



# C.A.T.S. Chats

CHILD ABUSE TRAINING SERVICES  
PROSECUTING ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION OF MI

[www.michiganprosecutor.org/cats](http://www.michiganprosecutor.org/cats)

*Together we can make a difference.*

February 2011

*Julie A. Welch, Editor*

Welcome to winter!

I've just returned from the San Diego International Conference on Child and Family Maltreatment armed with the latest information on what's happening in other parts of the country in the child abuse field.

It never ceases to amaze me that no matter where I attend a conference the state of Michigan is brought up in some context, whether it be regarding our Forensic Interviewing protocol, seeing Michigan presenters presenting nationally, or something else, people are talking. This always makes me proud and encourages me to come back and keep on doing what we're doing.

Another benefit of attending these conferences is meeting folks from around the globe and learning what they are experiencing in hopes that we can get ahead of the game back here. I met a few of these people last week. It really didn't come as a big surprise that a main topic of conversation was phones and predators. In today's technologically saturated world it's hard to go anywhere that there is not a form of what I call "tethered communication". Cell phone, I touches, laptops, even DSI's and home video systems all now connect to the internet. This is giving predators more prey, as most parents are allowing kids as young as 3 to have some of these devices. We will be working closely with teams of experts this year in bringing training to you in Michigan on this topic. All counties should be aware of the capabilities of each of these units, how to locate and process evidence from them and in turn seek prosecution if necessary for these crimes.

It's never too early to start teaching your own children about the dangers of online predators and the importance of not sharing information online. Realize that cell phones are mini computers and are just as dangerous as letting your children surf unsupervised on the web, talk with them about responsibilities and set expectations to assure their safety.

For future training information and to keep up to date with our trainings please view our website at [www.michiganprosecutor.org/cats](http://www.michiganprosecutor.org/cats).

## Forensic Interviewing

Remember that the Michigan Forensic Interviewing Protocol is required by Michigan's Child Protection Law for child abuse professionals interviewing children. Please make sure you are attending an authorized Michigan training. The Child Abuse Training Services department within PAAM is governed by DHS and the Governor's Task Force to provide this two day training. **It is the only approved training within the state by these two entities.** You can always check our website to assure you are attending an actual PAAM training. Attending out of state trainings also does not fulfill your obligation of forensic interviewing training.

There is no charge to attendees for registration fees or materials. **DHS employees only** can contact our office to see if funds are available to cover meals, mileage and overnight expenses.



*Inside this issue:*

<i>Alcohol Energy Drinks</i>	2
<i>Statistics from the National Center on Child Abuse Prevention</i>	3
<i>Sexual Predators using Phones to Lure Victims</i>	4
<i>Medical Marijuana Act</i>	5
<i>CAC Highlight</i>	6

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ANNOUNCE THE  
SECOND ANNUAL*

***"YOU MAKE A  
DIFFERENCE"  
AWARD.***

*SEE OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE  
DETAILS. THE WINNER WILL  
BE RECOGNIZED AT THE  
SUMMER 2011 CATS ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE*

***"I've learned that making  
a "living" is not the same  
as making a "life""***

***-Maya Angelou***





## STIMULANTS AND ALCHOL: A DANGEROUS COMBINATION

### ALCOHOLIC ENERGY DRINKS

**By: Kenneth Stecker**  
PAAM Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor

In October 2010, nine students from Central Washington University in Ellensburg, WA were taken to the hospital after they became sick from drinking the high-alcohol energy drink "Four Loko." Authorities first suspected drug use because of the number of persons who had become ill at the same party. That drink, which is comparable to consuming five to six cans of beer, is referred to as "black-out in a can" or "liquid cocaine."

Alcoholic Energy Drinks (AEDs) are prepackaged beverages that combine alcohol with caffeine, taurine, guarana, ginseng, and other ingredients commonly associated with nonalcoholic energy drinks. They may either be malt or distilled spirits-based. Malt-based Spark, Bud Extra, Tilt, and Rock Star 21 are among the popular AED brands. Pink Vodka and V2 Vodka are examples of distilled spirit-based AEDs. Malt-based AEDs have a higher alcohol content of five to twelve percent (5 – 12%) as compared to most beers with an alcohol content of four to five percent (4 – 5%).

