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**There's Nothing
CUTE About
UNDERAGE DRINKING**

UNDERAGE DRINKING FOCUS OF NEW MARKETING CAMPAIGN

Coalition for a Drug-Free Greater Cincinnati

CINCINNATI - "In Greater Cincinnati, the average child will take their first drink shortly after turning the age of 13." This sobering statistic is the basis of a new multimedia campaign being released today. Beginning today on local television stations, the 30 second public service announcements will illustrate the dangers of teen drinking. The commercials also challenge the beliefs some parents have about the real consequences of underage drinking. The ads were locally produced by the Coalition for a Drug-Free Greater Cincinnati.

The spots begin with a jarring image of a 13 year girl stepping up to a bar and ordering a beer. As the camera moves down the length of the bar, it reveals that the patrons of this establishment are all in the 13 year old age range. In one version, the voices of parents giving excuses about why they permit underage drinking are heard, while the very real consequences scroll across the bottom of the screen.

"Many parents do not see the harm in allowing their kids to drink, as long as they are in what they consider a 'safe' environment," says Holly J. Molony, Executive Director of the Coalition for a Drug-Free Greater Cincinnati. "We hope that by helping parents visualize their children in a bar with a drink in their hand, they realize the potential immediate and lifelong consequences of underage drinking and the need to act."

The realities of beginning to experiment with alcohol at such a young age are harsh. The PSAs focus on the connection between underage drinking and more pregnancies, more violent crimes, more sexual assaults, more suicide attempts, more alcoholics, more addicts, slower bone growth, reduced brain development and other problems.

To find out more about underage drinking and its consequences, and what parents can do to protect their kids, people are encouraged to visit the Coalition's website at www.DrugFreeCincinnati.org. "The most important thing a parent can do to prevent their kids from drinking alcohol is talk to their kids," says Molony. "Open lines of communication with kids about these tough issues will go a long way in keeping them safe and healthy."

The Coalition for a Drug-Free Greater Cincinnati has always had a strong media presence locally on television and radio, choosing to partner with a national organization to air PSAs. However, these spots, beginning to be aired today, are the first totally local effort for the Coalition. BrightLight Visual Communications created and produced the advertisements.

About the Coalition for a Drug-Free Greater Cincinnati

The Coalition for a Drug-Free Greater Cincinnati (CDFGC), established in 1996 by former U.S. Congressman Rob Portman of Ohio, has become a model for community coalitions nationwide. The Coalition serves communities throughout the 10-county, tri-state region by promoting drug-free environments for youth by enhancing partnerships to educate, advocate and support locally-based community mobilization. This is accomplished through partnering with business leaders, parents, schools, youth, faith-based leaders, law enforcement, community groups, media and other partners in local communities to implement comprehensive, community-wide, anti-drug initiatives with a goal of reducing substance use and abuse through prevention education.