



**2015**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**National Media  
Campaign for the  
Prevention of  
Underage Drinking**

***Talk. They Hear You.***  
**Campaign Highlights**

**June 2015**

## Leading Change 2.0: SAMHSA Acts To Prevent Underage Drinking

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) seeks to promote positive mental health and prevent substance abuse and mental illness. SAMHSA has long worked to reduce the impact of these issues on America’s communities.

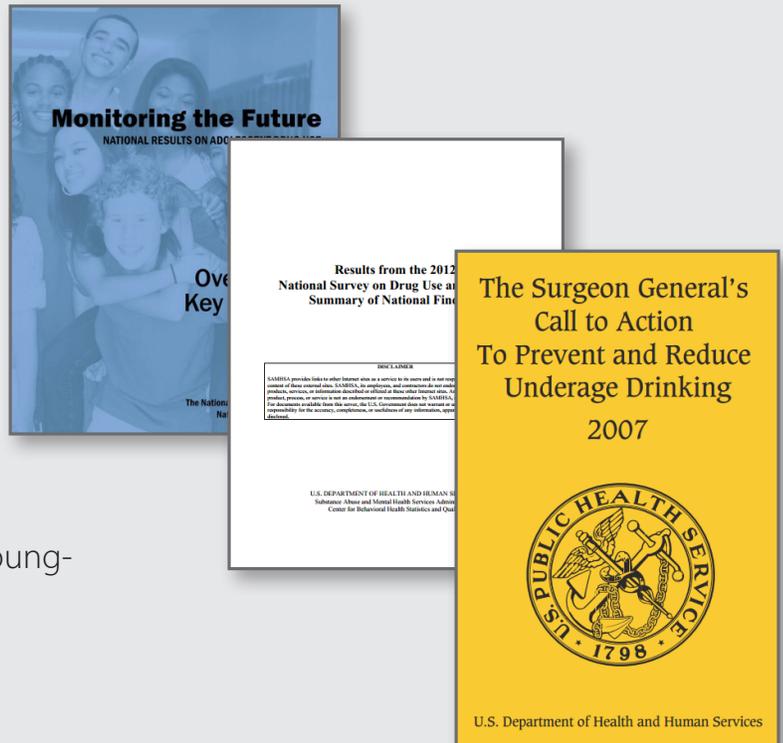
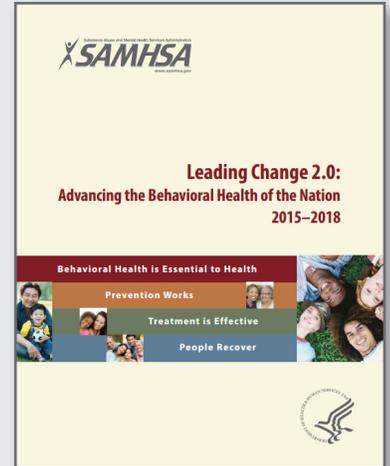
Alcohol use by those younger than the legal age of 21 remains a serious public health and safety problem, undermining the well-being of America’s youth. Ten percent of 9- to 10-year-olds have already started drinking,<sup>1</sup> and more than 20 percent of underage drinkers begin drinking before age 13.<sup>2</sup> The human cost of underage alcohol use is enormous, with many of the harmful consequences immediate and all too evident for youth, families, and communities.

In response, SAMHSA’s Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), through the Sober Truth on Underage Drinking Act (STOP Act), created the Underage Drinking Prevention National Media Campaign. The campaign—*Talk. They Hear You.*—engages parents and caregivers of children ages 9 to 15 in preventing underage drinking.

The campaign aims to:

1. Increase parent *awareness of the prevalence and risk* of underage drinking;
2. Equip parents with the *knowledge, skills, and confidence* to prevent underage drinking; and
3. Increase parent *actions to prevent underage drinking.*

This campaign supports SAMHSA’s *Strategic Initiative No. 1, Prevention of Substance Abuse and Mental Illness*, Goal 1.2: to prevent and reduce underage drinking and young-adult problem drinking.