There is also what is known as Flavored Alcoholic Beverages (FABs). FABs are alcoholic beverages designed and marketed for entry-level drinkers. Examples of FABs being marketed with distilled spirits brand names include Smirnoff Ice, Skyy Blue, Bacardi Breezer, and Jack Daniels County Cocktails. The vast majority of entry level drinkers are under the legal drinking age of 21. The alcohol taste in FABs is concealed by sweet, fruity flavors that serve as an alternative between nonalcoholic beverages such as soft drinks and the harsher tastes of traditional alcohol products. FABs are also called "alcopops" because of their similarity to soda pop in flavor and sweetness.

The caffeine in the drink, often as much as five cups of coffee, suspends the effects of alcohol, allowing people to continue drinking long after they normally would have stopped consuming non-caffeinated alcohol health experts have said.

Caffeine, a stimulant, masks the intoxicating effects of alcohol, which may lead to increased risk-taking. As a result, consumers may misjudge their level of intoxication and engage in risky behavior. The stimulants also encourage greater consumption by counteracting the depressant effects of the alcohol, increasing the risk of heavy binge drinking.

FABs are popular with junior and senior high school students. In a 2007 survey, 12.2% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 21.8% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders, and 9.1% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported consuming "alcopops" within the last 30 days. Girls are much more likely to consume FAB than boys.

Teenagers often refer to FABs as "girlie beer" or "cheerleader beer" because of their popularity with young, adolescent girls. Eighty-two percent of teen girls who have tried "alcopops" agree that they taste better than beer or alcoholic drinks.

The younger the drinker, the more likely he/she will consume "alcopops." Among 8<sup>th</sup> grade drinkers, 78% reported FAB consumption in the last 30 days compared to 59% of 19-20 year olds and 36% of 25-30 year olds.

Both the "Marin Institute" and Wake Forest University are the leaders in the research on this issue. The Wake Forest University report can be found at <http://www.wfubmc.edu/>. The Marin Institute's report can be found at <http://www.marininstitute.org/alcopops/resources/EnergyDrinkReport.pdf>.

To address this serious concern, the Michigan Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking (MCRUD) has been collecting the research on the harmful effects of these drinks and what other states have been doing about it. Because of their efforts, on November 4, 2010, Michigan's Liquor Control Commission announced a state-wide ban in Michigan on stimulant-laced alcoholic energy drinks.



## From the National Center on Child Abuse

- **A report of child abuse is made every ten seconds.**
  - Almost **five children die everyday** as a result of child abuse. More than three out of four are under the age of 4.
  - It is estimated that between 60-85% of child fatalities due to maltreatment are **not recorded as such on death certificates.**
  - 90% of child sexual abuse victims know the perpetrator in some way; 68% are abused by family members.
  - Child abuse occurs at every socioeconomic level, across ethnic and cultural lines, within all religions and at all levels of education.
  - 31% percent of women in prison in the United States were abused as children.
  - Over **60% of people in drug rehabilitation centers report being abused or neglected** as a child.
  - About 30% of abused and neglected children **will later abuse their own children**, continuing the horrible cycle of abuse.
  - About 80% of 21 year olds that were abused as children met criteria for **at least one psychological disorder.**
  - The estimated annual cost of child abuse and neglect in the United States for 2007 is **\$104 billion.**
- Abused children are **25% more likely to experience teen pregnancy**
  - Abused teens are **3 times more likely** to engage in unsafe sex, putting them at greater risk for STDs
  - Children who have been sexually abused are **2.5 times more likely to abuse alcohol**
  - Children who have been sexually abused are **3.8 times more likely develop drug addictions**
  - Nearly **two-thirds of the people** in treatment for drug abuse reported being abused as children

*“ A child can ask questions that a wise man cannot answer ”*

### CATS UPCOMING TRAININGS

#### Forensic Interviewing:

Mt. Pleasant: March 1-2, 2011  
 Grand Rapids: April 21-22, 2011  
 University Center: May 11-12, 2011  
 Mackinac Island: May 23-24, 2011

#### Hot Topics in Child Abuse Prosecution (prosecutors only):

Grand Rapids: February 25, 2011

#### Bodies and Brains of Children:

Gaylord: March 23, 2011

### WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- ⇒ **Advanced Trial Advocacy for Child Abuse Professionals**
- ⇒ **CATS Annual Conference**
- ⇒ **Supervision Skills for Child Welfare Field Investigators**
- ⇒ **Medical Marijuana related to Child Abuse and Neglect—Or is it?**
- ⇒ **Smart Phone Technology-The New Danger for Kids**

Check our website for training updates and announcements

[www.MichiganProsecutor.org/cats](http://www.MichiganProsecutor.org/cats)



## Sexual predators switching to phones to lure victims

-Julie Poppen, Scripps Howard News Service

Kyra Schraiber's mom didn't let her or any of her five siblings have a computer because she had heard so many stories about online sexual predators.

