

31 July 2014

David Burch
Category Manager
Woolworths Limited
1 Woolworths Way
Bella Vista NSW 2153

By email: dburch@woolworths.com.au

Dear Mr Burch,

RE: Woolworths and Nutrition Australia launch Healthier Bites for the family

The Australian Health Promotion Association (WA Branch) writes to congratulate Woolworths on the promotion of healthy snack options in Woolworths stores through the Healthier Bites initiative. We commend Woolworths for your partnership with Nutrition Australia to help improve the health and wellbeing of all Australians.

As Australia's peak health promotion body, the Australian Health Promotion Association (AHPA) supports evidence-based health promotion practice to create healthy environments for all Australians. AHPA not only embraces actions directed at strengthening the skills and capabilities of individuals, but also actions directed towards changing social, environmental, political and economic conditions to alleviate their impact on populations and individual health.

As part of your positive move to encourage Australians to eat more healthily, we also ask you to consider your position in the supply and promotion of alcohol in Woolworths stores.

As a major supplier of alcohol in Australia, Woolworths has an important role to play to help reduce alcohol-related harm in our communities. The point-of-sale promotions of alcohol in stores, including discounts on shopping docket, is one form of marketing that results in excessive drinking and alcohol-related harm and is therefore a great concern to AHPA (WA Branch) and our members.

A study on point-of-sale promotions, conducted in Sydney and Perth, found that liquor outlets connected to supermarket chains required shoppers to purchase a greater quantity of alcohol to participate in promotions. Price-related promotions for multiple/bulk purchases were also more commonly offered by outlets attached to large supermarket chains¹. Results like these support our concern that large supermarket chains, like Woolworths, are providing more opportunities for people to purchase larger quantities of alcohol.

In a survey conducted by the Government of Western Australia Drug and Alcohol Office found that point-of-sale promotions impact on purchase behaviour, with one in five respondents (20%) reported buying discounted alcohol once a week or more, and over half (55%) once a month or more. Almost three times as many respondents reported that if alcohol was discounted they would buy it more frequently (26%) than less frequently (10%). This same survey found that one in four (25%) of 18-29 year olds and almost one in five (18%) of 30-49 year olds reported that they drink more than planned when they buy discounted alcohol².

The Australian National Preventive Health Agency has placed advertising and marketing of unhealthy products on the national health agenda, as the weight of evidence is now sufficiently compelling to recommend action. The promotion of alcohol influences consumption choices and behaviour and contributes to the creation of unhealthy environments, communities, families and individuals.

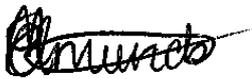
We strongly urge Woolworths to take a stand against point-of-sale alcohol promotions in stores and put restrictions in place to limit this form of promotion, which is needed to support the reduction of alcohol-related harm in Australia.

The AHPA (WA Branch) would be happy to provide further information about the impact point-of-sale alcohol promotions has on consumption and alcohol-related harm. We welcome the opportunity to be a part of any further conversations on this issue.

Please do not hesitate to contact me on adminwa@healthpromotion.org.au if we can be of any further assistance.

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Kind regards



Melinda Edmunds
President
Australian Health Promotion Association (WA Branch)

CC: Ms Lucinda Hancock
Executive Officer
Nutrition Australia
118 Cardigan Street
Carlton Victoria 3053

By email: lhancock@nutritionaustralia.org

¹ Jones SC, Barrie L, Robinson L, Allsop S and Chikritzhs T. 2012. Point-of-sale alcohol promotions in the Perth and Sydney metropolitan areas. *Drug and Alcohol Review*. 31(6): 803-808.

² Gardiner R and Coase R. 2011. Cheap Drinks. Drug and Alcohol Office Government of Western Australia. Available at: http://www.dao.health.wa.gov.au/DesktopModules/Bring2mind/DMX/Download.aspx?Command=Core_Download&EntryId=578&PortalId=0&TabId=211.