The newsletter of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse – St. Louis Area

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Super Bowl III

Howard Weissman

Though the championship game between the Patriots and the Falcons was, in fact, the 51st playing of the Super Bowl, it was the third year NCADA used the local broadcast of the game to air provocative opioid-themed commercials. (Two this year.) Though they were, in fact, announcements that provided a service to the public, they were not, in the technical sense, Public Service Announcements.

PSAs are aired for free; the station or network gives away commercial time to serve the greater good, not to sell things like Bud Light, Skittles or Chevrolets. Stations tend to give away unsold commercial time late at night, early in the morning or during local programming.

The Super Bowl is the most watched television program of the year. Nationally and locally, commercial time for the Super Bowl is at a premium and there is no such thing as a PSA run during the game. If you want to show your ad during the Super Bowl, you’ve got to pay for play.

As a small community health agency, NCADA did not have the resources to buy commercial time. To get it done, we needed help. A LOT of help. And this year, the commercial time was sponsored by the DEA and their DEA 360 Strategy.

Jim Shroba, the Special Agent in Charge of the DEA St. Louis office said, “There is an unprecedented prescription opioid epidemic in this nation. To combat this, the NCADA and DEA have joined forces to educate the community. When Howard called to tell me about the concept for the Super Bowl ads, I jumped at the chance to support NCADA on this effort. It was a great way to reach so many people—on the one night of the year they were actually watching TV for the commercials!”

The two ads address the importance of securing prescription drugs and discarding unneeded medications. You can view them on our website or at ThePlaceToTurn.com.

To understand why the Drug Enforcement Administration would partner with an agency like ours, it’s important to understand the DEA 360 Strategy. In addition to interdiction and diversion control, it involves changing attitudes through community outreach and partnership with local organizations to “equip and empower communities with the tools to fight the heroin and prescription drug epidemic.”

The response to the ads was immediate and, for the first time, almost unanimously positive.

For the third year in a row the ads were produced by Mark Schupp and directed by Scott Ferguson. And for the third year in a row, both men provided their talents pro bono. There were production costs, to be sure, so we are grateful for the support of those who helped fund the making of these ads—most especially, the Missouri Foundation for Health, a steady and quiet supporter for many years.

The ads did what they were designed to do: they made people lock up or destroy their medications. We received more requests for drug disposal pouches in the one day after the Super Bowl than we had during the previous 18 months. The ads were seen, they generated conversation and discussion and, most importantly, they incited change.
Inappropriate Advertising

Howard Weisman

I suppose as adults, we’re all fair game for advertisers. We live in a marketing-driven economy that encourages consumption and competition, and we’re able to make free choices about how to spend our money or what to put in our bodies. But kids are not only more impressionable, they’re more vulnerable to the overt and covert messages found in TV commercials, and one would hope we’d try to insulate them from some of the most legitimately inappropriate messaging.

In recognition of the power of advertising, certain products dominate children’s view on what, where, and how they can be marketed. Cigarettes and tobacco products are now banned from TV, and the beer and spirits industry is limited by a set of rules that was codified in the 1990s. Some of these limitations state that “beverage alcohol advertising and marketing materials should not depict a child or portray objects, images or cartoons that primarily appeal to persons below the legal purchase age.”

That makes sense. Unfortunately, in the alcohol industry, the people who sell the liquor write the rules; they’re both self-imposed and voluntary. The beer and spirits industry, in other words, polices itself.

So returning to the unhappy mother who found our ad inappropriate: Was she okay with the ad for Bud Light that brought back the ghosts of Spuds MacKenzie, an adorable bull terrier who helped build the Budweiser brand? Was she okay with the ad for Yellow Tail, a rosé wine that brought back the ghost of Spuds MacKenzie? Was she okay with the ad for Doritos and McDonald’s, a popular chip and dip combo? Was she okay with the ad from Yellow Tail kangaroo, an adorable bull terrier who helped build the Budweiser brand?

And while that one unhappy mother didn’t like our ad, was she okay with the ad from Yellow Tail wine that showed a friendly, anthropomorphized kangaroo flapping wings on the grill or mingling at a party with a glass of butty Chardonnay? Was THAT appropriate for her seven-year-old?

In the taxonomic hierarchy, kangaroos are not close to camels in terms of species, genus, family, order, class or phylum. But that Yellow Tail kangaroo was peripherally close to Joe Camel, the now-banned cartoon character who helped hawk countless kids on a cigarette brand.