Note: The background activities in the Preface describe efforts conducted in the 2013 and 2014 fiscal years.

## What the Research Suggests

Alcohol continues to be the most widely abused substance among our nation's young people. SAMHSA's National Survey on Drug Use and Health found that a higher percentage of youth (24.3 percent) ages 12 to 20 used alcohol in the past month than used tobacco (17.8 percent) or illicit drugs (14.5 percent).<sup>3</sup> Underage alcohol consumption increased with age in a steady progression from 1.2 percent for 12-year-olds to 53.3 percent for 20-year-olds.<sup>4</sup>

Parents have a significant influence on young people's decisions about alcohol consumption.<sup>5</sup> When parents know about underage alcohol use, they can protect their children from many of the high-risk behaviors associated with it. Furthermore, parents who do not discourage underage drinking may have an indirect influence on young people's alcohol use.<sup>6</sup>

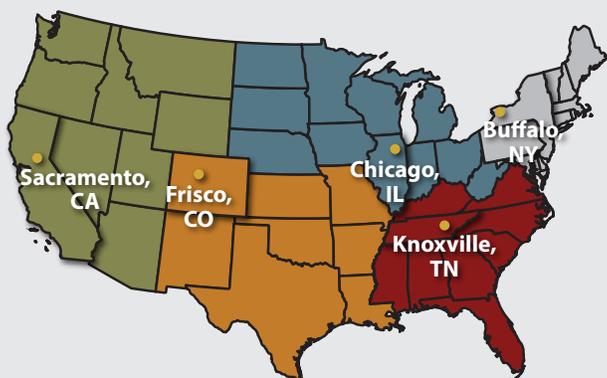
SAMHSA's *Talk. They Hear You.* campaign addresses these issues by drawing from social marketing and health education behavior theories, and the latest scientific research and feedback from audiences across the country.

## Piloting *Talk. They Hear You.* Across the National Prevention Network (NPN) Regions

In early to mid-2012, SAMHSA developed a national pilot program to test and refine campaign creative materials and pretest the campaign's national objectives in communities across the country. Five pilot sites implemented and evaluated the campaign. The feedback received from market testing was incorporated into the final materials prior to launch.

### Pilot sites were asked to:

- Use campaign messages and materials in current underage drinking awareness and education activities;
- Host at least one underage drinking awareness event;
- Include underage drinking research in existing educational materials;
- Provide overall feedback on the PSAs; and
- Gauge attitudes, behaviors, and concerns about underage drinking.



