

Harmful product marketing reform

A message guide for advocacy

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2024



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Introduction

Everyone should be able to enjoy safe and healthy environments that support their wellbeing. However, gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food companies currently flood our environments with advertising for their harmful and addictive products, telling us to gamble, drink and eat more so that their sales and profits continue to increase. This comes at the expense of our health and wellbeing, with our community experiencing high rates of cancer, liver disease, mental ill health and financial hardship. Together, we can hold gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food companies accountable for the harm caused by their marketing practices.

This messaging guide contains recommendations that will help you talk about the harms caused by the marketing of gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food products. It is based on national message research undertaken by **Common Cause Australia**.

While the focus of our research was building support for a Harmful Product Marketing Act, a comprehensive piece of legislation for regulating the marketing of alcohol, gambling and unhealthy food products, the insights we gained through this research and the recommendations contained in this guide are applicable to anyone with an interest in reducing harms from gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food advertising.



Common Cause Australia helps mission driven organisations use the power of values and frames to motivate change through research, training and strategic support. Its values-based messaging approach is based on decades of research from the fields of social psychology and cognitive linguistics and borrows heavily from the work of Common Cause Foundation in the UK.

A note on sharing

We encourage you to share this guide privately with our trusted professional network of public health peers. However, we request that you don't share it on publicly accessible social media channels or on your own organisation's website, which could be visible to representatives from harmful industry groups.

Approach

The research and recommendations outlined in this guide are based on the Common Cause approach to community engagement. This approach is based on decades of research from the fields of social psychology, cognitive linguistics, and behavioural economics.

A key finding of this research is that most people think about social issues from multiple and often conflicting perspectives. Importantly, these different perspectives operate mostly at a subconscious and emotive level, which means people's attitudes and behaviours are often driven by factors beyond their conscious awareness.

In our research for this project, we sought to identify perspectives (also known as frames) that make people feel at a gut level that our community would be better off if gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food brands were no longer allowed to advertise their products. We also sought to understand which frames moved people into an oppositional mindset in which gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food brands should be able to advertise their products with minimal constraints. Identifying these oppositional frames is just as important as supportive frames because it tells us which ideas we should avoid activating in our audiences.

Methodology

To identify the dominant frames that people in Australia use to think and talk about gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food marketing, we drew on our previous research findings on topics including alcohol regulation, food and drink regulation, and harmful industry regulation more broadly.ⁱ This was complemented by a discourse review to identify any new areas of research and research gaps.

In addition, we ran a workshop with core project stakeholders to review current framing, assumptions, and uncertainties. The workshop shaped subsequent research questions and testing priorities. We then conducted an online message testing survey with a nationally representative sample of 2,565 Australian voters. The 15-minute survey included a range of 'agree/disagree' questions to assess existing levels of support for key messages and policy solutions. These included a number of split sample questions to assess how the use of different terms or message framing influenced responses.

In addition, we tested ten 30-second audio-recorded messages in which participants moved a dial up and down on their screens as they listened to the messages to indicate their level of agreement with what they were hearing at each moment. This provided us with a word-by-word view of the persuasive effect of the messages we tested and allowed us to isolate specific elements of our messages that resonated best with different audiences.

ⁱ Gambling regulation was part of the broader harmful industry regulation research, though it was not covered in as much depth as previous Common Cause Australia research on alcohol and food and drink regulation.

Attitudinal Groups

By scoring survey respondents' answers to key questions throughout the survey, we identified three attitudinal groups when it comes to thinking about gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food marketing.



SUPPORTERS

22%

These are people who strongly believe that gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food marketing is harmful and should be stopped. They strongly support government action to end gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food marketing. They are firm in their support and are not persuaded by opposition messaging.



PERSUADABLES

65%

These are people who mostly agree with our supporters but are also attracted at some level to opposition messaging. As the name suggests, these are the people our messaging has the most persuasive effect on because they are not fixed in their views.