Yet these ads are not appropriate for children, and leaving an industry to police itself is, apparently, like leaving the fox to guard the henhouse.

But of all the ads that are, to use that unhappy mother’s word again, inappropriate, the worst offenders—and the ads most that need to be banned—all include these three words: “Ask your doctor.”

These three words are found in ads for prescription drugs. Products you cannot buy, and products that, unless you went to medical school, completed a residency, and spent time treating patients, you are not qualified to evaluate. It is insanity that America remains one of only two countries on earth that permits drug companies to advertise prescription drugs directly to consumers.

The U.S. is less than 5% of the world’s population, yet we consume nearly 80% of all drugs. This has not led to longer life expectancy (the U.S. ranks 43rd), but all day and all night we are bombarded with messages that a pill will cure what ails us. Drug companies have solutions to problems we don’t even know we have. From restless leg syndrome to viral flu, there’s a pill for it. Men can take pills for hardening arteries, softening penises, thinning blood or thinning hair. There are pills for an alphabet soup of conditions that we didn’t even realize existed until 20 years ago. IBS, COPD, LowT, ED. We are deluged with ads about drugs for plaque psoriasis, rheumatoid arthritis, diabetic nerve damage and a bunch of other conditions for which we, as patients, SHOULD NOT be treating ourselves.

Advertising prescription drugs normalizes and increases the use of pills as a first response to discomfort or dis-ease. Advertising prescription drugs helps inflate their efficacy and usefulness and, inadmissibly, it makes us more likely to demand prescription drugs from our doctors when over-the-counter medication will do just as well. This is, in part, why we live in a world where children who11 take something for a tissue cold that they used to get a couple of times a year. The public believes that, if the doctor prescribes it, it’s safe, and it’s not just effective, it’s MORE effective than the stuff that’s been around for years and doesn’t need a prescription.

How do we turn this around? In part, we need to have honest conversations. Between pharmaceutical companies and doctors. Between doctors and their patients. Between parents and their children. So, though the intention of our ads was not to alarm the mother who contacted me, I commend her willingness to speak with her child, and not simply dismiss the opportunity we offered to her…and 1.2 million other viewers. Last year, NCADA educated over 76,000 children in schools, at leadership retreats, and through our counseling program. If you need a hand in speaking with your child about substances and the proper use of medications, we are, once again, the place to turn.

And if you want to remove the truly inappropriate commercials from TV, remove ads for prescription drugs. Please: stop forcing me to look at those two matching bathtubs. If you’re bathing outside, you should be spending your money on indoor plumbing, not Cialis.

hweisman@ncada-stl.org

Though we didn’t receive much criticism for our Super Bowl ads, 

The average seven-year-old has seen around 200,000 commercials.

If you’re a kid watching only kid shows, you’re being bombarded with TV ads for Skittles, Coke, Doritos and McDonald’s. Is that appropriate? Is it appropriate that, for kids, Ronald McDonald is the second-most recognizable fictional character (edged out only by Santa Claus)? And that children can recognize McDonald’s by the yellow arches long before they can read?

Last year, companies spent more than $72 billion on TV advertising. It’s a lot of money, but large corporations know that after watching the talking gecko a few dozen times, there’s a pretty good chance you’ll think of Geico when you’re shopping for car insurance. And if you’re searching for an affordable car, there’s a pretty good chance you’ll think of Chevrolet or Toyota if you see enough of them on TV. A truck? Probably Ford or Ram. A luxury car? The folks at Jaguar hope you’ll think of them…and that you’ll remember that the British pronounce it, “Jag-You-Are.”

The Coalition on Addictions (COA) meets the first Wednesday of each month from noon to 1:00 at NCADA, 9355 Olive Blvd in Olivette. No RSVP is required. Lunch is provided free of charge, a $20 donation is requested.

For event information and registration details, contact Sarah Roberts at sroberts@ncada-stl.org or (314) 962-3456, ext. 372.

On the cover: A young woman with a massage oil bottle and a red flower, a symbol of the Coalition on Addictions (COA), is set against a purple background. The words “The Coalition on Addictions (COA)” and “A Matter of Perspective” are written in white text on the cover.

