

# STAND OUT POUR IT OUT.

## ALCOHOL IN THE MEDIA

Media literacy is an essential skill in today's world of media. Any illustration or depiction that you encounter which entices viewers to purchase something is considered an advertisement, and while advertisements may look appealing, there are rules and regulations that have to be followed. We have to be able to discern potential dangers in the content that we consume.

The alcohol industry is required to share enough truthful, accurate information about their products for consumers to make educated decisions, but the First Amendment's freedom of speech applies to advertising, limiting the extent to which advertising can be controlled. Youth are considered to be generally overexposed to alcohol advertising which can lead to the development of positive expectations for drinking, experimentation, and drinking more in quantity and frequency. Researchers continue to study alcohol advertising in connection to underage drinking, and have found that cultural myths and symbols used in alcohol advertising have powerful meanings for young people—which affects their intentions to drink. Studies have consistently found that advertising does directly increase consumption, but that counter-advertising campaigns (those that educate us about the dangers of underage drinking) are very effective in prevention work.

Use your skills and knowledge in online media to carefully scrutinize advertisements you see, especially those promoting the purchase and consumption of dangerous substances like alcohol. If you find campaigns sharing new research that warns us about alcohol consumption, pay attention!