**The National Prevention Network's Five Regions**

### Selected pilot sites:

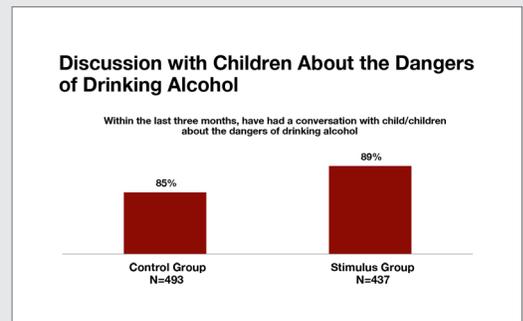
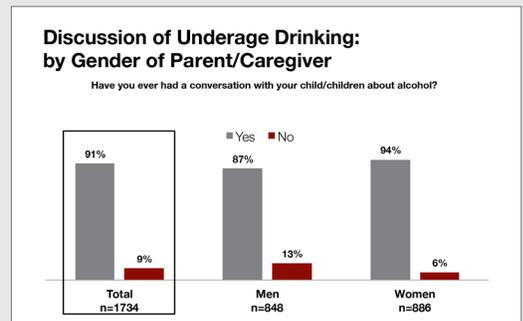
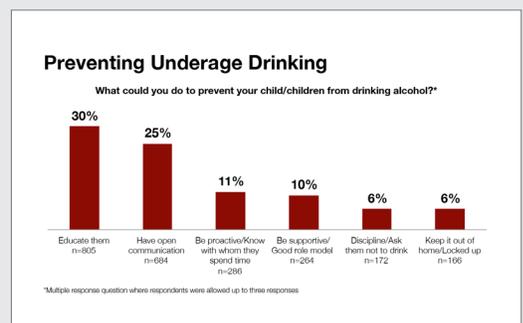
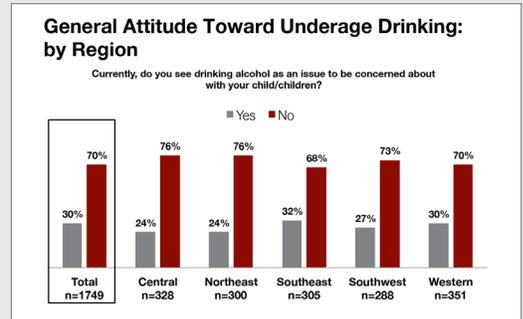
- People Reaching Out (Western NPN Region)
- Metropolitan Drug Commission (Southeast NPN Region)
- Asian Health Coalition (Central NPN Region)
- Summit Prevention Alliance (Southwest NPN Region)
- Erie County Council (Northeast NPN Region)

# Testing Campaign Effectiveness Prelaunch

In addition to the pilot sites, SAMHSA administered a national Web survey to establish baseline attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors linked to underage drinking. Through “control” and “stimulus” groups, SAMHSA assessed longitudinal changes in underage drinking prevention behaviors and attitudes over a 3-month period. A small sample provided qualitative feedback on the content, layout, and delivery of the public service announcements (PSAs).

## Measuring our success:

- Underage drinking is not a top-of-mind issue; less than half of all parents surveyed reported concern.
- Education and conversations with children were the top two ways parents said they could prevent underage drinking.
- Women are much more likely to have talked with their children about underage drinking.
- The majority of parents exposed to the materials said they were believable; a third said the materials left an impression on them.
- A quarter of parents exposed to the PSAs agreed the PSAs were among the best ads they had seen on underage drinking prevention.
- A quarter of parents exposed to the PSAs said they would seek out more information about SAMHSA.
- Parents exposed to the PSAs were much more likely to have talked with their children about the dangers of underage drinking in the last 3 months.
- Parents and caregivers asked for more modeling scenarios in the print PSAs.



<sup>1</sup> Donovan, J., Leech, S., Zucker, R., Loveland-Cherry, C., Jester, J., Fitzgerald, H., et al. (2004). Really underage drinkers: Alcohol use among elementary students. *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*, 28(2), 341–349.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2012). Youth risk behavior surveillance—United States, 2011. *Surveillance Summaries. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 61, SS-4, 1–162.

<sup>3</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2013). Results from the 2012 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Summary of National Findings, NSDUH Series H-46, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 13-4795. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Retrieved from <http://samhsa.gov/data/NSDUH/2012SummNatFindDetTables/NationalFindings/NSDUHresults2012.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2013). Results from the 2012 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Retrieved from <http://samhsa.gov/data/NSDUH/2012SummNatFindDetTables/DetTabs/NSDUH-DetTabsTOC2012.htm>

<sup>5</sup> Nash, S.G., McQueen, A., and Bray, J.H. (2005). Pathways to adolescent alcohol use: Family environment, peer influence, and parental expectations. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 37(1), 19–28.