St. Louis Coalition on Addictions

UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS

Apr. 12 – Shaina Solowes: Health Risk Behaviors and Addictions

May 10 – Michelle Roberts: Applying Health Literacy Principles and Practices in a Substance Use and Treatment Context

Jun. 14 – Kelly Schultz: The Impact of Parental Substance Use on Missouri Foster Care Children

On Addictions is an affiliate organization of the St. Louis Coalition on Addictions. (CAPA is an affiliate organization of North Carolina Addictions.)

NCADA KEY 2

NCADA KEY 3

NCADA KEY

April 28: Youths Mental Health First Aid Training
March 24: Youth Mental Health First Aid Training
March 31: SOS: Signs of Suicide Training
April 7: Drug Impairment in Youth: Recognizing the Signs
April 14: Youth Mental Health First Aid Training

For event information and registration visit www.ncada-stl.org or contact Jeanne Cordingley at jcordingley@ncada-stl.org, or (314) 962-3456 x304 (unless otherwise noted in the event listing).

Go to: G0SLouis.enmotive.com

To receive your special TEAM NCADA instructions and registration discount code, contact Sarah Roberts at sroberts@ncada-stl.org or (314) 962-3456, ext. 372.

NCADA is a charitable partner for the 2017 G0! St. Louis – Marathon Weekend

April 19: Spring Awards Luncheon
April 26: Addressing Opioid Overdose:

Register at: GoStLouis.enmotive.com

May 10: Michelle Roberts: Applying Health Literacy Principles and Practices in a Substance Use and Treatment Context

Jun. 14 – Kelly Schultz: The Impact of Parental Substance Use on Missouri Foster Care Children

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NCADA Awards Luncheon—April 21 at Saint Louis University

Annual Event Honors Exemplary Service to the Field of Substance Use Disorders

This year’s Awards Luncheon celebrates four colleagues – “unsung heroes” – for their important work in substance misuse prevention around our region. We also welcome as Keynote Speaker the accomplished stage, screen, and television actor, Richard Kind (see sidebar).

Our Community Service Award will be presented to St. Louis County Counselman Dr. Sam Page and St. Louis County Director of Public Health Dr. Faisal Khan for their innovation and leadership. Drs. Page and Khan worked to combat the gridlock in Jefferson City by creating and implementing the first municipal Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) in the United States.

Our Gateway Award will be presented to Jim Shroba, Special Agent in Charge of the DEA in St. Louis. Thanks to Jim, the DEA 360 Strategy partnered with NCADA in several significant ways, including purchasing the airline for our two opioid-themed Super Bowl ads.

The Bronze Key goes to Marilyn Bader, who served NCADA as a classroom prevention educator and training coordinator for almost three decades until her retirement last year. During this period, Marilyn helped thousands of students develop the knowledge and personal resilience necessary to avoid substance use, while also training and mentoring dozens of NCADA prevention educators. She leaves an enduring legacy of excellence.

Finally, this year’s Taish-Koplovow Scholarship for Addiction Studies will be awarded to Josh Gibson, an outstanding scholar who will graduate in May from Washington University’s Brown School of Social Work. Josh is an active duty veteran who used his practicum hours at Veterans Affairs to work with other vets impacted by substance use disorder. Passionate and dedicated, after graduation he plans to continue his efforts at the VA.

The Luncheon is open to the public. The cost is $35 per person or $245 for a table of eight. Seating is limited, so early reservations are strongly advised. For more information, call Angie Yarbrough at (314) 962-3456 x327.

Keynote Speaker

Richard Kind

Richard Kind may not be a household name, but the face and voice of this veteran character actor spark instant recognition. Through a career of more than 30 years, his credits in film, television and theatre are extensive. On television, these include Mad About You, Spin City, Gotham, and Curb Your Enthusiasm.

Richard has starred on-stage in New York, Hollywood and London in such shows as Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, The Producers, and Guys and Dolls. He holds a Drama Desk Award and a Tony nomination for the hit Broadway play, The Big Knife.

Richard’s film work includes Argo, Hereafter, and A Serious Man. His distinctive voice brought warmth and wit to Inside Out, A Bug’s Life, Cars, Toy Story 3, and other animated features. He is an alumnus of Chicago’s Second City theatre company.

There are several exciting, though possibly concerning, bills in the Missouri General Assembly that bear watching. Some special items to track:

**Powdered Alcohol:** HB 29 would bring powdered alcohol (palcohol) under the same controls as liquid alcohol. This is an important step in regulating one of the most misused drugs available.

**Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs:** There are currently at least five prescription drug monitoring program proposals in the Missouri General Assembly. Some are better than others, but this demonstrates a broad interest in working to eliminate doctor shopping, and bringing Missouri in line with the rest of the nation by implementing this common sense reform.


