

Media Release

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ALCOHOL ADVERTISING AND CHILDREN – CALL FOR ACTION

A Jim Beam Racing children's clothing product has been described as the most shocking example of alcohol advertising yet seen in Australia.

The McCusker Centre for Action on Alcohol and Youth (MCAAY) has called for urgent action by the Federal Government to end alcohol advertising targeting or using children and young people.

MCAAY Director Professor Mike Daube said, "We have received, from an easily reached website for a Jim Beam sponsored sport, a size 4 child's jacket promoting both the Jim Beam name and branding. Size 4 is generally for children around four years of age, and the jacket is one of a number of items of clothing for children and young people available from the website. The label clearly identifies the jacket as a Jim Beam promotion, along with the Jim Beam name and additional logo on the zip. The jacket prominently displays the Jim Beam Racing "The Team" branding – and is even promoted on the website as "JBR Kids" clothing".

"This is the most shocking alcohol promotion I have seen. It would be hard to think of anything more cynical than children's clothing advertising alcohol. This promotion turns children into mobile billboards for whisky, and encourages them to associate themselves with the Jim Beam brand."

The Jim Beam children's clothing is one of 22 complaints upheld in full or in part in the third quarterly report of the Alcohol Advertising Review Board (AARB). During September – November 2012, the AARB received 35 complaints, nearly a third relating to sports sponsorship. Complaints covered promotions such as motor racing-themed beer packaging, alcohol advertisements on sports fields and alcohol promotions in Test cricket commentary. The cricket commentary complaint has been sent to ACMA (the Australian Communications and Media Authority) who are investigating it.

Another area of concern highlighted by the AARB was the placement of alcohol advertisements outside schools. A beer advertisement outside a primary school in Western Australia was the fourth alcohol advertisement placed there in a 20 month period.

Beam Global has already been criticised for promoting its products in ways likely to appeal to children and young people, through advertising, sponsorship, social media and promotions such as the "Jim Beam Electric Skateboard" and "Jim Beam on Campus".

Professor Daube said, "The current system of alcohol advertising self-regulation is a dismal failure. We have written to the Federal Minister responsible for alcohol policy, Mark Butler, requesting him to take immediate action so that these products are withdrawn, and to introduce legislation that will prevent anything of this nature occurring again."

Information on the Alcohol Advertising Review Board, the report and images of the Jim Beam Racing jacket are available at www.alcoholadreview.com.au

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