OPPONENTS

13%

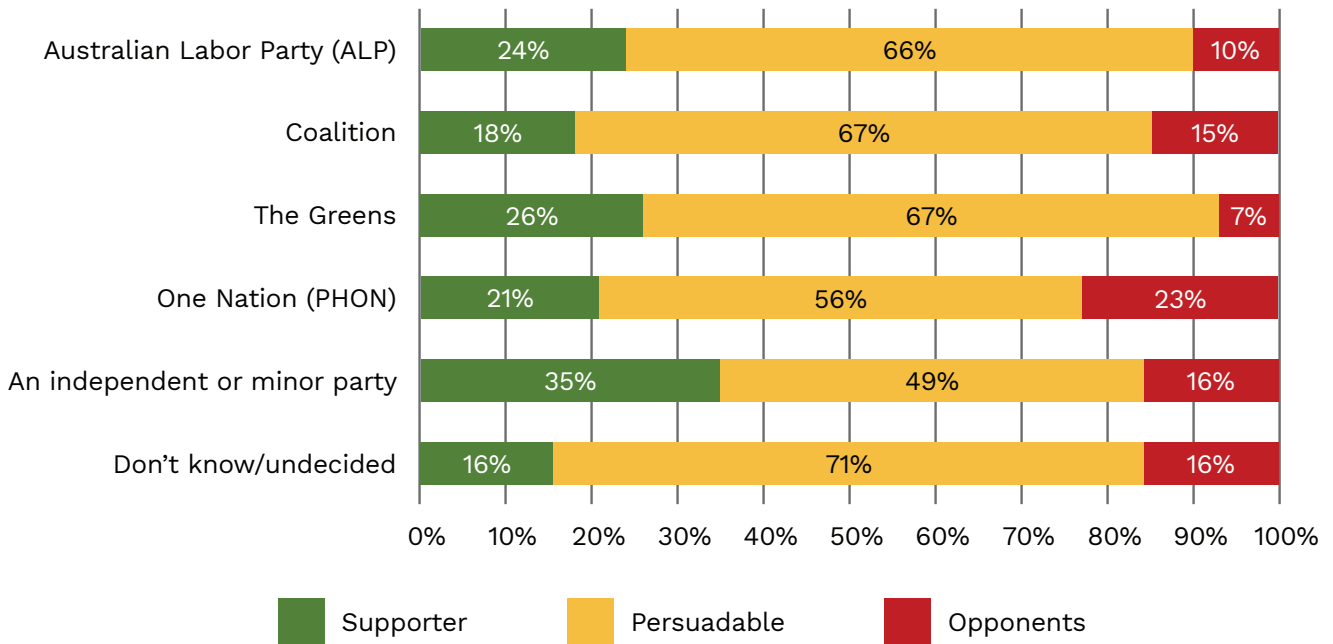
These are the people who are mostly comfortable with gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food marketing. They are more likely to agree that any harms caused by gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food is the sole responsibility of individuals and that companies should be left to promote their products freely. These people are firm in their opposition and are not likely to be significantly persuaded by our messaging.

Analysis of attitudinal groups

We examined how each of the three attitudinal groups reacted to the questions and messages in our survey. Messages that resonated strongly with supporters and persuadables were singled out as particularly valuable for future messaging because they effectively shift persuadables towards a supporter mindset. On the other hand, messages that resonated with both opponents and persuadables were flagged as harmful, as they pushed the latter towards an oppositional mindset.

Encouragingly, our survey found that 22% of respondents were supporters, while only 13% were opponents. Most people were persuadable (65%) and could be toggled into both a supporter and oppositional mindset. There was little difference between most demographic groups and portions of supporters, opposition, and persuadables. We found no notable difference in gender, location, and number of children living at home.

There were some interesting trends among differences in political voting preferences. As the table below shows, voters who put an independent or minor party as their first preference were significantly more likely to be supporters than any other voting preference group (35%). While there was a higher percentage of supporters among ALP and Greens voters than Coalition voters (24%, 26% and 18% respectively), there were almost identical portions of persuadable people (66-67%). Greens voters had a smaller portion of opponents (7%), while PHON voters had the highest portion of opponents (23%). Despite these differences, most people were still persuadable among all voting preference groups.



Top tips

Based on the insights we gained from the survey and messaging testing, we have developed six top tips for more effective messaging in support of a Harmful Product Marketing Act.

Tip #1 Tar them with the same brush

If we want Australians to support regulation that would address the harmful marketing practices of the gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food industries, they must first believe these industries and their marketing have something in common.

While our research found a clear ‘hierarchy of harm’ in how Australians think about the different products – with gambling considered the most harmful, followed by alcohol and then unhealthy foods – our testing also showed Australians are very comfortable with these products being grouped together in messaging and labelled as harmful and addictive products.

