# Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice public consultation

Violence involving alcohol increases at the time of football grand finals and the State of Origin. The link is so strong that the Rapid Review of Prevention Approaches for family and domestic violence recommended that “alcohol advertising be restricted during sporting events”. Considering this recommendation and the strong evidence showing that when children are exposed to alcohol advertising, they are more likely to start drinking early and to drink at higher risk levels; broadcast alcohol advertising should be reduced, not increased.

But the draft ‘Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice’ is proposing extending the hours that alcohol advertising can be shown to children by over 800 hours per year. Even more concerning is the proposal that these ads be shown during the daytime on school holidays, weekends and public holidays, when children are more likely to be watching alcohol advertising. Weekends and public holidays are also times when alcohol harms are more likely to occur. This is in addition to the existing loophole where restrictions on alcohol advertising do not apply during the broadcast of sports programs on public holidays and weekends.

Marketing to children results in the use of these products at earlier ages, which leads to higher and more frequent patterns and levels of use. While alcohol marketing can impact anyone in the community, some Australians are particularly impacted by alcohol advertising and alcohol harm, including children and young people.

We oppose the proposed changes to the Code and believe they breach the requirements in the Broadcasting Services Act 1992 that “broadcasting services place a high priority on the protection of children from exposure to program material which may be harmful to them”, and that industry codes “provide appropriate community safeguards”.

## Recommendations

1. Ensure that any changes to the Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice (the Code) do not extend the hours when alcohol advertising is permitted to be broadcast. This can be achieved by:
	* Retaining the current ‘M’ classification zone allowances in Section 2.2.2 of the Code that restricts alcohol advertising from being exposed to children during school holidays, public holidays and on weekends, or
	* Extending the current ‘M’ classification zone allowances for weekends and school holidays in Section 2.2.2, across all days, if the changes are intended to provide a uniform zone, or
	* Un-linking alcohol advertising in Section 6.2 from M classification zones, and separately defining times restricting alcohol advertising from being exposed to children during school holidays, public holidays and on weekends, if changes to M classification zones are needed.
2. Remove the exemption in Section 6.2 that allows alcohol advertising during sports broadcasts, due to the known increase in family and domestic violence during sporting events.
3. Remove the exemption in Section 8 of ‘program sponsorship’ from alcohol advertising, that allows the promotion of alcohol companies during program broadcasts.

[read the submission](https://fare.org.au/wp-content/uploads/FARE-Submission-to-Commercial-Television-Industry-Code-of-Practice-Consultation.pdf)