



Talk Early And Often About Alcohol, Tobacco And Other Drugs. Even When It Gets Tough

## Know! To Decode The Message

Was your child among the record-breaking 111.3 million viewers for this year's Super Bowl? If so, he or she saw plenty of top dollar alcohol advertising in between the game action. Do you know which commercials were most appealing to your child? What about the alcohol ads?

America's youth have voted! As part of Drug Free Action Alliance's Big Bowl Vote, more than 40,000 middle and high school students weighed in on their favorite Super Bowl commercials.

Take a look at the top five **FAVORITES**:

1. M&M's: Just My Shell
2. Doritos: Dog Buries Cat
3. Doritos: Sling Shot Baby
- 4. Bud Light: Rescue Dog Wego**
5. Skechers: Dog Race

While snacks beat out beverages and a candy treat took top spot, alcohol once again surfaced as a Big Bowl Vote favorite; appealing to both middle and high school students.

We know that the more children are exposed to alcohol advertising, the more likely they are to drink underage. Though the Super Bowl itself is likely gone from their thoughts, the commercials will linger on, as they continue to pop up on our televisions and computers for months to come.

While we cannot possibly shield our children from every alcohol advertisement, we can use opportunities like these as *Teachable Moments*, by helping them to decode the message through *Media Literacy*.

Whether they are tuning in to their favorite TV show, listening to their iPod or socializing online, youth are flooded with a mix of media messages every day. Simply put, Media Literacy is the ability to read between the lines to recognize the influence of these media messages. Children who are media literate can look and listen with a critical eye and ear, helping them to make healthier lifestyle choices and avoid the pressures fueled by media messages to drink, smoke or use other drugs.

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Talking regularly with kids about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs reduces their risk of using. Know! urges you to encourage other parents to join Know!

[Click here for the Know! Parent Tip Sign-Up Page.](#)

Know! is a program of:



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Lifetime Wellness*

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**TRY THIS:** Watch any TV show with your tween/teen. When the commercials come on, encourage your child to pay close attention, then pose these questions to decode the message:

- Who do you think created this commercial?
- What techniques did they use to get your attention?
- What do they want you to do after seeing their message?
- Would this be a healthy choice for you?
- Do you think your health and safety are important to the ad sponsor?
- How do you feel about it now?

Another great opportunity for a similar conversation is in the car, when you have a captive audience. When an advertisement comes on the radio, listen together and then break it down to figure out the real message.

It doesn't have to be an alcohol advertisement to be a learning experience. The key is to teach your child that no matter the product being promoted, there is an advertiser with an intended message. It is up to your child to think critically to interpret that message and apply it his/her life appropriately.

For more information, visit [DrugFreeActionAlliance.org](http://DrugFreeActionAlliance.org) or the Center for Media Literacy (CML) at [medialit.org](http://medialit.org).

**Sources:** Drug Free Action Alliance Big Bowl Vote, Nielsen Company, Center for Media Literacy.