

PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA  
**MEDIA RELEASE**

[www.phaa.net.au](http://www.phaa.net.au)



18 November 2009

**DRINKS INDUSTRY'S CAMPAIGN IS "STUNNING HYPOCRISY"**

Children's continued exposure to pervasive alcohol promotion means that the drinks industry's "DrinkWise" publicity campaign about youth drinking has no credibility, according to the Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA).

PHAA President Professor Mike Daube said today that, "Children and young people remain exposed to massive levels of alcohol advertising and promotion."

"There is a stunning hypocrisy about the new DrinkWise campaign," Professor Daube said. "On the one hand, a body established by the alcohol industry speaks solemnly about the need to delay the onset of drinking. On the other hand, the industry spends hundreds of millions of dollars on advertising and promotion, using youth-friendly techniques ranging from the Bundy Bear to sponsorship of our children's sporting idols."

DrinkWise was established by the drinks industry, and no less than half the Board are senior figures in alcohol companies. It is not surprising that DrinkWise seems to play no role in addressing crucial issues such as price, access and curbs on advertising and promotion. This is despite a report commissioned by DrinkWise itself which focuses on the importance of such issues, concluding that, "Alcohol marketing and advertising, which is well-funded by large global companies, uses sophisticated techniques that impact on young adults and adolescents, including those who have not yet started drinking. Marketing alcohol products defines alcohol as a normal, accepted feature of youth culture".

According to Professor Daube, "We do have a problem with drinking by young people – but the last people who should have a role in health promotion about alcohol are the drinks industry, who are promoting their products as widely as possible. That is why a World Health Organization expert committee on alcohol recently recommended to WHO that: *'Any interaction should be confined to discussion of the contribution the alcohol industry can make to the reduction of alcohol-related harm only in the context of their roles as producers, distributors and marketers of alcohol, and not in terms of alcohol policy development or health promotion'*."

"If the drinks industry is serious about wanting to reduce drinking by young people," Professor Daube said, 'they should support measures that will make a difference, curb their irresponsible advertising, and stop pouring money into sports sponsorship that turns sporting heroes into walking billboards for alcohol. Until they do this, DrinkWise and programs like it will have no credibility."

**ENDS**

**For further information:**

**Professor Mike Daube, President, PHAA –**  
**Michael Moore, CEO, PHAA –**

**0409 933 933**  
**0417 249 731**