

3 in 4 Australians want less alcohol ads on TV, as community calls for stronger safeguards

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 12:01AM MONDAY 20 APRIL

Public health organisations and community advocates are calling on Australia's media regulator to use its review of television alcohol advertising rules to introduce stronger safeguards, saying current regulations fail to protect the community from harm and fall short of public expectations.

It comes as new data shows Australians want better protections from harmful ads. Polling found 3 in 4 people (75%) want less alcohol ads on TV. It also found 4 in 5 people (82%) want alcohol ads restricted during children's viewing hours, including sports broadcasts.

The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) [has opened a review of the alcohol advertising rules in *The Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice*](#), to determine whether the code properly safeguards the community. ACMA is seeking public submissions until April 30.

The existing Code is developed by commercial free-to-air television broadcasters through their industry body, Free TV, whose members profit from alcohol advertising. In 2025, Free TV proposed changes to the code that would have increased the amount of alcohol advertising on television, a move that ACMA ultimately rejected on the grounds that it did not provide adequate community safeguards.

Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education CEO Ayla Chorley said existing rules were failing the community and ACMA could take action to fix the problem.

"There is strong evidence that marketing influences alcohol consumption, and alcohol continues to cause significant harm across Australia, including poor health outcomes and increased domestic, family and sexual violence. ACMA can and should take action to improve regulation and safeguard the community," she said.

"The responsibility for managing exposure to harmful alcohol advertising should not rest with Australians. ACMA has a clear mandate to regulate in the public interest and ensure advertising rules prioritise community health over commercial reliance on these ads.

"A major loophole in the current rules continues to allow alcohol advertising during sports broadcasts, resulting in millions of exposures of children to these ads. The evidence is clear that this kind of marketing increases the likelihood of earlier and riskier drinking later in life, while reinforcing a harmful association between alcohol, sport and sporting role models."

"ACMA has a responsibility to listen to the community. Our latest polling shows the majority of the community want to see the sports loophole closed and fewer alcohol ads on television."

Canberra parent William Spaul frequently watches sport with his son but says he often turns it off due to incessant alcohol ads.

"The loophole permitting alcohol ads during sports programs means the Free TV Code is like a safety net with a big hole in the middle. The Code lets children down at the times they need the most protection," he said.

"Children should not be required to watch alcohol ads when they watch sport, watch TV in the evening or during the day if they miss school due to being unwell. Children deserve better and closing the loophole will protect children both now and for decades to come."

Alcohol exacerbates domestic, family and sexual violence, and this is amplified further during sports events. Women and children are at higher risk of experiencing violence during sports broadcasts and on public holidays, with one study finding a [40% increase in gender-based violence](#) during State of Origin matches.

Actor and FARE Lived Experience Advisor Kym Valentine said, “I know firsthand the responsibility television has in creating cultural norms and cognitive connections that stay with us for a lifetime,”

“When alcohol companies connect their harmful products to sport, something we value so highly in this country, we are predatorily and intentionally taking our greatest vice and turning it into a cultural virtue.

“If we are really committed to reducing violence against women and children, then we must shift this narrative. ACMA has a responsibility and an opportunity to create real change and prioritise safeguarding women, and most importantly, children experiencing violence.”

The community can have their say until April 30. Learn more about how and why [to make a submission on FARE’s website](#).

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*FARE commissioned Pureprofile to conduct a survey of 2015 Australians in February 2026. The sample was nationally representative for age, gender and location.

Media outlets are requested to promote help-seeking information when reporting on alcohol and other drugs, in line with the [Mindframe National Guidelines](#). Suggested wording relating to this media story: *If you or someone you know needs support, please call Lifeline 13 11 14, the National 24/7 Alcohol and Other Drugs Hotline 1800 250 015 or 1800RESPECT 1800 737 732.*

Media contact:

Kate Lewis | media@fare.org.au | 0429 291 120

The Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) is a not-for-profit organisation with a vision for an Australia free from alcohol harms – where communities are healthy and well and where laws, policies and programs are fair, equitable and just. Working with local communities, people with lived experience of alcohol harm, values-aligned organisations, health professionals, researchers and governments across the nation, we are improving the health and wellbeing of everyone in Australia. To learn more about us and our work visit www.fare.org.au