



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 17, 2006

Media Contact:

Leslie Kimball, The Century Council,
(202) 425-5243 / kimballL@centurycouncil.org

**TIFFANY ROBERTS BRINGS PUBLIC AWARENESS INITIATIVE
TO MOMS AND DAUGHTERS IN WALNUT CREEK**
Girl Talk: Choices and Consequences of Underage Drinking
Launched to Address Alarming Data on Moms, Daughters and Underage Drinking

WALNUT CREEK, CA—A recent survey commissioned by The Century Council, a national not-for-profit organization funded by America’s leading distilled spirits producers, revealed that nearly half of all mothers think underage drinking is acceptable under some circumstances. The survey found that mothers of teenage daughters underestimate the occurrence of underage drinking among their own daughters and misjudge the seriousness of the issue.

To address this gap in knowledge of the prevalence of underage drinking in Walnut Creek, Tiffany Roberts collaborated with Mayor Kathy Hicks and The Century Council, an organization dedicated to fighting drunk driving and underage drinking and funded by distillers, to launch *Girl Talk: Choices and Consequences of Underage Drinking* at Roberts’s camp in Arbolado Park.

“It is important that my young soccer players remain in top athletic shape on the soccer field – and equally important for them to be in top shape off of the field. Alcohol should not be part of a teen’s life – it is illegal and irresponsible for our young girls to drink alcohol,” said Roberts.

“The high school years can be some of the toughest for students, hence is why it is so important for mothers and daughters to talk about underage drinking. The data shows that underage drinking increases through the high school years. We need to encourage mothers to take the lead on this conversation,” said Mayor Hicks. “I’m proud that Tiffany brought this program to Walnut Creek to keep our young girls safe and alcohol-free.”

Significant survey findings include the following:

Mothers significantly underestimate daughter’s experience with alcohol

- 16% of 13-15 year old girls say they drink with friends, only 5% of their mothers think their daughters are drinking;
- 30% of 16-18 year old girls say they drink with friends, only 9% of their mothers think their daughters are drinking;
- 51% of 19-21 year old girls say they drink with friends and only 32% of their mothers think their daughters are drinking.

Alarmingly, mothers say underage drinking is acceptable

- Nearly half (49%) of mothers of teenage girls say it is okay for their daughters to drink;
- 38% of mothers say it is okay for their daughters to drink on special occasions;
- 21% of mothers say it is okay to drink under parental supervision at home;
- 20% of mothers say drinking alcohol is a natural part of growing up.

“These data show that mothers start out viewing underage alcohol consumption as a serious problem, yet as
—more—

their daughters grow older mothers switch their message from “don’t do it” to “be safe”; this illustrates a disturbing misperception among moms about the seriousness of problems associated with alcohol consumption by their teenage daughters,” said Dana Fudurich, The Century Council. “Our goal is to encourage moms to have conversations with their teenage daughters about the negative effects and dangers of underage drinking.”

71% of Girls Think Health Consequences Serious

When asked how serious they thought health risks were for teens that drink, 71% of the girls polled stated that they believe the health risks associated with drinking are serious. Putting a finer point on their concerns, the research also uncovered “the five strongest health-consequences that would keep teens from drinking alcohol” according to survey responses of teenage girls ages 13-18. Among the health consequences they identified are the following:

Alcohol poisoning/overdose	64%
Rape	63%
Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)/HIV-AIDS	52%
Unsafe/unplanned sex	52%
Harm to mental development	39%
Hangover	37%
Pregnancy	45%
Suicide	35%
Harm to physical development	27%
Vomiting	28%
Weight gain or weight loss	28%

Girl Talk: Choices and Consequences of Underage Drinking

In the face of these data, The Century Council created *Girl Talk: Choices and Consequences of Underage Drinking* to improve dialogue among mothers and daughters. Developed in partnership with the Society for Women’s Health Research and the National Alcohol Beverage Control Association, *Girl Talk* will help mothers initiate and sustain conversations about alcohol.