In addition, there is strong support for regulating the advertising of all these products when they are grouped together. For example, in our message testing, 81% of persuadable people would rather that ‘advertising for harmful products like alcohol, gambling and unhealthy food be carefully regulated by government’ than allowing all companies to be ‘free to promote their products however they like without government interference’.

In short, advocates for a Harmful Product Marketing Act can have confidence that grouping these product categories together and calling for government action on their marketing both makes sense to our audiences and is a highly attractive proposition.

When grouping these industries together in your messaging, keep the following principles in mind.

Firstly, when listing the products or industries, **mention them in order of their perceived harmfulness - i.e. ‘gambling, alcohol and unhealthy foods’**. This leverages the power of a cognitive bias known as the ‘primacy effect’ in which people pay more attention to items at the beginning of a list than those in the middle or at the end.

Secondly, **highlight the similarities in how these industries operate and how their products cause harm**. For example, point out the way they use apps and online platforms to harvest people’s data and target them with tailored messaging, or expose the tactics their lobbyists use to prevent or delay government regulation. The more we help people see the similarities in how these industries cause harm, the more they will accept the need for a collective solution.

→ **Key takeaway:** present gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food marketing as a collective problem, with a shared solution.

MESSAGE SHIFT EXAMPLES

FROM:

“The gambling industry is a ruthless, poorly regulated industry that actively targets people who are addicted to their products.”

TO:

“Gambling, alcohol and unhealthy foods are designed to keep you coming back for more. For people trying to escape the grip of these addictive products, being bombarded everywhere they go with advertising from them is deeply distressing and can undermine their efforts to get well.”

FROM:

“Alcopop brands like this shouldn't be allowed to sponsor junior soccer! Alcohol advertising doesn't belong in sports because it is relentless and dangerous for our children.”

TO:

“Alcopop brands like this shouldn't be allowed to sponsor junior soccer! Our kids should be free to play community sports without the makers of harmful products like gambling, alcohol and unhealthy foods relentlessly trying to lure them in.”

Tip #2 Highlight exploitation

While most persuadable people are concerned to some degree about harmful product marketing, our research showed that highlighting certain key aspects of that marketing can elevate people's concerns and boost support for action.

Based on this, we recommend focussing on the following features of harmful product marketing in your messaging:

1. The way they target **people most harmed by their products**;
2. The influence they have on **children** and **young people**; and
3. The **misleading tactics** they use to promote their products.

These outperformed other commonly cited concerns, including the way harmful product marketing intrudes on sport and other entertainment; the way they collect personal data and target people online, and the sheer volume of advertising that makes it impossible to escape.

Interestingly, the top features of concern all have one element in common: exploitation. Whether it is preying on people who are most harmed by their products; bombarding children with unhealthy influences; or deliberately deceiving people, these exploitative tactics fill most Australians with a clear sense of an injustice that needs correcting.

It is not enough, however, to tell audiences these industries are exploitative, we need to **show them what this looks like in practice through tangible examples**. Providing clear and tangible examples brings the problem to life for people, which helps them internalise the issue and connect with it at a deeper emotional level.

To reinforce the need for a collective solution, it is best to use multiple similar examples from across different industries to show that these problems are not unique to any one industry.

→ **Key takeaway:** highlight examples of misleading marketing and the way the gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food industries target children and people most harmed by their products.

MESSAGE SHIFT EXAMPLES

FROM:

“The marketing of gambling, alcohol and unhealthy foods is linked to increased use of these products, which leads to greater levels of physical, mental, and social harms.”

FROM:

“Harmful industries use manipulative and predatory tactics to target vulnerable people.”

TO:

“The people behind gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food products advertise in places they know children will be exposed. As a result, children’s minds are being flooded with imagery and messages about these harmful products that are deeply unhealthy.”

TO:

“Gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food companies collect the personal data of their biggest customers so they can bombard them with tailored advertising enticing them back again and again. This makes it very hard for people trying to cut back on gambling, alcohol or unhealthy food to escape the clutches of these companies.”

Tip #3 Use a health vs profit frame

Previous research in public health messaging has consistently found the Health vs Profit frame to be a powerful tool in building support for industry regulation. This frame contrasts public health interests with the profit motives of harmful industries. The problem is framed as profits being prioritised above health and wellbeing, while the solution is framed as action that puts health interests first.

