

Scottish Government urged to curb alcohol marketing to protect children

Langue Anglais

In a report published today by [Alcohol Focus Scotland](#) [1], leading academics and health experts outline how the Scottish Government can reduce the unacceptably high levels of alcohol marketing that children and young people are exposed to.

Children are very familiar with and influenced by alcohol brands and advertising campaigns, despite codes of practice which are supposed to protect them. There is clear evidence that exposure to alcohol marketing leads children to start drinking at a younger age and to drink more if they are already drinking.

Alcohol Focus Scotland was asked by Ministers to facilitate an international expert group on alcohol marketing to advise on the most effective policy options available and how they might be implemented in Scotland.

The group's recommendations include:

- removing alcohol marketing from public spaces such as streets, parks, sports grounds and on public transport
- ending alcohol sponsorship of sports, music and cultural events
- pressing the UK Government to introduce restrictions on TV alcohol advertising between 6am and 11pm, and to restrict cinema alcohol advertising to 18-certificate films
- limiting alcohol advertising in newspapers and magazines to publications aimed at adults
- restricting alcohol marketing on social networking sites

The report also recommends setting up an independent task force on alcohol marketing to remove the regulatory role of the alcohol industry.

Self-regulation of alcohol marketing isn't working: <http://bit.ly/2IXEWwC> [2] #alcoholfreekids

The NCD Alliance has joined more than 30 organisations, including Children 1st, the Scottish Cancer Prevention Network and the medical Royal Colleges, as well as the majority of MSPs (72), have pledged their support to end alcohol marketing in childhood. This report now outlines specific actions which could be taken to achieve that.

Professor Gerard Hastings, one of the group members and internationally renowned expert on social marketing, said:

“Self-regulation does not work; it will not control dishonest banks, over-claiming MPs or profit-driven multinational drinks companies. And yet we continue to rely on it to protect our children from alcohol marketing. It is no surprise that study after study has shown that, as a result, children are being put in harm’s way – and that parents want policy makers to be more courageous. Scotland now has a chance to grasp this nettle and show how independent statutory regulation of marketing can provide our young people the protection they deserve. The international community is trusting us to take the same public health lead we took on smoke-free public places and minimum unit pricing; let us show them that we will.”

Alison Douglas, Chief Executive of Alcohol Focus Scotland, said:

“An alcohol-free childhood is the healthiest and best option, yet we allow alcohol companies to reach our children from a young age. They are seeing and hearing positive messages about alcohol when waiting for the school bus, watching the football, at the cinema or using social media. We need to create environments that foster positive choices and support children’s healthy development. We hope Ministers will respond to this report and the groundswell of support for effective alcohol marketing restrictions in Scotland.”

Tam Baillie, Children and Young People’s Commissioner Scotland said:

“I strongly support this report which provides clear evidence on the nature and reach of alcohol marketing and makes welcome and sensible proposals to safeguard our children. All children and young people have the right to good health and that must include the right to grow up free from commercial pressures to drink alcohol. The extent of the actions we take now are a good measure of the value we place on our children for the future.”

Find the report and summary - *Promoting good health from childhood: Reducing the impact of alcohol marketing on children in Scotland* at the Alcohol Focus Scotland [website](#) [1].

“We believe that alcohol marketing has no place in childhood. All children should play, learn and socialise in places that are healthy and safe, protected from exposure to alcohol advertising and sponsorship.” #alcoholfreekids

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[1] <http://www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk/>

[2] <http://bit.ly/2IXEWwC>