For an up-to-date list of NCADA’s legislative priorities and to find out how to contact your elected officials, please visit www.ncada-stl.org.

911 Good Samaritan Law: This bill would provide limited immunity for anyone who calls 911 in a medical emergency related to drugs or alcohol. This is an important step in addressing the opioid epidemic, but also helpful in reducing the worst harms of youthful binge drinking.

Marijuana: There are several bills that are various schemes for legalizing marijuana – and which definitely warrant concern. Some go so far as to allow for complete legalization and commercialization. These bills must be watched carefully.

Legislative Update

Brandon Costerison

Let’s face it: Teens get a bad rap. Their voices often get drowned out by news stories about the latest teenager who made a “bad” choice. But here at NCADA, we believe teenagers are pretty awesome. And we know that every teenager has a unique voice; some soft, some loud, some assertive, others gentle. Regardless of the tone and style, every teen possesses the ability to influence those around them.

This year’s Teen Institute – our 38th annual – challenges participants to Find Their Voice, and gives those teens who want to make a positive impact a chance to be heard.

This life-changing retreat takes place on June 6–9 in Dittmer, MO. Teens from across our seven-county region will come together to learn about the impact of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs and develop the skills to use this knowledge effectively in their schools.

Not only will teens learn something, but they’ll have a blast doing it. Evening activities such as square dancing (way more fun than it probably sounds) and karaoke will keep teens engaged and help them forge new friendships. At the end of TI, participants will leave with skills needed to create powerful, lasting change for themselves, their schools, and their communities.

If you know a teen currently in 9th, 10th or 11th grade who is interested in Finding Their Voice, please visit stlteeninstitute.org; or contact Joy Carter or Kim Sherony at 314.962.3456. Space is limited – applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

New Mass Transit Advertisements

As part of the MO-HOPE collaboration with the Missouri Department of Mental Health, and the Missouri Institute for Mental Health at the University of Missouri–St. Louis, NCADA has developed a series of mass transit ads that can be seen throughout the City of St. Louis.

The goal is to encourage people to call 911 if they witness an overdose, and to let them know they won’t be arrested or prosecuted for trying to save a life.
When it comes to donating to worthy local causes, the St. Louis community is hard to beat. Each year, thousands of St. Louisans participate in Give STL Day to support their favorite charities, including NCADA.

We are once again a charity partner of the St. Louis Community Foundation for this special online giving campaign, set for Thursday, May 11. If you can’t participate on May 11, the contributions site will be open for the prior two weeks — but all gifts made on the 11th qualify us for additional funding from the Community Foundation!

For more information about Give STL Day, visit givestlday.org. *(Find a Nonprofit*) to locate NCADA.

NCADA Golf Tournament
AUGUST 7 • THE COUNTRY-CLUB OF ST. ALBANS
S A V E  T H E  D A T E

We support our many worthwhile programs on Give STL Day. Visit givestlday.org, “Find a Nonprofit” to locate NCADA.

**STAFF SPOTLIGHT**

**Kristin Bengtson**
Manager of Community Strategy

After graduating from Missouri State with a degree in anthropology and minors in sociology and linguistics, I started volunteering for the Rockwood Drug-Free Coalition. Part of my training included Substance Abuse Prevention Skills Training (SAPST), which was during that training when I discovered some profound connections between my educational background in anthropology and the field of prevention work. For example, both fields require a look beneath the surface to understand why people are engaging in (let alone how to prevent) their behaviors. When a position in community prevention opened at NCADA, I knew it would be a perfect fit.

What I love about working at NCADA is the same thing I loved about studying anthropology: it requires many different things from me. I provide knowledge and guidance regarding prevention science and best practices to community coalitions, and in turn, coalitions are better equipped to determine their own, tailored solutions to address the local conditions of their communities.

This means I’ve had to gain a working knowledge of all things related to alcohol and other drugs — from liquor laws and the quirks of Missouri enforcement procedures, to figuring out the legal way to host a community movie night (who knew there were so many blackout dates for showing Disney movies?). I’ve been to countless trivia nights, town hall meetings, dances, community forums, and youth retreats. As a result, I have a personally preferred magician, print shop, billboard broker, and a hook-up for cookies.

