

Pressured to Drink: 'Mommy Wine Culture'

Perhaps you've noticed all the messages on social media, or the numerous products at the store, suggesting mothers of young children need to drink alcohol, and lots of it, to cope with the pressures of raising children.

If you yourself are a young mom, chances are you're being pressured to drink as part of the role.

It's called "Mommy Wine Culture," and while it's pervasive throughout American society, a growing number of mothers are pushing back against it.

The troubling messages often try to be humorous and appear on merchandise like baby clothes saying "Mommy Drinks Because I Cry," wine glasses with the phrase "Mommy's Sippy Cup" written on them, and adult t-shirts with "Coffee, Hockey Mom, Wine, Repeat" emblazoned on the front. Then there are all the memes like "The Most Expensive Part of Having Kids is All the Wine You Have to Drink."

As it turns out, the messaging reflects reality. Moms with young children are turning to alcohol, like Kelley Manley, who always felt "Mommy Wine Culture" was problematic, but drank with other mothers anyway, as a way to fit-in with them.

"I think this messaging that is everywhere, it normalizes this behavior of drinking to survive parenthood, and it normalizes this idea that drinking a lot is no big deal," she told CBN News.

Manley said she was shocked to discover mothers drinking around their children at nearly every conceivable occasion.

“People would show up to the park with little discreet glasses of wine at 4 p.m. at a play date at the park,” she said. “You’d go to the zoo, and for a small up-charge you can buy a flight of beer, not just a beer, but a flight of beer, to enjoy while you’re pushing your kid around the zoo.”

Wine doesn’t take center stage only at in-person events like a child’s birthday party or play date, but young moms even bond over booze online, such as in the “Moms Who Need Wine” Facebook group.

 Psychotherapist Ann Dowsett Johnston, best-selling author of “Drink: The Intimate Relationship Between Women and Alcohol,” told CBN News today’s young mothers are under an enormous amount of pressure, as they shoulder much of the family’s emotional labor, what she calls “the third shift.” She points out that while the struggles of mothers of growing children are very real, the idea that alcohol is the remedy, is a lie.

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