

Study: Regulate alcohol marketing

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The U.S. alcohol industry snares too many underage drinkers and its marketing practices should be federally regulated, a Columbia University study concludes.

Underage drinkers account for more than 17 percent of the U.S. alcohol industry's market, says the university's National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse.

"With at least 37.5 percent of sales linked to underage drinking and adult abusive and dependent drinking, the alcohol industry has a compelling financial motive to maintain or increase rates of underage drinking," researchers wrote in the Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine.

"Underage and pathological drinkers are the alcohol industry's most valuable customers," said CASA Chairman and former U.S. Health Secretary Joseph Califano Jr. "Self-regulation by the alcohol industry is a delusion that ensnares too many children and teens."

However, the spirits industry is "vehemently opposed" to underage drinking and has worked to combat the problem, Peter Cressy of the Distilled Spirits Council told the Scripps Howard News Service.

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