As I celebrate my five-year anniversary with NCADA this month, I realize that rooted in all my duties and activities with NCADA is the same simple motivation that steered me towards anthropology: a desire to help people better understand each other and their environments. When you can accomplish this, change is not only possible, it’s practically inevitable. 

**GRANTS RECENTLY RECEIVED**

Clifford Willard Gaylord Foundation
Tom Institute
The Siteman Family Foundation
Prevention First
Tegna Foundation
Prevention First

**MEMORIALS**

Keith Broome
The Dotin Family
Fatty Dowd
Tina Hunt
Sue Johnson
Jeanette Lawrence
Sue Wustebek

Jerry Carvey
Adie Carvey
Morgan Cao
Diane Lavin

Mary Eisenbauer
Thomas and Janet Hoff
Peter and Frances Leverenz
Jim and Nancy Murphy
John C. Flansy
Ray Flansy
Brandy Jordan
Diane Hill
Tim and Jackie Jordan

Lauren Kilian
Joan Dean
Jerald and Barbara Jennings
Rita Mather
Billy Kolen
Caryn Friedman
Curt and Lori Neisen
Joseph Middendorf
Darn Badalato
Patricia Kolley
O’Connor
Mary Haider
Robert and Lois Jobs
Chris Rizes
Marissa Wild
Ellen Rose
David Wed
Zack Schenberg
Jeanette Hefrich
Leah Schweiss
Steve and Judy Merritt

**INDIVIDUALS**

Gabe Thome
Brian Sweeney
Fred and Eda Varney
Terry and Marilyn Bader
Terrill and Janea Bessman
Howard Weisman
Kerry and John Dian Felch
Terry and Marilyn Bader
James and Chrissa Baker Kruton
Lissa Bernstein
Jeanette Bassen
Nancy Bigne Libby and Steve Brum
Bert and Ellen Bresler
Nina Bronnig
Dwight and Michael Burton
Barbara Burton
Cheryl and Mark Carner

Bob and Lynee Pinion
Mary Ellen Schoksi
Bill Sunderland
Jenna Besser
Henry Watkins
John and Diane Felch
Dr. Dick and Nancy Arnoldy
Lawrence Doyle
Richard and Judy Dubin
Dan Duncan and Dana Sebastian-Duncan
Tom Erickson
Dan and Eleanor Perry
Robette Figler
Winneta Fitz
Willow Ford
Cheryl and Tom Fox
Roeznie freshman
Dick Goldberg

Marg and Gina Gold
Robert and Russell Carrit
Cindy and Chris Connedy
Jeff and Melissa Allen
Tom and Tina Dubkery
Kenny Delheid
Thomas and Tina DuBrow
Lawrence Doyle
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Kristin O’Reilly from the St. Louis Breastfeeding Coalition presents the Gold Level “Breastfeeding Friendly Worksite” Award to NCADA
(From right: O’Reilly, Nicka Dewosky, Jane Young, Emily Mangi)

**NCADA Certified as Breastfeeding Friendly**

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services has designated NCADA as a Missouri Breastfeeding Friendly Worksite. NCADA joins a growing number of Missouri businesses that provide time, a private space and other benefits to support a new mother’s decision to continue breastfeeding after she returns to work.

The Pumping Station, as NCADA’s private room is affectionately called, is decorated with soft watercolors, and is furnished with a comfortable chair, a table, and a small refrigerator. A lending library is also available for expecting parents.

The Pumping Station is not exclusively for employees. Women who attend trainings and community workshops at NCADA are welcome to use the room as well.

**CORPORATIONS, FOUNDATIONS & ORGANIZATIONS**

American Direct Marketing Resources LLC
Assure Inc.
Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund
Frederick Pitman Fund
G. H. Voss Co. Inc.
Kendra Scott Jewellery, Plaza Frontenac
United Way of Eastern Fairfield County

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Thomas and Janet Hoff
Peter and Frances Leverenz
Jim and Nancy Murphy
John C. Flansy
Ray Flansy
Brandy Jordan
Diane Hill
Tim and Jackie Jordan

Lauren Kilian
Joan Dean
Jerald and Barbara Jennings
Rita Mather
Billy Kolen
Caryn Friedman
Curt and Lori Neisen
Joseph Middendorf
Darn Badalato
Patricia Kolley
O’Connor
Mary Haider
Robert and Lois Jobs
Chris Rizes
Marissa Wild
Ellen Rose
David Wed
Zack Schenberg
Jeanette Hefrich
Leah Schweiss
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