



## TV WATCHING

### AND SMOKING



Children who do at least five hours a day of television watching are six times more likely to start smoking. Those who watch between two and four hours of television a day are two to three times more at risk.

This recent study appeared in the September issue of the *Journal of Pediatrics*. The study tracked 559 children, ages 10-15 from 1990 until 1992.

The study also found that white children who watched a lot of television were more at risk of starting smoking than blacks or Hispanics.

The study's author said, "You're looking at TV as indirect advertising. Rarely is smoking portrayed in an unattractive manner or associated with negative consequences."

The researchers recommended that parents follow the guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics that suggest no more than two hours of "quality" programming a day.

## Cough Medicine Highs

There have been several incidents over the past few years involving teens using cough tablets or cough medicine to get an LSD-like high. Cough Medicine abuse has intensified over the last two years.

The most popular cough medicine abused by teens is Coricidin. Teens refer to the medications as DXM, TripleC, robo, skittles, dex, tussin, and Vitamin D.

Health experts are concerned about the forms of cough medications containing dextromethorphan because they are much more potent and could be deadly when taken in large quantities.



(Source: JTO Wire, May 31, 2002)

## KNOCKOFF CLUB DRUGS

Drug dealers are taking advantage of the popular club drug ecstasy by selling variations of it to keep up with the demand.

Fake ecstasy tablets being sold by dealers include chemical blends known as Foxy and AMT. Health officials warn these two are particularly dangerous because scientists have not studied their effects.

Both Foxy and AMT are hallucinogens. The drugs mimic some of the effects of ecstasy, but produce more intense hallucinations. They are sold legally for scientific use only. Dealers purchase them via the Internet.

(Source: JTO Wire, August 1, 2002)



## TEENS THINK PEERS DRINK MORE

Researchers recently interviewed 209 U.S. high school sophomores to survey how often they drank alcohol and how much they thought their friends drank. The study shows that teens justify their drinking by overestimating how much their friends drink.

The researchers found that the boys who were surveyed reported drinking once or twice a month, but believed their friends "drank double that"...three to four times a month.

The study's findings could aid in the development of interventions that could help prevent binge drinking among teens. The study's author, Dr. Dan Segrist, said, "Correcting those misperceptions needs to be a part of the intervention, so that kids can start to see that people don't drink as much as the kids think they are drinking."

(Source: JTO Wire, August 27, 2002)



What you should know about . . .

## UNDERAGE DRINKING



**“They are all going to drink no matter what we do.”**

*If you feel this way you should know:*

- . . . that the number one reason kids give for not drinking is the belief that they would disappoint or upset their parents.
- . . . that when parents talk to their teen about drinking, those teens are less likely to use alcohol.

**“I take their car keys. What else do you want me to do?”**

*If you have said this, you should know:*

- . . . that underage drinkers are more likely to become perpetrators or victims of rape, assault, robbery, murder, or other violent crimes.
- . . . that alcohol is a depressant drug. Its impact on developing organs, the brain and decision making make it particularly dangerous for adolescents.

**“It’s better to let them drink in my home, so I can supervise them.”**

*If you believe this, you need to know:*

- . . . that kids whose parents allow them to drink are more than twice as likely to be a casualty of drinking and driving, use an illicit drug, have conflicts with friends, trouble in school, or other problems than kids who aren’t allowed.
- . . . that individuals who begin to drink alcohol before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcohol problems in adulthood than those who wait until the legal age of 21.

### Questions From Parents

- Q:** If my child injures someone while driving under the influence of alcohol, can I be held liable?  
**A:** Yes, the head of the household is personally liable to an injured person when a minor child is involved in a crash with the family car.
- Q:** Am I responsible for minors using alcohol in my home?  
**A:** Yes, you may be brought to court on criminal charges and for monetary damages in a case where alcohol or other drugs are used by minors on your private property.
- Q:** Can the court system help me if I cannot control my child who is using drugs?  
**A:** Yes, a minor beyond control of his/her parents can be declared a status offender and placed under the supervision of the Juvenile Court.