In our message testing for a Harmful Product Marketing Act, this frame proved highly effective once again. Most persuadable people in our survey agreed that government has a vital role to play in promoting health and wellbeing and that we should limit advertising for products that can harm our health and wellbeing.

Messages that highlighted the way gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food companies put their profits above the health and wellbeing of the community were not only highly believable to persuadable people, but also highly concerning. Meanwhile, messages that called on government to step up and put the health and wellbeing of the community first were effective at boosting support for greater regulation of marketing.

Activating the health vs profit frame can be as direct as calling for the government to “put health above profits” or to “put our health first”. Another way of activating this frame is to contrast the unsavoury tactics harmful industries use in their marketing to boost sales with the negative impact these products have on people’s health and wellbeing. In fact, **any messaging that demonstrate the inverse relationship between harmful industry profits and community health will help activate and strengthen this frame in the public’s mind.**

A related finding of our research is that persuadable audiences are more motivated by concern for the impact of harmful products on the health and wellbeing of their fellow citizens than they are by the burden these products may create on the healthcare system or the increased healthcare costs for government. In other words, people are more motivated by keeping each other healthy than they are finding the most efficient way of managing population health. Therefore, **focus on the human (rather than economic or efficiency) impacts of the problem when building public support.**

→ **Key takeaway:** frame the issue around putting our health and wellbeing above the profits of the gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food industries.

MESSAGE SHIFT EXAMPLES

FROM:

“The cost of treating alcohol and diet-related cancers has risen to over \$450 million each year.”

TO:

“Sadly, the number of Australians who are diagnosed with an alcohol or diet-related cancer is growing each year.”

FROM:

“If we have less harmful marketing, we will have healthier citizens, which will ultimately take the burden off our strained healthcare systems.”

TO:

“It’s time for governments to put our health over corporate profits and protect our community from gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food advertising for good.”

Tip #4 Focus on outcomes more than process

When it comes to motivating persuadable audiences, focusing on the outcomes you want (e.g. better health) is more engaging than focussing on the processes needed to achieve those outcomes (e.g. regulation). Yet advocates too often get bogged down in talking about the process and fail to highlight the outcomes that audiences care about.

Advocates tend to focus on the lack of government regulation to date to justify the need for more government action on harmful industry marketing. In particular, those working to reduce harms from alcohol and unhealthy food often focus on the problem of self-regulation in their messaging. Indeed, our

research confirmed most people do not understand the regulatory environment of gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food marketing. However, we found that educating people about the status quo of regulation didn't motivate support for change. For example, most people who had assumed alcohol marketing was government regulated, expressed either support or indifference to industry self-regulation once they were told about it. They may have been surprised, but they weren't convinced the process was worthy of urgent change.

In short, we won't build support for change by focussing on the process alone. Instead, **we need to show what happens when industries are not properly regulated.** What are the tangible outcomes that people will care about?

One way of focussing on outcomes, not just process, would be to give examples of the types of misleading advertising allowed under the current system that most people would take objection to. Or it could be highlighting the volume of ads for harmful products children are exposed to on a daily basis under the current rules. One step further would be linking these tactics to the harms these products cause, including cancer, heart disease, mental ill health and financial ruin. In our message testing, we found mentioning negative outcomes like these particularly engaging for persuadable audiences.

Similarly, **when describing our solution, it is important to focus more on the outcomes of a Harmful Product Marketing Act, than the process itself.** While persuadable audiences responded poorly to messages that framed the Act in term of banning, restricting, or ending (the process), they responded well to messages that focussed on the positive outcomes that would be generated, such as less advertising in our lives, protecting children and vulnerable people, and improving people's health and wellbeing.

→ **Key takeaway:** spend less time explaining current and proposed regulation, and more time showing people what happens as a result of this regulation.

MESSAGE SHIFT EXAMPLES

FROM:

"It's outrageous that the alcohol and food industries are allowed to regulate themselves."

TO:

"This is the kind of unacceptable advertising that happens when you allow the alcohol and food industries to regulate themselves."

FROM:

"We need to stop all marketing by the gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food industries – and that's what this Act will do."

TO:

"We'd all be better off with less advertising for gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food products in our lives – and that's what this Act will do."

FROM:

"The Harmful Product Marketing Act will ban all marketing from gambling, alcohol and unhealthy foods with heavy penalties for companies who breach the new laws."