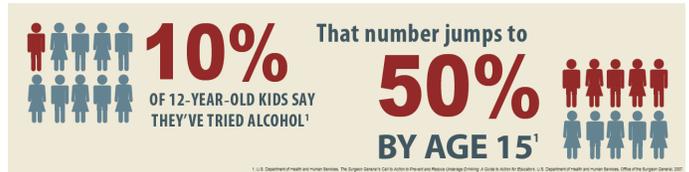
<sup>6</sup> Sieving, R.E., Maruyama, G., Williams, C.L., and Perry, C.L. (2000). Pathways to adolescent alcohol use: Potential mechanisms of parent influence. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 10(4), 489–514.

## Empowering Parents To Prevent Underage Drinking

SAMHSA's *Talk. They Hear You.* campaign engages parents and caregivers of children ages 9 to 15 in the prevention of underage drinking. Underage drinking remains a national public health issue, especially among adolescents.



### Parents have significant influence on young people's decisions about alcohol consumption.



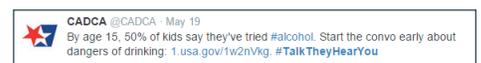
- Despite its prevalence, underage drinking is not a top-of-mind issue for parents.
- Children said that parents are the primary messengers for underage drinking prevention.
- To succeed, parents need prompts and conversation starters for talking with their children.

## Broadening the Campaign Reach Through Partnerships

The *Talk. They Hear You.* campaign has a strong network of partners to help plan strategy and disseminate campaign messages. Partners include other government agencies, as well as prevention, retail, health care, community, and school-based organizations.



Outreach to more than 40 partners opens new channels to reach parents through the national, regional, and local outreach and social media channels of our partners. These channels, in turn, generated feedback on campaign successes.



## TIMELINE

May 2013

May 2013 – October 2013

- Launch *Talk. They Hear You.*
- Launch Campaign Website
- Deliver T&TA to Partners
- Disseminate PSAs
- Continue and Monitor PSA Distribution
- Ongoing Media Outreach
- Implement Launch Year Evaluation Efforts

# Assisting Communities To Engage Parents

Campaign materials were created and provided to partners to display and distribute to parents and community members. These channels, in turn, generated feedback on campaign successes such as social media (30) and blog (9) posts, newsletter articles, and direct distribution of campaign materials.



For consistent outreach, we also gave partners talking points, factsheets, infographics, draft social media messages, and e-mail templates.

## Modeling Conversations for Parents

*Talk. They Hear You.* PSAs show parents using everyday opportunities to talk with their children about alcohol, and reinforce the importance of starting these conversations at an early age. In 2015, two new print PSAs were created.



The video PSAs include 15-, 30-, and 60-second television spots, radio spots, and print advertisements, with many materials available in both English and Spanish. A series of print PSAs aimed specifically at Native American audiences has also been distributed to select markets (Alaska, Arizona, and Oklahoma).

### October 2013

- Launch New Online Role-Play Tool

### December 2013

- Earned Media Pitch Around Holidays
- Production of New TV PSA

### January 2014

- Target Atlanta, GA, and Los Angeles, CA, With PSAs

- Native American Technical Expert Meeting
- National Partner Meeting

# Reaching Parents Through Relevant Channels

Since launching in 2013, the PSAs have been distributed to:



**2138**  
broadcast TV stations



**1000**  
cable TV stations

**3500**



**3500**  
radio outlets

**3131**



**3131**  
print outlets

**510**



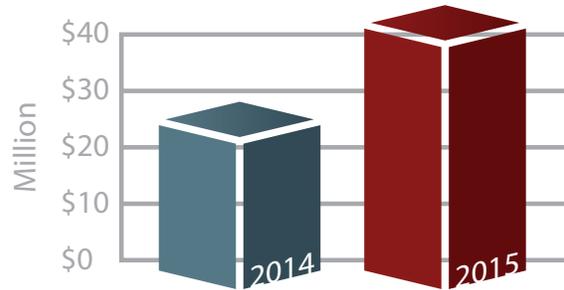
**510**  
community-based outlets in the Wash., DC area

Through November 4, 2015, the *Talk. They Hear You.* PSA campaign has:

