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Minister for Health and Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

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Young drinkers targeted in ad campaign

The Australian Government today launched a series of “in your face” advertisements aimed at tackling the binge-drinking epidemic among young Australians.

As schoolies kicks off on the Gold Coast this weekend, this campaign is a wake-up call to young Australians about the dangers of binge-drinking.

The theme of the campaign is “Don’t turn a night out into a nightmare”, and demonstrates the violence, injury and humiliation that can result from binge-drinking.

The campaign will spearhead the Government’s National Binge Drinking Strategy and is targeted at teenagers aged 15-17 years and young adults aged 18-25 years and their parents.

The first TV ads will broadcast on Sunday. There will also be print, radio and internet ads, as well as ads in pubs, outside nightclubs and on street furniture.

These are hard-hitting ads – that’s because we are dealing with a group of people who think they are bullet proof.

The campaign shows how a night out, which is full of positive expectations, can go horribly wrong.

The ads are designed to confront young people with the facts about binge drinking:

- Four Australians under 25 die due to alcohol related injuries in an average week.
- On average, one in four hospitalisations of people aged 15-24 happens because of alcohol.
- Seventy Australians under 25 will be hospitalised due to alcohol-caused assault in an average week.
- One in two Australians aged 15-17 who get drunk will do something they regret.

The message to parents is that they can positively influence their children’s attitudes and behaviour about drinking.

The \$20 million campaign will run over two years and will be executed in two stages. The initial year will launch and establish the campaign theme.

The campaign is one plank of the Government's National Binge Drinking Strategy, which includes:

- \$14.4 million to support community partnerships with sporting and other non-governmental organisations to help tackle binge drinking among young people. This includes \$5.2 million to support local sporting clubs to build a culture of responsible drinking at the grassroots level.
- \$19.1 million to support innovative early intervention and diversion programs for young people.
- Closing the dangerous tax loophole for alcopops, aimed at hooking young girls on drinking.

Binge-drinking hurts our communities. It hurts our hospitals. It hurts mums and dads. And it hurts our kids.

Binge drinking among young people has been a problem for a long, long time in Australia – and it's time to act.

For all media inquiries, please contact the Minister's Office on 02 6277 7220.