



LINCOLN Medical Education Partnership
Strengthening Families through Health Education

ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS WORK!

February 2007

Think you can't make a difference in our community, state or world? If you are not a part of a local prevention coalition, you may want to consider becoming one! Several recent advocacy campaigns have been extremely successful in getting the attention of national level stores. Read on for how you and your local coalition can make things happen to help our youth! **WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

DRINKING GAMES:

Mid-December until January 12, 2007 was all the time it took for some groups to call attention to three retail stores that were selling drinking games in their stores and online. Kohl's was selling at least five different drinking games; they became the first target of the emails and letters. After Kohl's removed the games, Target and Linens 'n Things were next to be hit with the campaign.

The drinking games include "Drinko" (a version of the TV game show "Plinko"), "Shots and Ladders" and "Beer Pong." Many games combine ping-pong, roulette, and darts. These are commercially produced versions of drinking games already popular on college campuses and among high-school students.

National groups such as Join Together, the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) and Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) joined local coalitions such as the Oregon Partnership and the Kentucky Crime Prevention Coalition in coordinating the efforts and getting the word out.

By January 12, 2007, Kohl's, Target and Linens 'n Things had all responded to advocates that the drinking games were no longer being sold in their stores or their online sites. Corporate America can be very responsive when shown the social consequences of their business practices!

This advocacy campaign saw success rapidly...in just about a month. As the communications director of the Oregon Partnership notes, "We didn't have to go to court. It didn't take years; it happened really quickly."

OTHER SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGNS:

- In 2005 Abercrombie & Fitch removed a series of drinking-related t-shirts marketed to teens and young adults after years of criticism.
- In 2005 J.C. Penney responded to criticism from the Marin Institute and community-based advocates by removing alcohol-branded t-shirts from its young men's department.
- Last October the Oregon Partnership convinced Macy's to stop selling beer-related t-shirts in its back-to-school catalog. Actually, Macy's parent company, Federated Department Stores, decided to stop selling the shirts altogether, removing them from both Macy's and Bloomingdales stores, as well as the catalog.

Changing public attitudes toward drinking point to the possibility of more wins in the future!

(Source: www.jointogether.org; 1-12-07)