Earned more than

**4.6**  
billion

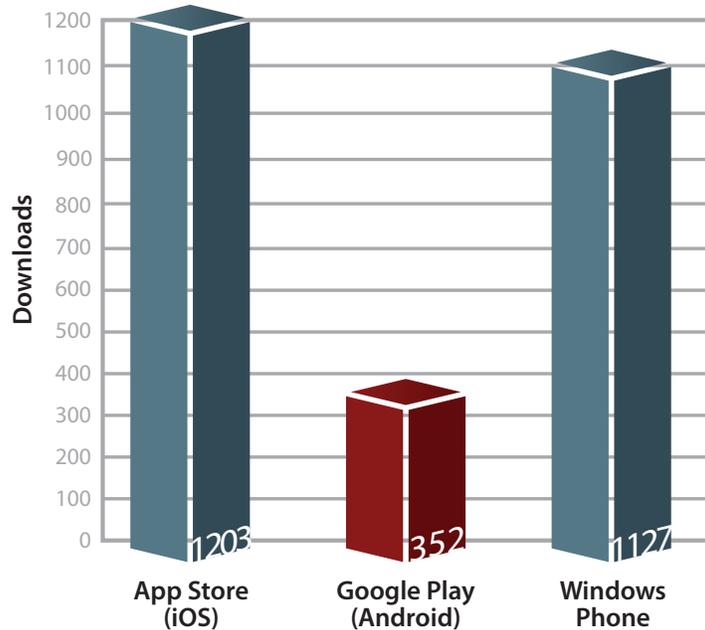
impressions



Generated an advertising equivalency of more than \$46.5 million across all media outlets

PSAs have also been shown across the country on AccentHealth Media Network designed for patients in waiting rooms and Walmart SuperCenters Checkout TVs.

Launched in early 2015, the mobile app is available through the App Store<sup>SM</sup>, Google Play<sup>TM</sup>, and the Windows<sup>®</sup> Phone.



Total Number of Downloads

**2,682**

**February 2014**

- Unveil New TV PSA at Prevention Day 2014

- Redistribute Suite of PSAs to Media

**May 2014**

- Release of *Talk. They Hear You.* Mobile App

**Nov. 2014 – Dec. 2014**

- Revise Strategic Communications and Marketing Plan

# Building Skills With the *Talk. They Hear You.* App

The *Talk. They Hear You.* app features an interactive simulation that uses avatars to help parents practice bringing up the topic of alcohol, learn the questions to ask, and get ideas for keeping the conversation going.



The app was optimized through the development and incorporation of new user flow. A menu resource was also integrated to take users directly to the *Talk. They Hear You.* website.

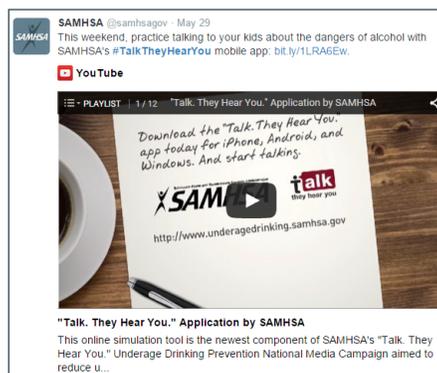
## Promoting the *Talk. They Hear You.* App

The *Talk. They Hear You.* promotional video highlights the interactive app and shows parents ways they can use the desktop or mobile app to prepare for one of the most important conversations they may ever have.

The promotional video was shared with media and partners, posted on the underage drinking website, and shared via SAMHSA's social media channels.



The promotional video was viewed 556 times via SAMHSA's YouTube channel and earned 98 likes, 137 shares, 12 favorites, and 39 retweets via SAMHSA's Facebook page and Twitter profile.



