

MEDIA RELEASE

CURRENT CONTROLS ON ALCOHOL MARKETING ARE NOT PROTECTING YOUTH, WARN PUBLIC HEALTH EXPERTS

Embargoed until 7pm AEST time (9am UTC London time) Tuesday 10 January 2017

10 January 2017: Leading researchers and health experts warn that children and young people around the world continue to be exposed to extensive harmful alcohol marketing and current controls are ineffective at protecting our youth.

New research released today provides further evidence that alcohol marketing is associated with youth consumption, and that self-regulatory codes do not sufficiently protect young people from aggressive alcohol promotions, especially those on social media.

The series of peer-reviewed studies published in a special supplement of scientific journal [Addiction](#) presents the latest evidence on alcohol marketing and its impact on children, making a strong case for urgent intervention.

In light of this work, the National Alliance for Action on Alcohol (NAAA), a coalition of more than 40 health and community organisations, is calling on Australian governments to step up and prioritise the health of children and young people.

“Alcohol advertising has never been as pervasive, inventive, and well-resourced as it is now. And this is a concern because there is strong evidence that exposure to alcohol marketing leads young people to drink at an earlier age and to drink more if they already do so. Drinking from a young age can also damage the developing brain and increase the risk of alcohol-related problems later in life,” said NAAA co-Chair Michael Moore.

The Alliance is calling for state and territory governments to ban alcohol marketing from public property and locations where young people are likely to see it, such as on public transport.

As a matter of priority, NAAA urges the Commonwealth Government to close the loophole that allows alcohol advertising to children during televised sport, to develop independent regulatory processes, and to establish an alcohol marketing replacement fund to phase out alcohol sponsorship of sporting, music and cultural events.

“Australia needs to be doing much more to protect our young people, who are exposed to an ever-increasing rate of harmful alcohol advertising. It is shameful that children continue to be saturated with these inappropriate messages while catching the bus to school or while watching their favourite sport on television.

“This month alone, millions of Australian families will tune in to Cricket Australia’s One Day International series and the Australian Open tennis matches, which are flooded with booze promotions both on the grounds and during commercials,” said Dr John Crozier, NAAA’s other co-Chair.

Local [polling](#) shows strong and increasing community support for change, with 70 per cent of Australians supporting a ban on alcohol advertising on television before 8:30pm, and 60 per cent supporting removing alcohol sponsorship in sport.

Michael Moore says these papers provide a wealth of useful information to support governments in their efforts to strengthen the rules governing alcohol marketing.

“The need to overhaul the state of alcohol advertising regulation in Australia is clear. No other legal product with such potential for harm is as widely promoted and advertised as alcohol. This research again shows the failure of self-regulation and the need to prioritise the health and safety of the next generation,” said Michael Moore.

ENDS

Media notes

The *Addiction* supplement, *Alcohol marketing regulation: From research to public policy*, is free to download from the Wiley Online Library at 9am UTC London time (7pm AEST) Tuesday 10 January <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/add.v112.S1/issuetoc>

To arrange an interview with Michael Moore or Dr John Crozier contact:

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About the National Alliance for Action on Alcohol:

The National Alliance for Action on Alcohol (NAAA) is a national coalition representing more than 40 organisations from across Australia. NAAA’s members cover a diverse range of interests, including public health, law enforcement, local government, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, child and adolescent health, and family and community services.

www.actiononalcohol.org.au

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