



TACKLING UNHEALTHY ADVERTISING IN SPORT

**MEDIA RELEASE**



Foundation for Alcohol  
Research & Education

**For Immediate Release**

## **CHILDREN THE LOSERS IN BOOZE-DRENCHED ORIGIN CLASH**

### **MEDIA EVENT:**

**Game Changer will take its Mobile Billboard and message direct to the NRL**

When: 12pm, Wednesday 18 June 2014

Where: Outside Rugby League Central, Driver Avenue, Moore Park, Sydney

Who: Aaron Schultz, Game Changer & Jane Martin, Obesity Policy Coalition

**18 June 2014:** The State of Origin series is on the line tonight at ANZ Stadium, but experts say the only sure losers, ahead of the big game are the nation's young rugby league fans.

The Foundation for Alcohol, Research and Education (FARE) and the Obesity Policy Coalition have lent their support to a campaign that has the National Rugby League firmly in its sights.

Launching nationally today in Sydney, the new billboard and online campaign demands healthy advertising in the NRL, and poses the question, what is the NRL selling your family?



The advertisement featuring a young boy in a typical Aussie backyard holding a schooner of beer in one hand and a burger in the other, is the initiative of Game Changer, an organisation concerned about the way Australians are targeted by alcohol, junk food and gambling.

Game Changer founder and father of two, Aaron Schultz hopes to encourage the NRL to rethink its unhealthy alliance with alcohol.

“Children and teens are regularly exposed to alcohol promotion in sport, and no more so than during the beer-drenched State of Origin. That’s a very real problem when we know that alcohol marketing shapes young people’s attitudes towards alcohol, and increases the likelihood that they will start to drink and the amount they’ll drink,” Mr Schultz said.

Game One of the State of Origin drew a national audience of over four million and was the top rating program for 2014.

FARE Chief Executive, Michael Thorn says the NRL is using its substantial reach to recruit the next generation of drinkers.

“The NRL needs to abandon a flawed and frankly unconscionable business model that actively and knowingly pushes gambling, booze and junk food onto impressionable and vulnerable kids,” Mr Thorn said.

Polling by FARE consistently shows there is already widespread community concern about the promotion of alcohol in sport.

Mr Thorn says Australia’s major sporting codes now find themselves out of step with prevailing community attitudes on alcohol.

“Each year our national polling tells us that a majority of Australians are concerned about this unhealthy nexus between sport’s promotion and alcohol. Each year those numbers grow bigger. It’s now time for the NRL to listen to the Australian public, and for the good of the game, put an end to unhealthy promotions,” Mr Thorn said.

Obesity Policy Coalition spokesperson, Jane Martin says the campaign also highlights the amount of junk food being flogged to children during the game.

“I believe Australian parents deserve to sit down and watch the State of Origin with their family without their young and impressionable kids being assaulted by an endless barrage of fast food advertising and promotion during the game, on and off the field, and in the ad breaks in between,” Ms Martin said.

---

Aaron Schultz and Jane Martin are available for interview.

**Media Contact: Jeremy Henderson 0425 559 710**

*For media enquiries after 9am on Wednesday 18 June 2014, Aaron Schultz and Jane Martin can be contacted directly.*

<b>Aaron Schultz</b>	<b>0400 573 867</b>
<b>Jane Martin</b>	<b>0418 358 768</b>