

Sample Op-Ed

(Courtesy of Indiana Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking)

Sad Reality

Ironically, the newest reality movie, “The Real Cancun” from New Line Cinemas, will be released in April – Alcohol Awareness Month. This movie, a by-product of the reality television craze, features 16 “cast members” on Spring Break in Cancun, eight of them under the legal drinking age in the United States. The camera crew follows them around 24/7, filming everything they do – including getting drunk, pairing off and even stripping.

The reality is that underage drinking is neither funny nor entertaining. Alcohol is the most widely used drug by teens, with 44 percent of all college students reporting to be binge drinkers. In reality, more than 70,000 students are victims annually of alcohol-related date rape or sexual assault; more than 150,000 students develop an alcohol-related health problem, with 31 percent meeting the clinical diagnosis for alcohol abuse each year; 25 percent of college students report negative academic consequences as a result of their drinking; and 1,400 college-aged students die every year as a result of alcohol use.

The cast of this movie may have only been filmed during one week, but the decisions they made while filming may last a lifetime and affect the decisions of others. Get real...underage drinking is a serious problem that negatively affects everyone. It's time to give Hollywood a dose of reality – let's send this movie to the discounted video bin where it belongs.

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