Girl Talk utilizes the data gleaned from the survey including those health consequences of most concern to the girls. *Girl Talk* also highlights the daughters’ advice to their moms regarding talking about underage drinking. Girls participating in the survey responded that:

- Moms must be approachable, able to keep an open mind and must not lecture or overreact — “just because I am asking about alcohol does not mean I am drinking alcohol.”
- Moms: Keep the conversation real and personal by telling about your own personal and real-life experiences, choices and consequences, and if you don’t want to talk about yourself, share the experiences of people you know.
- Be my parent, not my friend. Share your values and set the rules and discuss the social risks of underage drinking beyond just drunk driving.

The Century Council has developed a comprehensive program tailored specifically for mothers and daughters including:

- A website, www.girlsanddrinking.org, for mothers and daughters with additional information on how to have the underage drinking conversation and links to additional national and local resources related to underage drinking.
- Booklets for mothers, detailing how to begin the conversation, sustain the conversation and have an impact as well as information explaining the facts about alcohol, and addressing issues such as peer pressure and creative ways to say “no” to alcohol.
- A Blog, hosted by the Society for Women’s Health, for moms and daughters to discuss their experiences and connect with others on this issue.

Additionally, the US Women's National Soccer Team Players Association has partnered with The Century Council on this initiative. The National Soccer Team Players Association will endorse *Girl Talk* through personal appearances at functions and schools, in print and online media, public service announcements and other integrated marketing initiatives. Through its official fan club alone, The Ponytail Posse, the US Women's National Soccer Team Players Association has the potential to reach millions of girls around the world.

"Girls need to be informed of the toll that underage drinking can take not only on their health but also on their grades and reputations. I want all of the young girls out there who look up to us as role models to know that underage drinking is wrong and it's something they need to talk about with their mothers," said Roberts.

About the Surveys

The Century Council commissioned Teenage Research Unlimited (TRU) to conduct a comprehensive research project to better understand the dynamics of underage drinking among mothers and daughters. TRU fielded a study April 2005 among a national on-line sample - a total of 875 respondents (496 daughters and 379 mothers, 322 of the matching) completed the questionnaire. Quotas were set to ensure that a representative number of daughters (and mothers) from each of the following age segments completed the survey: 13-15 year olds, 16-18 year olds, and 19-20 years olds. The mother-daughter results presented here reflect the matched mother and daughter data collected. TRU conducted an additional self-administered online omnibus survey, Omnibuzz™, among 802 13 to 18 year olds in August 2005. The data were weighted for key demographic variables (gender, age, ethnicity, parent education, region and community-type of place of school) to reflect the national population. The margin of error for both survey samples at the 95 percent confidence level is + 3 percentage points. That is, if this survey were to be replicated 100 times, in 95 instances the results would be within three percentage points of the data reported here.

The Society for Women's Health Research

The Society for Women's Health Research is the nation's only non-profit organization whose mission is to improve the health of all women through research, education and advocacy. Founded in 1990, the Society brought to national attention the need for the appropriate inclusion of women in major medical research studies and the need for more information about conditions affecting women disproportionately, predominately, or differently than men. The Society advocates increased funding for research on women's health; encourages the study of sex differences that may affect the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of disease; promotes the inclusion of women in medical research studies; and informs women, providers, policy makers and media about contemporary women's health issues. Visit the Society's website at www.womenshealthresearch.org for more information.

US Women's National Soccer Team Players Association

The US Women's National Soccer Team Players Association was created after the 1999 FIFA Women's World Cup to represent all the players that comprise the US Women's National Soccer Team, and give the US Soccer Federation the assurance that the new Uniform Player Agreement and Collective Bargaining Agreement would govern its relationship with the players through the 2004 Olympics. The Association has primarily functioned as a representation and negotiating body, and is now making greater efforts to promote its constituent players. More information can be found at: www.unitedsoccerathletes.com and www.ponytailposse.com.

National Alcohol Beverage Control Association (NABCA)

It is the mission of the National Alcohol Beverage Control Association (NABCA) to support and benefit alcohol control systems by providing research, fostering relationships, and managing resources to address policy for the responsible sale and consumption of alcohol beverages. Established in 1937, NABCA is the national association representing the Control States - those political jurisdictions that directly control the distribution and sale of beverage alcohol within their borders. Headquartered in the Washington, DC area, NABCA serves its members as an information clearinghouse and as liaison to federal, state and local governments, research and advocacy groups, the alcohol beverage industry, and other organizations impacting alcohol policy.