### January 2015

- Conduct Outreach to Prevention, Retail, Health Care, Community, and School-Based Organizations (Ongoing)

### February 2015

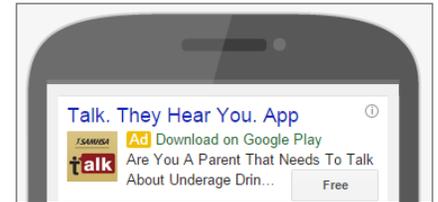
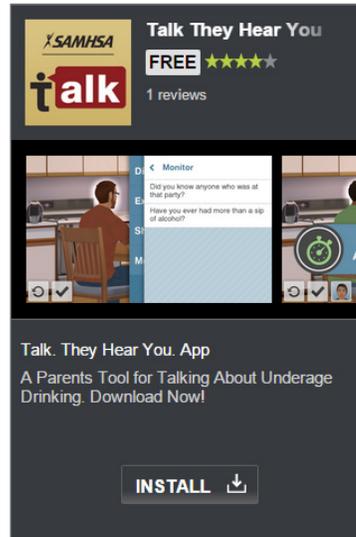
- Promote App at Prevention Day 2015

### March 2015

- Launch Paid Advertising Campaign on Social Media (Ongoing)
- Conduct Ongoing Blogger Outreach

# Showcasing the *Talk. They Hear You.* App

The *Talk. They Hear You.* app and promotional video were featured through advertising on Google and Facebook. The ads drove clicks to the underage drinking website, as well as to mobile stores to download the app.



**The paid ads generated 272,299 clicks and 5,940,224 impressions across all campaigns.**

The *Talk. They Hear You.* app was featured at SAMHSA's Prevention Day 2015. Representatives from organizations such as the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA), the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), the U.S. Department of Education, and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) were there. Those attending had a chance to try the app and learn how it helps parents talk to their children about underage drinking.



## April 2015

- Share First Infographic With Partners, Bloggers, and Media
- Update Website To Feature App (Ongoing)
- Interview With Just Believe Radio
- Promote UAD Messages and App Through SAMHSA's Social Media Channels (Ongoing)

# Reaching New Audiences

To extend the reach of *Talk. They Hear You.* messages and materials, the campaign reached out to bloggers and radio shows. Carefully selected outlets received the *Talk. They Hear You.* toolkit, infographics, and promotional video to share with their key audiences.

Jorielle R. Brown, Ph.D., Director of the Division of Systems Development, Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), was featured in two segments on Just Believe Radio to discuss the campaign and SAMHSA's resources on underage drinking prevention.

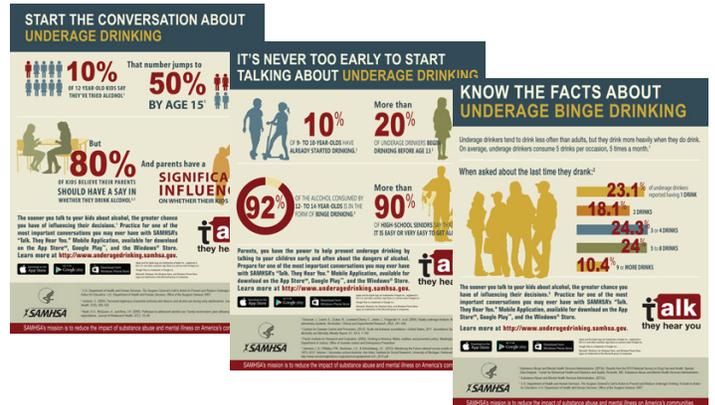
**Blogger outreach resulted in coverage on popular blogs including TheFix.com. Dr. Jorielle Brown's interview on Just Believe Radio was heard by thousands of listeners. Just Believe Radio also posted about the campaign on its Facebook page, earning 896 likes.**



# Bringing Statistics to Life

*Talk. They Hear You.* infographics educated parents and the media on the facts about underage drinking in a visually compelling way.

