

# It's a Wrap

This final module is designed as a brief summation of the skills and principles of being media sharp.

**Analyzing Pro-Health Messages** has youth focus their media literacy skills on messages designed to promote health. By directing their critical attention to messages on both sides of the tobacco and alcohol issues, youth are encouraged to question all media—not just those that adults think are bad for them.

**Media Mapping Tobacco and Alcohol** serves as a capstone activity for combining the findings of the previous media mapping exercises. The aim of this activity is to provide youth with a comprehensive picture of the number and nature of tobacco and alcohol messages they experience every day.

**Objectives**

**Youth will:**

- understand the total range of tobacco and alcohol media messages to which they are exposed and
- be able to identify “glamorization” and “normalization” across all media formats



## Teen-age girls say they use cigarettes to combat stress, pressures of daily life

**By Jennifer Piss**  
TheOlympian  
Friends, stress and social pressures are some of the reasons that teenagers smoke.  
Piss, according to her, it's big.  
Torgerson, 15, a freshman at North Thurston's River Ridge High School, is one of a growing number of teen-age girls who make cigarettes a big part of their daily routine.  
According to a report released today by the National Center on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, smoking, drinking, and drug use among teen-age girls is on the rise.  
The study found that even though women have made great strides the past 20 years, in the area of substance abuse, the progress is really no progress at all.  
Torgerson started smoking at 12 years age because her friends

were doing it. "It's a social thing," she said.  
Hayley Jackson, 13, a freshman at North Thurston's Timberline High School, has been smoking since she was 13. Jackson started because of social pressure, but she lights up on a daily basis because she is now addicted.  
"I used to smoke a pack of cigarettes a day," she said. "Now I smoke about four or five. Smoking is gross, I wish I could quit."  
Both students said that they have noticed a larger number of girls on their campus smoking. The two said that girls now often exchange keys in local smoking "joints" or hangouts.  
"There are more girls out here smoking," Torgerson said as she stood in a ditch just off campus. "Once I started smoking, I never noticed a lot more girls out at the pit."

Lays against smoking for minors seem to be on a...  
Jaime Caldwell, 15, a River Ridge freshman, said she...  
"Even though it is against the law to sell cigarettes to anyone under 18, there are still local stores that will be willing. They have older friends or peers with fake identification cards buy them."  
"There is always a way to get cigarettes," Caldwell said.  
The bottom line for most girls in the smoking makes them feel as if they fit in and look cool and can deal better with the pressures of everyday life. When stress and pressure hit home, many girls turn straight to cigarettes.  
"When somebody gives you stress, it easier to take it out in a cigarette," Caldwell said.



**LIVES TO SMORE:** River Ridge High School freshman Jaime Caldwell says smoking is "a social thing" to her and her friends.

# analyzing Pro-Health Messages

## Focus

Apply critical media reading skills to messages designed to discourage tobacco and alcohol use.

## Time:

45 minutes

## Materials:

Examples of pro-health messages located by youth during media mapping activities, or

*Video-Part II*

*Handout 5: The Seven Critical Media Questions*

*Handout 7: Selling to Youth*

## Talking Points

- The message analysis skills we've been developing can and should be applied to all media messages—even those designed to discourage smoking and drinking. The goal is always to make up your own mind, based on your reading of the evidence.
- Analyzing pro-health media messages also helps us understand the different ways tobacco and alcohol can be presented in the media.

## Action Steps

- 1 Have youth present their pro-health messages or show the youth-developed counter ads from the video. If possible, compare these side by side with messages that promote tobacco and alcohol use. Discuss the similarities and differences between these messages.
- 2 Have youth analyze the pro-health messages using *Handout 5: The Seven Critical Media Questions*. Use this as an opportunity to discuss the nature and purpose of health messages sponsored by the government and health organizations.
- 3 Have youth analyze these messages using *Handout 7: Selling to Youth*. How likely are these messages to work with teen audiences? What works? What doesn't? What would youth have done differently?

# Media Mapping—Tobacco and Alcohol

## Talking Points

- Now that we've mapped marketing, entertainment, and news messages, it's time to put them all together. This final map of our community will help us examine how many different messages we are exposed to that glamorize and normalize tobacco and alcohol use.

## Action Steps

1 Have youth compile the data from their various media maps using *Handout 18: Media Mapping—Grand Map*. If youth all mapped the same neighborhood, have them construct one common map. If they mapped different neighborhoods, have them develop separate maps and present them to the class for comparison.

2 Youth can choose to either graph their findings or draw actual maps of their selected neighborhood to show where the messages occurred. Messages on radio or television can be represented as occurring in a representative "home" or "car" in order to help illustrate these data. Have them identify the glamorization techniques they discovered in each message format.

For example, a youth can use this map to document the number of times he or she encounters a message about tobacco or alcohol while traveling through a defined geographical area or neighborhood. Each time the youth sees a billboard suggested smoking is glamorous or sexy or a poster ad at a convenience store linking alcohol use with success or happiness, the youth would indicate this on the grid. This documentation would continue until the neighborhood journey is complet-

ed. Then, youth can total the number and type of messages encountered within the defined neighborhood.

In the entertainment section, youth can document messages they encounter while watching television. In the news section, they can record the number of types of messages they receive while watching news programs.

3 Discuss the following questions:

? **What did you discover about how the media in our community and homes normalize and glamorize tobacco and alcohol products and use?**

? **How many examples of messages did you find that discouraged tobacco and alcohol use? Where did these appear? How did they compare in quality, attractiveness, and number with those that *promoted* tobacco and alcohol use?**

? **What are your observations about the number, type, and placement of messages that promote tobacco and alcohol use? Do you think these messages influence people's decision about tobacco and alcohol use?**

### Focus

Assess the overall impact of media normalization and glamorization of tobacco and alcohol in the community.

### Time:

45 minutes

### Materials:

Completed media maps from previous activities

*Handout 18: Media Mapping—Grand Map*

*Handout 19: Media Mapping—Grand Map (Sample)*

*Handout 4: Glamorization Appeals*



# Notes

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