She thought a cell phone was harmless.

Wendy Schraiber gave Kyra a cell phone when she was 12, believing the device would help her daughter stay in contact with her during the dark days following her husband's suicide.

A sexual predator found her daughter anyway.

Increasingly online predators are using phones, BlackBerrys and other handheld devices to seek out and groom potential underage victims, police say.

Kyra, now 13, used her phone to look for some music and ended up on a networking site. A 20-year-old man texted her and said he was getting off work soon. She texted him back and agreed to meet him because, as she says, "I have trouble saying 'no.'"

The man came to pick her up, then sexually assaulted her.

Maximino Sanchez-Castro, an illegal immigrant who pleaded guilty to assaulting Schraiber, was sentenced to three years in prison and faces deportation when his sentence is up.

Kyra decided to go public with her story with her mother's permission to warn other teens about the dangers lurking at the touch of a tiny keypad. She appeared on the Dr. Phil show just last week.

"I try to tell them to stay off MySpace and Facebook," the eighth-grader said. "I feel like I'm a better person because I can help other teens."

Kyra's case isn't uncommon. Hundreds of phone predators are stalking victims, police say.

In a move to catch the predators, Jefferson County, Colo., has a new crime-fighting tool. The Child Sex Offender Internet Investigations Unit, which is run out of the district attorney's office, has started using software called RADAR. It's the law enforcement version of commercial software for parents called My Mobile Watchdog that works on certain "smart phones."

RADAR allows law enforcement officers to track, organize and store all incoming and outgoing text messages so they can more easily build criminal cases, according to Mike Harris, who supervises the investigative unit.

Harris pretends to be a young girl as he awaits predator contact in chat rooms or other online spaces. He was the first officer to make an arrest using the software, available at no cost to investigators.

He has used it in more than half of his arrests since March.

Harris said he has made 318 arrests, including 83 last year. So far this year, he has made 18. Last year he had to take a break because the work overwhelmed him.

Harris said parents shouldn't worry only about their child meeting a predator in person.

He cited a straight-A student in California who was courted for six months by a male she thought was her own age. Finally, she agreed to send him nude pictures of herself. She was shocked when the FBI came to her door to tell her she had actually befriended a 57-year-old teacher who had a collection of explicit photos. The young woman considered suicide, Harris said.

Harris said many predators start out looking for young people online.

"But they're very cunning," Harris said. "They want to switch to a phone to get more explicit about their intentions and to arrange meetings."



## Michigan Medical Marihuana Act

On November 4, 2008, Michigan voters passed Proposal 2008-01: Medical Marihuana Act. Michigan is the 15th state that has passed laws legalizing medical marihuana. Highlighted below is information regarding the Act:

The Act took effect on Thursday, December 4, 2008.

On April 4, 2009, the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) adopted rules to implement the Act.

The Act permits a physician to issue a written certification stating that, in the physician's professional opinion, the patient is likely to receive therapeutic or palliative benefit from the medical use of marihuana to treat or alleviate the patient's debilitating medical condition or symptoms associated with the debilitating medical condition.

The Act allows registered individuals to possess 2.5 ounces or less of usable marihuana and no more than 12 marihuana plants kept in an enclosed, locked facility.

The Act permits unregistered patients and primary caregivers to assert medical reasons for using marihuana as an affirmative defense to any prosecution involving marihuana.

Although the Act prohibits the operation of any motor vehicle while under the influence of marihuana; it does not make reference to Michigan's current law, which prohibits a person from operating a vehicle with any amount of a Schedule 1 controlled substance (including marihuana) in his/her system, regardless of how little the amount or how long it has been in the system.

The Act does not specify how patients and caregivers would acquire marihuana for medical purposes, but it allows for the assertion of an affirmative defense (even for unregistered patients and caregivers) for the acquisition, possession, cultivation, manufacture, use, delivery, transfer, or transportation of marihuana or marihuana paraphernalia for medical use.