TO:

"The Harmful Product Marketing Act will free our sports fields, TV screens, mobile phones and streets from advertising by gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food companies once and for all – saving and improving countless lives."

Tip #5 Make comparisons to tobacco control

Most Australians are well aware of the success of our world-leading tobacco control measures and the role that changes such as plain packaging and limits to advertising have played in reducing smoking harms.

Our testing found that reminding people of Australia's success with tobacco control and framing the Harmful Product Marketing Act as a similar measure, significantly increased support from persuadable audiences. For most people, **it makes sense that we apply the same thinking and extend the same rules to other industries that are also strongly linked to health harms.**

We therefore encourage advocates to make this comparison in their messaging. However, we only want to make this comparison when talking about the solution to harmful marketing and never when talking about the problem of gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food harms. Comparing these products in terms of the harms they cause is likely to make the harms of gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food pale in comparison to tobacco, which will undermine our case.

When making the analogy to tobacco control, don't shy away from positioning the Harmful Product Marketing Act as a big deal. In message testing, persuadable audiences responded well to framing the proposed Act as a world-leading initiative that would be a bold step towards improving the health and wellbeing of our community.

→ **Key takeaway:** Leverage our audience's association with the success of the Tobacco Advertising Prohibition Act with our proposed Harmful Product Marketing Act.

MESSAGE SHIFT EXAMPLES

FROM:

"Gambling, alcohol and unhealthy foods are harmful products – just like tobacco. That's why we need a Harmful Product Marketing Act."

TO:

Just like we protected the community from tobacco advertising with the Tobacco Advertising Prohibition Act, we can protect our community once again with a Harmful Product Marketing Act that covers the gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food industries.

Tip #6 Build the case for cross-media protections

To build the case for comprehensive regulation that applies across media channels, **it is important to show that the problem is not contained to any one platform.**

One way that we can do this is by using examples of harmful marketing tactics across media channels wherever possible. This might involve, for example, showing not only how unhealthy food brands target children through mobile apps, but also by placing a disproportional amount of their outdoor advertising near schools.

Another way we can build the case for comprehensive regulation is by highlighting examples of the way harmful industries continually evolve their marketing tactics in response to weak regulation. For example, the way Sportsbet side-stepped a ban on gambling ads at the Australian Open by paying a family member of a prominent tennis player to wear a t-shirt with their brand on it

Examples like this help demonstrate the limitations of piecemeal rules and build the case for a comprehensive framework.

→ **Key takeaway:** To build the case for cross-media regulation, give examples of how harmful industries use multiple channels to target people with their advertising and side-step narrow rules.

MESSAGE SHIFT EXAMPLES

“Not only do gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food advertisers reach children through most major sport events broadcast on TV, they are also in their faces anytime they walk out the door, with advertising all over billboards and bus stops.”

“Without comprehensive protections that cover every aspect of their marketing, we know that harmful product marketers will just find another loophole to keep bombarding people with advertising.”

Narrative Structure

Vision-Barrier-Action is an evidence-based narrative structure that is particularly effective with persuadable audiences. It leads with a positive vision to connect with our audiences at the level of shared values, before outlining the problem and proposed solution.

Below we outline the core ingredients of this structure and how the top tips above can be incorporated into a logical and compelling narrative in support of a Harmful Product Marketing Act. More examples of this structure in action are included in the appendix.

Vision

To set a positive tone for our communications, it is important to start with a values-based vision. This helps us frame the message in terms of shared values that appeal powerfully to both our supporters and persuadable audiences.

CORE INGREDIENTS:

- Remind people of the importance they attach to compassionate values such as honesty, equality, and mutual support.
 - General statements about principles are fine, but more powerful are specific and tangible examples of what these principles look like in action.

EXAMPLE:

“Looking out for each other and supporting someone going through a tough time comes naturally to most of us.”

Barrier

The barrier part of our narrative tells our audience what stands between us and the vision we seek. It establishes the problem and sets the stage for why our solutions are necessary.

CORE INGREDIENTS:

- Point out how gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food marketing undermine our vision.
 - Use specific examples of how these industries put their profit above our health and wellbeing by exploiting people’s vulnerability.
 - Use multiple similar examples across different product categories to demonstrate the shared nature of the problem.
 - Point out how current regulation enables these negative outcomes.