The infographics were shared with media and partners, posted on the underage drinking website, and shared via SAMHSA's social media channels.



**The infographics earned 561 likes, 1,238 shares, 34 favorites, and 122 retweets via SAMHSA's and the Department of Health and Human Services' Facebook pages and Twitter profiles.**

## May 2015

- Share Second Infographic with Partners, Bloggers, and Media
- Begin App Integration and Optimization (Ongoing)
- Create and Distribute New Print PSAs
- Launch Promotional Video, Share With Partners, Bloggers, and Media
- National Partner Meeting

# Reaching SAMHSA Communities

To prevent underage drinking and empower parents to talk to their kids about it, the *Talk. They Hear You.* campaign continues to grow. Upcoming activities include:

- Evaluating the mobile app to determine its influence on parental behavior;
- Creating and distributing new PSAs, including spots for Spanish audiences; and
- Optimizing the *Talk. They Hear You.* website.



The *Talk. They Hear You.* website was updated with revised campaign language, links to download the mobile app, new campaign infographics, and the *Talk. They Hear You.* promotional video. The app is also featured in the SAMHSA Store.

**The website received 84,218 page views from June 18, 2014, to June 17, 2015, and drove 213 click-throughs to the app stores.**

## Continuing To Evolve

**Prevent Underage Drinking With "Talk. They Hear You."**

For many kids and teens, summer means fun and relaxation. However, the freedom of the summer months can mean an increased risk for underage drinking. In fact, the average first use of alcohol by young people in the United States peaks in June and July.

As the school year ends and summer begins, parents may have more time to connect with their children and more opportunities to have meaningful talks. SAMHSA's app "[Talk. They Hear You.](#)" can help parents prepare for one of the most important conversations they may ever have. This free app, available through the [App Store](#)<sup>SM</sup>, [Google Play](#)<sup>TM</sup>, the [Windows® Store](#), and [Windows® Phone Store](#), features an interactive simulation that uses avatars to help parents practice bringing up the topic of alcohol, learn the questions to ask, and get ideas for keeping the conversation going.

The app is part of SAMHSA's "Talk. They Hear You." Underage Drinking Prevention National Media Campaign, which encourages parents and caregivers to talk with children early about the dangers of alcohol. [Access additional resources and information about the campaign and underage drinking prevention.](#)

SAMHSA shared compelling data, campaign messaging, and information about the *Talk. They Hear You.* app on its blog and in an e-blast to the SAMHSA listserv.

**The blog post and e-blast were published on June 16, 2015, and shared with 109,168 recipients via SAMHSA's outreach channels. The blog post was viewed 1,277 times on SAMHSA's blog from June 16 to 17, 2015.**

**Summer is Prime Time to Talk To Kids About the Dangers of Underage Drinking**

By: **Frances M. Harding**, Director, Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Did you know that the average first use of alcohol by young people in the United States peaks in June and July? Every day in the month of July, an average 11,600 young people take their first drink. Also, young people report that alcohol is easy to obtain, and new forms of alcohol distribution, like online ordering, present new challenges to underage drinking prevention. That's why it's especially important that parents start – or continue – the conversation about underage drinking during the summer months.

Fortunately, the longer days and warmer nights of summer can provide plenty of opportunities for parents to talk with their kids. Summer time means family time. Road trips, barbecues, bike rides, and ballgames give parents and kids more time to connect without the pressures of homework, exams, and the after-school hustle and bustle.

Information about the *Talk. They Hear You.* campaign and app was also featured in a SAMHSA release titled "New report shows steady decline in underage drinking from 2002 to 2013." The report was covered by top-tier media, including *The Washington Post* and *USA Today*.

### June 2015

- Share Third Infographic With Partners, Bloggers, and Media
- Create and Distribute Campaign Materials to Partners (Ongoing)
- Promote UAD Messages and App on SAMHSA's Blog and E-Blast
- Translate Campaign Materials Into Spanish



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