The Act prohibits smoking marihuana in public places, although it does not define what would constitute a public place.

**Lastly, it should be noted that under the Act, a person shall not be denied custody or visitation of a minor for acting in accordance with this act, unless the person's behavior is such that it creates an unreasonable danger to the minor that can be clearly articulated and substantiated.**

Alcohol Energy Drinks Continued from page 2

The decision was made in light of the several studies regarding alcohol energy drinks, the widespread community concerns aired by substance abuse prevention groups, parent groups and various members of the public, as well as The Food and Drug Administration's decision to further investigate these products.

The ban covers a number of products from four manufacturers currently approved for sale in the state. Manufacturers had until December 2, 2010 to remove these products from the market. For a complete list of the products that are banned in Michigan, please go to the following website: [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dleg/11\\_AED\\_Product\\_Release\\_12-2-2010\\_339777\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dleg/11_AED_Product_Release_12-2-2010_339777_7.pdf)

Chairperson Nida Samona said that "Alcohol has been recognized as the number one drug problem among youth, and the popularity of alcohol energy drinks is increasing at an alarming rate among college students and underage drinkers."

Further, according to Commissioner Patrick Gagliardi, who voted in favor of the ban, "One can, one serving, is enough to get you intoxicated. Alcohol energy drinks cost on average \$2-\$5 per can making these products easily accessible and affordable."

Following Michigan's lead, on November 17, 2010 the Food and Drug Administration notified four manufacturers of caffeinated alcoholic drinks, giving them 15 days to stop adding caffeine to the products or stop selling them altogether. Dr. Margaret Hamburg, the F.D.A. commissioner, said the drinks appeared to pose a serious public health threat because the caffeine masked the effects of the alcohol, leading to "a state of wide-awake drunk." After a yearlong review found no conclusive evidence that the drinks were safe, she said, the F.D.A. decided the caffeine in them was an illegal additive.

Getting behind the wheel after drinking alcohol is bad enough, potentially endangering other innocent drivers on the highways. If a drinker decides to drive after drinking alcoholic energy drinks, the caffeine will most likely make this driver feel wide awake which causes them to underestimate their impaired condition.

The bottom line is that stimulant combined with alcohol is a dangerous combination at anytime, especially when driving! For more information on these cases and statutes and TSTP training programs, contact Kenneth Stecker, Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor, at (517) 334-6060 or e-mail at [steckerk@michigan.gov](mailto:steckerk@michigan.gov).



Together we can make a difference.

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The CATS mission is to promote multi disciplinary expertise in the prevention of child abuse by providing professionals with up-to-date information about suspected or alleged sexual or physical abuse, neglect and the training of Forensic Interviewing.

### *What are our counterparts offering?*

- \* Florida National Child Advocacy Center - July 27-29, 2011—Orlando, FL
- \* National Strategy Conference on Combating Child Exploitation—May 17-20, 2011—San Jose, CA
- \* MDT Conference: Facing the Challenge—April 25-26, 2011—Traverse City, MI

### CAC Highlight **Traverse Bay CAC**

**The Traverse Bay Children's Advocacy Center is committed** to protecting children, and supporting families by: providing prevention, advocacy, awareness, multi-disciplinary intervention, assessment and treatment of child sexual and physical abuse. All in an environment that is child sensitive, supportive and safe. The TBCAC is built upon a model of success used by CAC's nationwide, and customized through collaborative team input in our region.

The TBCAC officially opened its doors in April of 2010 in coordination with the Tri-County Coalition for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect. The CAC is driven to lessen the trauma that the child might experience in the interview process related to their abuse. By collaborating with law enforcement, the prosecutor's office, Department of Human Services, medical professionals, and local counseling agencies, the child finds that safe place under one roof - the CAC. This collaborative group makes up the Multi-disciplinary teams who gather at the Center for the child's interview and watch it live over closed-circuit TV. This results in the child not having to endure multiple interviews. The child has a safe and supportive place.

The Center conducted nearly 80 interviews in eight months. Roughly two-thirds of those children would not have received counseling services and follow-up if not for CAC intervention. Vital research shows that traumatized children who do not receive follow-up counseling are at high risk to engage in antisocial conduct, such as criminal activity, substance abuse, or self-harming behavior. The TBCAC is here to make a difference in the health of this Northern Michigan Region.

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