

Booze ads cause risky drinking in young people

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Young people are more likely to start drinking alcohol earlier and at risky levels as a direct result of alcohol companies targeting them via advertising, a review by Curtin University has found.

The report, released today, also concluded that [alcohol](#) companies were increasingly using a range of new techniques to promote alcohol to young people in their everyday lives through [digital media](#) and [social networking sites](#).

Report co-author John Curtin Distinguished Professor Simone Pettigrew, from the School of Psychology at Curtin University, said the research confirmed young people are being exposed to a large variety and high volume of alcohol advertising.

"Our research found there is a strong and consistent link between alcohol advertising on traditional media such as TV, print and outdoor, and a young person's decision to drink alcohol earlier in life and in greater quantities that are likely to put them at an increased risk of harm," Professor Pettigrew said.

"It also found alcohol companies are increasingly using a sophisticated range of new techniques to target young people at any time of the day or night via digital media and the clever use of social media to promote alcohol-sponsored events or engage users at popular [drinking](#) times."

Professor Pettigrew said the research recommended immediate

advertising regulatory changes to protect young people from the pervasive nature of alcohol promotion across Australia and the rest of the globe.

"This research shows that alcohol promotion in Australia and worldwide is highly sophisticated, widespread, and often in violation of advertising codes, with a direct link to young people drinking more alcohol," Professor Pettigrew said.

"We also found the current regulatory approaches, which are predominantly led by the [alcohol industry](#), are largely ineffective at protecting young people from the negative effects of alcohol promotion.

"That means independent, comprehensive and statutory regulations are needed and should be implemented immediately if we are serious about tackling problematic drinking among young people."

The research found a loophole in current regulations also allowed [alcohol advertisements](#) to be aired in popular children's television viewing times during the broadcast of sports.

The report, written by the WA Cancer Prevention Unit based at Curtin University, was prepared for the Ministerial Drug and Alcohol Forum.

More information: Evidence on the nature and extent of alcohol promotion and the consequences for young people's alcohol consumption: [mcaay.org.au/assets/publicatio ... ces-for-young-people's-alcohol-consumption.pdf](#)

Provided by Curtin University

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