

Study: Black youth drink less, still targeted more

By Charlene Muhammad
Special to Sentinel-Voice

(NNPA) — The Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., found Black youth ages 12 to 20 drink far less alcohol than their White counterparts, but with age they suffer more from alcohol-related diseases than Whites and other ethnicities.

Alcohol-related ailments include heart disease, high blood pressure, decreased or impaired brain functions, liver and kidney damage and kidney failure.

During its study of exposure between 2003 and 2004, the center also found alcohol use contributes to homicides, unintentional injuries and suicide, which are considered the three leading causes of death among Blacks of that age group.

According to the center, 19 percent of the Black youth used alcohol within 30 days prior to the survey, compared to about 33 percent of Whites. Further, Black youth reported "binge" drinking at 10 percent, compared to Whites at 23 percent. Binge drinking is considered as five or more drinks at one sitting,

is associated with health, social and economic problems, and is harmful for adolescent development.

Critics say alcohol is made appealing to Black youth via a consistent, aggressive advertising campaign in magazines, music and videos, and on TV, radio, billboards.

The Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine studied *Billboard* magazine's 279 most popular songs of 2005 to analyze substance use in popular music. It found rap music referenced alcohol 33 percent of the time, followed by country music at 20 percent. R&B referenced alcohol 7 percent of the time.

Researchers provided a breakdown of alcohol advertisements Black youth were exposed to:

Magazines

— Twelve-to-20-year-olds saw 15 percent more for beer and 10 percent more for distilled spirits per capita than adults age 21 and over; and generally, Black youth saw more advertising for both products than youth in general.

— In national magazines, Black youth saw 34 percent

more alcohol advertising than youth in general, 21 percent more for beer and ale, 42 percent more for distilled spirits; and

— 99 percent of Black youth saw an average of 150 alcohol ads in national magazines while 97 percent of all youth saw an average of 113 alcohol ads.

— 14 magazines (including *Sports Illustrated*, *Vibe*, *Stuff*, *Entertainment Weekly*, the *Source*, *InStyle* and *Vogue*), accounted for 75 percent of Black youth's exposure in 2004.

Radio

— Of a sample of more than 67,000 occurrences of advertising airing in 104 markets for the 25 top alcohol brands in June-July, 2004, Black youth heard 15 percent more advertising per capita than youth in general;

— In New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Dallas-Forth Worth, Houston-Galveston and Detroit (six of the top 10 markets comprising 34 percent of America's Black population), and in 25 of 104 markets, Black youth heard more alcohol advertising on the radio per capita than youth in general)

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Does 'acting Black' play role in academic gaps?

By Nisa Islam Muhammad
Special to Sentinel-Voice

(NNPA)-For too many Black students, going to high school means fitting a stereotype of what it means to be "Black" developed by images in music, movies and media. It means "acting Black" to fit in a peer group or in response to social pressures.

According to researchers, "acting Black" is contributing to the education and achievement gap between Black and White students. They also believe it is one reason why Black students are underrepresented in gifted programs.

"If you are a Black student and are doing well in school you are accused of 'acting White.'" Black students' performance then begins to suffer," study author Donna Ford, professor of special education and Betts chair of education and human development at Vanderbilt University's Peabody College, told *The Final Call*.

"Part of the achievement gap, particularly for gifted Black students, is due to the poor images these students have of themselves as learners. Our research shows that prevention and intervention programs that focus on improving students' achievement ethic and self-image are essential to closing the achievement gap."

The research, one of the first to examine the concept of "acting Black," was published in the March 2008 issue of Ur-

ban Education.

"A quarter of a million Black students are missing out on the opportunity of being in gifted programs. They just don't see themselves in the class. Being successful is seen as being White," said Dr. Ford.

The study found that 40 percent of Black girls and 60 percent of Black boys were underrepresented in gifted and talented programs.

When Nina Washington was in the 10th grade teachers recommended her for Advanced Placement (AP) classes.

"I didn't want to do it," she told *The Final Call*. "I thought those classes would be too hard. None of my friends were in them and I would rather be with them."

That was before she told her mother, Sandra Washington.

"I was shocked. I couldn't understand why she would want to diminish her skill and talent to be with friends. I told her she was definitely taking the AP classes and if they were hard we would get a tutor or whatever she needed to be successful. She could be with her friends between classes, during lunch and after school," Sandra Washington told *The Final Call*.

Several AP classes later, Nina will graduate with honors this June.

There is also double standard for Black and White students who act out or demonstrate youthful exuberance.

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Military

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the level of sexism is almost to the point where it is non-existent, the dorms are still segregated by sex, and one base was especially not friendly to women.

"There is an installation, Camp McKenzie, where there are no women stationed," Lee said.

"The men have not had

contact with a woman for a long period of time. We are told that if we go to McKenzie, do not walk alone and carry an extra layer of protection, especially at night."

Norton thanked the participants for their input. She said that a different mindset must be looked at when dealing with women in combat.

"The old-fashioned war of men in the foxhole is gone," she said.

"Wars are not fought like that anymore. When you are in the theater, everyone is in the combat zone.

"That is the reality of today."

James Wright writes for the *Afro-American Newspapers*.

Voter ID

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Of the remaining state primaries, Indiana's vote on May 6 has the most possibility for voter confusion over ID rules, voting advocates say. The remaining states, including Nebraska, Kentucky and Idaho, have much more lax identification requirements.

Those states that worry election advocates because of ongoing efforts to pass strict photo ID laws include Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma. But it appeared unlikely Monday that legislators in those states would be able to push any such measures through before November's general election.

In Missouri, where the state supreme court overruled a previous photo-ID law, Republican Rep. Stanley Cox earlier this year proposed a constitutional amendment requiring such identification. He'd been waiting on the Supreme Courts decision before aggressively lobbying for it, but with Missouri's legislative session due to end May 16, Cox said Monday that the high court's ruling came too late.

"As a practical matter, the voters probably

won't have this choice until 2010," Cox said.

Across the country, as many as 20 million people lack such identification, most of them minorities and the elderly who don't have drivers' licenses or passports and are unable to afford the cost of obtaining documentation to apply for such identification, advocacy groups say.

In Indiana, more than 20 percent of Black voters do not have access to a valid photo ID, according to an October 2007 study by the University of Washington.

In Marion County, 34 Indiana voters without the proper identification were forced to file provisional ballots in an offseason local election.

According to Indiana's photo law, voters have 10 days to return to the county courthouse with the proper identification. They can also file an affidavit claiming poverty. "Who's going to do that?" asked Bob Brandon, president of Fair Elections Legal Network, a nonpartisan network of election lawyers. "Who's going to show up and sign an affidavit saying 'I'm poor'?"



SUPREME HONOR

Mary Wilson, a member of the original Supremes, was named "Legendary Phenom" at the third annual Celebrating Phenomenal Women event held recently. *EVibe* publisher Alicia Gibbs (right) created the annual event to shine the light on the many accomplishments of African-American women throughout the Las Vegas Valley.

Sentinel-Voice photo by Marty Frierson