*

Doctors Undertreating High Blood Pressure

"Feb. 25, 2002 -- Studies continue to show that people with high blood pressure aren't getting their numbers



(Over, please)

down like they should -- leaving themselves at increased risk of heart attack, stroke, and kidney failure. But a new study shows that one big part of the problem may be that doctors are choosing to ignore high blood pressure until it reaches a more dangerous level.

Studies have shown that most people with high blood pressure aren't getting adequate treatment, according to the researchers. It's well known that walking around with a blood pressure 140/90 or over can be deadly. So why are so few people getting their blood pressure down to where it needs to be?

UCLA researchers did a study to answer just that question. They identified 231 people with out-of-control high blood pressure. Each person saw their doctor, and the researchers then asked each doctor questions about treating blood pressure.

What they found is very disturbing. Their results appear in the Feb. 25 issue of the *Archives of Internal Medicine*.

Despite the persistently high blood pressure, the doctors opted to change or start medication to lower blood pressure only 38% of the time.

The most common reason for not trying to get the blood pressure lower was that the doctors were satisfied with the current blood pressure -- in spite of many studies showing that long-term high blood pressure can do much harm.

At over 90% of the doctor's visits, the systolic blood pressure -- the top number -- was 140 or higher. This is above the cut-off point set by an expert committee on high blood pressure.

In fact, the systolic blood pressure was over 150 at 35% of the visits. On average, a systolic blood pressure of 150 was considered by the doctors to be the lowest point at which they felt a change was needed.

The researchers say that this has an important impact on our country's health given the known association between high systolic blood pressure and heart disease and stroke.

People often ask 'Which blood pressure number is more important, the top or bottom?' The answer is that they are both equally important. We used to think that the top number was more important. Then the bottom number was thought to be key. But research now shows that it's important to get both numbers down -- the systolic 'top' number to less than 140, and the diastolic 'bottom' number less than 90.

And for some people, such as those with diabetes, these numbers should be less than 120 and 80.

Too many people have out-of-control high blood pressure. Both doctors and patients need to work together to treat this problem aggressively -- potentially saving thousands of lives.

Let your doctor know that you want to get your blood pressure down. It can be done, but the two of you need to work together."

By Michael Smith, MD (WebMD Medical News)

Evil spring break marketing abounds

"Chicago, IL - All-you-can-drink specials, booze cruises, endless nights of music, partying, sex and anything but textbooks may be the perfect lure to college students planning their spring break, but a poll released today by the American Medical Association's A Matter of Degree program shows that 91 percent of parents say it's time to stop spring break marketing and promotional practices that promote dangerous drinking.

The majority of parents (56 percent) are completely unaware that tour companies market spring break destinations directly to college students, emphasizing heavy drinking and sex. These promotions arrive by email, campus advertisements and direct mail.

.... More than 80 percent of parents said they were concerned about college students drinking alcohol during spring break. Topping the list of concerns were students having unprotected sex (71 percent); students driving while intoxicated or with a drunken driver (70 percent); and female students getting raped (68 percent).



'Unfortunately, spring break is no longer an innocent respite from the rigors of academics, it's potentially life threatening,' says J. Edward Hill, MD, AMA chair-elect. 'The tourism and alcohol industries promote heavy drinking and sex, creating an environment that can lead to rape, fatal injuries and death by alcohol poisoning. We agree with parents that we must put an end to these promotions that target students, most of whom are underage.'

One such promotion, created by the Panama City Beach (Florida) Convention and Visitors Bureau, has appeared in campus newspapers throughout the country. This 12-page insert consists of spring break advertisements from hotels and clubs, many featuring an endless supply of alcohol. One example reads, Plus, pay 5 bucks, and you can drink all the beer you can handle every day.

.... In addition to U.S. spring break destinations, American tour companies, in partnership with alcohol producers, promote destinations outside the country where the drinking age is 18 - a key attraction.

.... The study found that 94 percent of parents would require colleges to actively encourage students to consider spring break options that emphasize community service."

—Join Together Online, 3/7/2002

"... the work of making drunkards of the youth goes steadily forward. Upon the creating of the liquor appetite in the youth the very life of the traffic depends. The youth are led on, step by step, until the liquor habit is established and the thirst is created that at any cost demands satisfaction.

.... Let the danger from the liquor traffic be made plain and a public sentiment be created that shall demand its prohibition... Let the voice of the nation demand of its lawmakers that a stop be put to this infamous traffic." *Ministry of Healing, pp. 342, 346*

Fiber Can Improve Mental Health

"A study conducted by Cardiff University's School of Psychology, found that high-fiber eaters are less stressed and have a more positive mood. Professor Andrew Smith tested a group of volunteers over a four-week period. Baseline measurements showed that those that regularly consumed a high-fiber diet were less emotionally distressed; had fewer cognitive difficulties; had a more positive mood; had less difficulty falling asleep and had lower depression scores than those people who ate a low-fiber diet. The results show the equivalent of five slices of whole-wheat bread or seven bowls of brown rice was enough to reduce fatigue by 10 percent. 'The physical benefits of a high-fiber diet have been widely acknowledged amongst health care professionals for many years. However, this is the first time high-fiber intake has been associated with improved mental health,' says Smith. Eight out of ten people do not eat enough fiber, according to the researchers." *Health Tips, Feb. 25, 2002*



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