

Targeting Youth In Your Community – Radio Ads

Why would our community group or coalition want to do this project?

The Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth (www.camy.org) analyzed a sample of more than 50,000 radio ad placements for 25 leading brands of alcohol in 104 U.S. radio markets in the summer of 2003. They found that youth ages 12-20 in 92 of these 104 markets heard more radio advertising per capita for alcohol brands than adults 21 and above.⁵ **Are there alcohol ads on radio programs appealing to youth in your community?**

What area of underage drinking prevention does this project address?

This project will address alcohol promotion and marketing to underage youth.

Project Description

Choose either middle or high school youth as your target population. Identify one to three radio stations listened to most frequently by the population you have chosen. Survey 50-100 students to identify the stations and times they listen. Then monitor the stations identified during the popular listening times and count the alcohol ads aired during these times. Report the findings to the media.

Step #1 - Identify the Radio Stations and Times to Be Monitored

Make a list of radio stations in the listening area. Use the yellow pages of the phone book for ideas. Ask people who are not close friends for ideas. Use the call letters and identify whether the station is FM or AM. If there are more than ten stations in your area have the youth doing the project identify the ten they believe will be most popular with the target population.

Survey youth in the target population to determine their favorite stations and the times they listen. See sample survey in this guide. If the school will allow surveying students in homeroom classes try to reach ten percent of the school's population. If this is not possible see if students can be given the option of completing the survey during lunch hour. If neither of these is possible go to places where teens gather (church groups, scout troops, athletic events, food courts, sleepovers) and ask them to complete the survey. Have ten or more youth who are not from the same friendship group get five of their friends to complete the survey.

Step #2 - Monitoring Radio Stations and Times Chosen in the Survey

Choose the radio stations and times based on the results of the survey. In a rural area there may not be many stations so it is okay to monitor only one station. Nothing is gained by monitoring more than two or three. If only a few youth listen to the radio before school, don't include this as a monitoring session. It is best to have a minimum of five youth assigned to monitor each of the chosen stations.

Give monitors a form to use to do their monitoring. See sample in this guide. It is fine to stop monitoring at 10 or 11 pm if younger teens are involved. The survey may be done over a two-week period of time so the monitoring can be spread out. For example the youth monitoring

⁵ "Youth Exposure to Radio Advertising for Alcohol – United States, Summer 2003" www.camy.org

Monday through Friday, 6 – 8 am, listens on Monday, Wednesday, Friday one week and Tuesday, Thursday the next. If five youth volunteer to monitor one radio station in one week each youth will need to monitor for 17 hours.

Youth will want to record time of the ad, the brand of alcohol being advertised, and whether they thought the ad appealed to youth. Monitors could also record instances of DJs making statements that seemed to promote alcohol use by youth.

Who needs to be involved?

This project needs a minimum of ten youth from the targeted age group and at least one supportive adult. Fifteen may be needed if there are three radio stations to be monitored. One youth should be in charge of organizing the survey and compiling the results. Another youth should be in charge of organizing the monitoring of the selected radio stations and compiling the results. A third youth should be identified as a media coordinator to lead the group in identifying media messages and make sure the media releases are prepared and distributed. This person may also be the media spokesperson or another youth may be given this responsibility. All youth involved need to help with all aspects of the project.

What resources will we need?

The cost will be under \$25.00 for making copies of surveys, monitoring reports, and media releases; and purchase of pencils, if necessary.

How and why do we get the media involved?

After the results are compiled the group should identify its two or three main media messages.

- What should be said about the results? Media messages should include something about the findings to get the public's attention. Use language like "the (1, 2, or 3) stations most listened to by teens in (name of town) heard (number) of alcohol ads (an hour or a day)."
- A message could be that people are or should be concerned about the findings since advertising influences youth.⁶
- A third message should tell people what action they can take to reduce alcohol advertising to youth. Examples: write the radio station and ask them not to promote alcohol to youth; contact elected officials to discuss alcohol advertising that appeals to youth. Currently there are voluntary standards set by the industry. See www.camyo.org for more information about these standards.

Talking points attached to your media release can broaden your message to include television, magazine, Internet, and billboard advertising. Visit www.camyo.org to get information to create talking points.

Remember that radio is media. Some groups will want to contact the radio stations they are monitoring and let them know what they are doing. In most cases radio stations already know which age groups listen to their station and when. They sell to advertisers using this information. A group who decides to do this will want to identify a member or two to study a website that compiles information for broadcasters, agencies, and advertisers about radio

⁶"Effects of Alcohol Advertising Exposure on Drinking Among Youth" by Leslie B. Snyder, Frances Fleming Milici, Michael Slater, Helen Sun, and Yuliya Strizhakova, Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med. 2006; 160:18-24.

listeners – www.Arbitron.com. Available from this web site is the publication “Radio Today – How America Listens to Radio” 2006 Edition.

How and why do we evaluate this project?

The goal of this project is to increase public awareness of alcohol advertising to youth. One way of measuring success is to record the media coverage your project received. The more media coverage the more potential there is for community awareness.

Another way of evaluating the effectiveness is to count the number of people taking recommended action steps. This is a measure of the impact of your project.

A third goal of this project is to mobilize youth and adults in efforts to reduce underage drinking. This outcome is measured by counting the number of people who are now involved because of the project. This along with the information and skills organizers learn is building capacity for success in future projects.

(SAMPLE SURVEY)

SURVEY OF (name of school/community) STUDENTS ABOUT RADIO LISTENING

This survey is voluntary and for you only if you listen to the radio. Check the boxes under your favorite radio stations that show the days and time you are most likely to listen.

	Name of Radio Station #1	Name of Radio Station #2	Name of Radio Station #3	Name of Radio Station #4	Name of Radio Station #5
Mon.-Fri., 6-8 am					
Mon.-Fri., 3-6 pm					
Mon.-Thurs. 6-9 pm					
Mon.-Thurs. 9-midnight					
Fri.-Sat., 6-9 pm					
Fri.-Sat., 9-12 am					
Sat., 9 am-noon					
Sat., noon-3 pm					
Sat., 3-6 pm					
Sun., 9-noon					
Sun., noon-3 pm					
Sun., 3-6 pm					
Sun., 6-9 pm					
Sun., 9-midnight					

(If there are 5 youth monitoring one station for one week each youth will need to sign up for approximately 17 hours of monitoring. This can also be done over a two-week period of time. Youth will need to sign up for six to nine shifts dependent upon whether the shifts are for two or three hours.)

Sample Monitor Form

Name of Radio Station _____ Name of Student
 Monitor _____

Make sure you have written the days and times you are monitoring in the left hand column.

Day, Date, Time of Shift	Time	Ad or DJ comment	Brand of Alcohol	Youth Appeal?	Other Comments