

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**25 July 2011**

### **Response to Deakin University claims re DrinkWise**

Claims today by Deakin University researchers that the DrinkWise organisation is just a PR tactic are laughable and do a great disservice to the academic community.

The sole "research" involved appears to be reading submissions about preventative health issues in which, not surprisingly, those who fund DrinkWise (alcohol producers) talk about that fact and what the organisation is trying to do.

This then leads the researchers to claim the whole process is tainted and that DrinkWise only promotes measures for which there is little evidence of impact and which are unlikely to hurt profits. As the "research" does not actually address impacts, this "finding" is clearly just opinion.

The first irony is that these claims come the day after DrinkWise released survey results in relation to its recent *Kids and Alcohol Don't Mix* campaign, which show 76% of parents surveyed said the campaign made them think about how they drank and how their attitude to alcohol will influence the way their children may drink in the future.

The second irony is that the researchers claim DrinkWise is just a PR tactic when that is exactly what they are guilty of – trying to grab a headline based on nothing and continuing the relentless campaign to portray all alcohol as bad all the time.

The alcohol industry openly and voluntarily funds DrinkWise to run campaigns and educational programs that seek to change Australia's drinking culture.

If Deakin University wants to make a serious contribution to the debate around alcohol consumption in this country it might want to have an equally serious look at the research it spends money on and the way researchers are allowed to interpret and promote it.

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