

Dear ACMA,

*My name is Dane McDowell. I am the Community Engagement Officer for Lives Lived Well, Lithgow. We are an AOD organisation and I deal with the effects of alcohol on a regular basis.*

*I am a recovered alcoholic and a child of alcoholic parents. The results of my parents, and extended family's drinking, resulted in severe trauma for me, and as a result, I risked passing that on to my future family. My life was in ruins throughout what is meant to be the best years of my life. From 14-34 I was traumatised, mentally ill, and sought refuge in alcohol.*

*When I decided to tackle my alcoholism, I found that what worked hardest against me was not my own cravings, or family and friends discouraging me. It was the general culture. It was walking through my local shopping centre and seeing a picture of a can of beer, dripping so as to look as appealing as possible, with text encouraging me to drink. These adverts are at children's eye level. It is so normalised and ingrained into the culture that it's suffocating.*

*Now as a Youth AOD mentor, I see the effects it has on the community. The text after an ad for alcohol, a brief, rushed message claiming drinking is bad, read in a droll tone, is frankly pathetic. It's embarrassing and history will humiliate us for allowing it to be this way.*

*Reduction in advertising for nicotine has shown a real positive effect on public health. Alcohol is linked to almost every social issue we have plaguing our communities. Banning advertisement of alcohol is a no-brainer. It is obviously the correct thing to do. The only argument against it is those who seek to profit from misery, and I care not for their wishes and nor should anyone with an ounce of a conscience.*

*Thank you for reading my submission.*

*Kind regards,*

*Dane McDowell.*