EXAMPLE:

“However, when it comes to companies that profit from alcohol, gambling and unhealthy food, preying on people experiencing vulnerability is a core marketing strategy. These industries generate the majority of their sales from people who are most harmed by their products. For people trying to escape the grip of harmful products, being bombarded everywhere they go with advertising from them is deeply distressing and undermines their efforts to get well.”

Action

Here is where we explain what can be done to remove the barrier that stands in our way. The solutions should always provide an action for our audience to take.

CORE INGREDIENTS:

- Present the Harmful Product Marketing Act as a bold step we can take to put the health of our community before the profits of harmful industries.
- Remind the audience of the success of tobacco control to show ambitious change is possible.
- Focus on the outcomes the Act will generate – i.e. how it will improve people’s lives.

EXAMPLE:

“It’s time for the government to step up and shield our community from the onslaught of marketing from these harmful industries. Just like we stopped the tobacco industry from preying on people with the Tobacco Advertising Prohibition Act, a new Harmful Product Marketing Act could free us from all forms of alcohol, gambling and unhealthy food advertising. It would be a bold step towards improving our community’s health and wellbeing in the decades ahead.”

Words to lose and use

LOSE	USE
<p>Ban, restrict, end, illegal</p> <p>People don't respond well to negative concepts of something being taken away or removed. Carefully shifting language to less harsh terms and focusing on the positive outcomes of less harmful marketing is much more positively received.</p>	<p>Ensure, protect, promote, free, allow, enjoy, give</p> <p>Use positive language and give examples of the good having less harmful marketing would do e.g. freeing our sports and entertainment from annoying and manipulative gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food marketing.</p>
<p>Comprehensive rules</p> <p>Comprehensive rules and laws don't sound very exciting on their own. Instead, talk about the ways industries will continue to make their own rules and find loopholes to market harmfully without legally-binding, strong reform.</p>	<p>Bold step, world-leading, future generations</p> <p>Leaning in and presenting the Harmful Product Marketing Act as a bold solution sends the message that this is real reform that will have real impact. Use this language and compare it to the success of bold tobacco marketing reform as a strong call to action for governments to stand up against gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food industries.</p>
<p>Physical, mental, and financial health harms</p> <p>These are broad terms that on their own are not very engaging. They need clear examples to come to life.</p>	<p>Cancer, heart disease, addiction, financial stress</p> <p>Specific examples of harms are easier to visualise and relate to, creating a more compelling and convincing narrative.</p>
<p>Vulnerable people</p> <p>We want to avoid disempowering terminology to describe people harmed by the gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food industries. They are not the problem, the industries and their marketing tactics are.</p>	<p>People most harmed by their products</p> <p>One way of avoiding disempowering terms is to use person-first descriptive phrases that externalise the problem to the harmful industries and/or their products.</p>
<p>Economic costs, financial burden, cost-effective</p> <p>People are less motivated by the financial impact of gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food compared to the health and wellbeing impacts on people.</p>	<p>Harm in our community, health and wellbeing</p> <p>Focus on the human consequences in communities and those most harmed by gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food products. Descriptive phrases like burden, strain, stress, toll, loss and struggle can be used to highlight the harms. Inversely, talk about the positive community outcomes of less harmful advertising, like improved health and wellbeing, protecting kids, and being free from advertising.</p>

Appendix

The following are the messages we dial tested in our research. **Green text** indicates elements of messages that were most effective at moving Persuadable audiences to ‘dial up’ (indicating strong agreement). **Red text** indicates messaging that led Persuadable audiences to ‘dial down’ heavily (indicating strong disagreement).

Health v Profit

Most people agree the **health and wellbeing of Australians should be a top priority of any government.**

But the Australian government currently allows alcohol, gambling and unhealthy food companies to bombard us with advertising telling us to drink more, eat more and gamble more. As a result, **their sales are booming, while our rates of cancer, liver disease, mental ill health and financial hardship are at record levels.**

We’d all be better off if we never saw another ad for gambling, alcohol or unhealthy food. It’s time for government to put health before profits by shielding our community from the onslaught of marketing from these harmful industries.

Tobacco

Just over three decades ago, Australia led the world by creating the Tobacco Advertising Prohibition Act, which banned all forms of advertising for tobacco products. Since then, tobacco use has plummeted in Australia – saving and improving countless lives.

Over the same period, alcohol, gambling and unhealthy food advertising has grown exponentially, allowing these products to wreak havoc with our physical, mental and social health.

