The Results Are In...

Number of sixth through twelfth grade students across the nation participating in this year’s Big Bowl Vote: 20,000 (and counting). Number of participating states: 32.

*Please note: Due to weather related issues in multiple states, the reporting deadline has been extended. We will post final results on our website.

Top 10 FAVORITE Commercials

**Middle School Students**
1. Doritos: Goat 4 Sale
2. Taco Bell: We are Young
3. Doritos: Fashionista Daddy
4. Budweiser: Clydesdale
5. Oreo: Crème vs. Cookie
6. M&M’s: Anything for Love
7. Pistachios: Crack ‘em Gangnam Style
8. Dodge: God Made a Farmer
9. GoDaddy.com: Beauty & Brains Kiss
10. Tide: No Stain is Sacred

**High School Students**
1. Doritos: Goat 4 Sale
2. Taco Bell: We are Young
3. Budweiser: Clydesdale
4. Oreo: Crème vs. Cookie
5. Dodge: God Made a Farmer
6. GoDaddy.com: Beauty & Brains Kiss
7. Doritos: Fashionista Daddy
8. Kia: Space Babies
9. Pistachios: Crack ‘em Gangnam Style
10. Tide: No Stain is Sacred

Top 10 Most RECALLED Commercials

Middle School Students
1. Doritos
2. Budweiser
3. Oreo
4. Coca-Cola
5. Taco Bell
6. M&M’s
7. GoDaddy.com
8. Pepsi
9. Pistachios
10. Calvin Klein

High School Students
1. Doritos
2. Budweiser
3. Oreo
4. Taco Bell
5. Coca-Cola
6. GoDaddy.com
7. Dodge
8. Pepsi
9. M&M’s
10. Audi

According to Nielsen, 108.4 million viewers tuned in for this year’s Super Bowl, making it the third most-watched broadcast in TV history. We also learned from Nielsen that more than half of the viewing audience was likely tuned in more for the high priced commercials (which cost between $3.8 to $4 million per 30 second spot) than the game itself.

How many of those viewers were underage youth? Plenty! According to preliminary results of the Big Bowl Vote, 72% of participating sixth through eighth graders and 73% of ninth through twelfth graders watched the Super Bowl.

And what did they like best? The goat with an insatiable hunger for Doritos. It took top spot among both middle and high school students. Taco Bell’s old folks hitting the town was the second favorite among both age groups. But the Budweiser ad was not far behind. The story of the Clydesdale growing up, but never forgetting the “brother” who raised him, stole hearts of all ages. This alcohol ad placed third favorite among the high school crowd and fourth favorite among the middle school group. And when students were asked what brand products they remembered being advertised during the Super Bowl, Anheuser-Busch was the second highest recalled ad for all students.

What does this mean? Research reveals that young people are drawn to advertising that features animal and people characters, tells a story and makes them laugh. If the target demographic for Doritos and Taco Bell is middle and high school aged youth, the advertiser was right on the mark. But what about the Budweiser Clydesdale ad; cute animal, warm-hearted story, feel-good ending? What’s not to like? Intended audience or not, this one caught the attention of the young viewers.

Does this mean more kids will now start drinking alcohol because they liked the ad? Maybe. According to a study where researchers investigated alcohol advertising to learn what makes it attractive to youth, the alcohol ads that young people found to be appealing were more likely to elicit responses from them saying they wanted to purchase the brand and products advertised. We also know that the more youth are exposed to alcohol advertising, the more likely they are to drink (drink to excess and drink more often).
Drug Free Action Alliance Executive Director Marcie Seidel said, “Looking at the results from the Big Bowl Vote, we see that the majority of these youth are watching the Super Bowl and we know they are being exposed to alcohol advertising. The Vote has shown the Budweiser Clydesdale ad to be overwhelmingly appealing to the younger audience. And based on research that continues to come out, we know that increased exposure plus youth appeal equals an increase in underage drinking overall. While parents and peers have significant influence on a child’s decision to drink, so too does alcohol advertising and marketing.”

This is not the last of the Clydesdale or other appealing alcohol ads we can expect to see. Youth will continue to be flooded by this and other alcohol ads on their computers, televisions, billboards and radio. While we cannot possibly shield our children from every alcohol advertisement, we can make it a Teachable Moment, by helping them to decode the message through Media Literacy.

Simply put, Media Literacy is the ability to read between the lines to recognize the influence of media messages. Children who are media literate can look and listen with a critical eye and ear, helping them to make healthier lifestyle choices and avoid the pressures fueled by media messages to drink, smoke or use other drugs.

PARENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO TRY THIS: Watch any TV show with your tween/teen. When the commercials come on, ask your child to pay close attention, then pose these questions to help decode the message:

- Who do you think created this commercial?
- What techniques did they use to get your attention?
- What do they want you to do after seeing their message?
- Would this be a healthy choice for you?
- Do you think your health and safety are important to the ad sponsor?
- How do you feel about it now?

Another great opportunity for a similar conversation is in the car with a captive audience. When an advertisement comes on the radio, listen together and then break it down to figure out the real message.

It doesn’t have to be an alcohol advertisement to be a learning experience. The key is to teach your child that no matter the product being promoted, there is an advertiser with an intended message.

It is up to your child to think critically to interpret that message and apply it to his/her life appropriately.

For additional information and resources, please visit Drug Free Action Alliance at www.drugfreeactionalliance.org.


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