We can lead the world once again with the creation of a new Harmful Products Advertising Control Act that would eliminate all forms of alcohol, gambling and unhealthy food advertising in Australia. It would be a bold step towards improving our community’s health and wellbeing in the decades ahead.

Children

When it comes to **protecting and supporting our children to be healthy and well**, everyone in our community has a role to play.

Yet sellers of harmful products including gambling, alcohol and unhealthy foods **bombard us with advertising** in places where they know children will be exposed. As a result, **children's minds are being flooded with imagery and messages** about alcohol, gambling and unhealthy food that are deeply unhealthy.

It's time we put the wellbeing of our kids first and **put an end to** harmful product marketing. We can do this through a Harmful Product Marketing Act that makes it illegal to promote alcohol, gambling or unhealthy food anywhere in our community.

Addictive products

Looking out for each other and supporting someone going through a tough time comes naturally to most of us.

But when it comes to companies that profit from alcohol, gambling and unhealthy food, **preying on people who are vulnerable is a core marketing strategy**. These industries generate the **majority of their sales from people who are most harmed by their products**.

For people trying to escape the grip of harmful products, **being bombarded everywhere they go with advertising from them is deeply distressing and can undermine their efforts to get well**.

As a community, **we can help people struggling with alcohol, gambling or unhealthy food** by supporting **a total ban on advertising** of these harmful and **addictive products**.

Different – not like other products

At the end of the day, alcohol, gambling and unhealthy foods are not like other products on the market. **They cause significant harm in our community – including through cancer, heart disease, mental ill health and financial ruin**. But despite the huge burden these products place on families and communities every day, there are very few controls on how they are promoted.

We don't let pharmaceutical companies say whatever they want about their products, and we don't let tobacco companies advertise at all, because just like alcohol, gambling and unhealthy foods, they are products that must be treated with caution.

That's why we need a Harmful Product Advertising Control Act that **limits and regulates the way alcohol, gambling and unhealthy food brands promote their products**.

Regulation

Most people agree it's the **responsibility of our government to make sure the way companies advertise their products is in line with community expectations.**

So when it comes to the marketing of harmful products like alcohol and unhealthy food, most people are shocked to learn the government has taken a hands-off approach – allowing these industries and their lobbyists to dream up their own rules that nobody can enforce. Meanwhile, gambling advertising is covered by a broken patchwork of inconsistent rules with gaping loopholes that gambling companies love.

It's time for government to **step up and create comprehensive legally binding rules for how companies market harmful products such as unhealthy food, alcohol and gambling. It's what our community expects and deserves.**

Digital marketing

One of the fundamental roles of government is to **protect our community from things that may cause us harm.**

Yet government protections have not kept pace with the increasingly invasive advertising techniques used by the gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food industries. This includes the collection and use of personal data to target us with products based on our online interests and behaviours. **When it comes to harmful products like alcohol, gambling and unhealthy food, this type of advertising is outright dangerous.**

The best way to get ahead of these increasingly sophisticated tactics, is to implement **a comprehensive ban on all advertising for harmful products** including unhealthy food, gambling and alcohol.

Sports marketing

For many of us, sport is how we come together, get fit, make new friends and push our boundaries.

Sadly, it's exactly this community spirit and healthy culture that the makers of alcohol, gambling and unhealthy food products want to exploit by plastering their ads all over our playing fields and sports broadcasts. And most of us are thoroughly sick of it.

Beyond sport, these **harmful industries also spend millions each year trying to convince us all to drink more, gamble more, eat more.**

We'd all be better off without this advertising in our lives both on the field and off, so why don't we give it the boot? **Let's free our sports fields, TV screens, mobile phones and streets from advertising by gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food companies once and for all.**

Comprehensive regulation

When it comes to billion-dollar industries like gambling, alcohol and unhealthy foods, **their lawyers, marketers and lobbyists are experts at exploiting weak laws and loopholes to get away with whatever they can.**

That's why laws that focus only on one small part of how harmful products are promoted – for example on TV, or in sport, or around children, are destined to fail. **Eventually, these companies will find a new way of getting people hooked on their products.**

Comprehensive legislation that covers all marketing from alcohol, gambling and unhealthy food is the best way to get these products out of all of our faces for good. **It worked with tobacco advertising, and it'll work again. All we need is politicians courageous enough to stand up to the lobbyists and put our health first.**



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