

To whom it may concern,

Submission to the Inquiry into the advertising and promotion of gambling services in sport

I heard there is to be a Senate Committee to discuss gambling and wanted to provide my view as a parent of a 7 year old boy.

My son is sports mad. He loves to watch sport on tv and he loves to play sport. He plays cricket in summer, and rugby league and soccer in winter.

Whilst watching rugby league on channel 9 we noticed that Tom Waterhouse was promoting his on-line gambling site. He's a clever businessman who's using new avenues to promote his product.

The result however is that my 7 year old son asked me what gambling is. Before I could answer he said "it looks like fun. Can we try it?" that I wondered about how acceptable it is for children to be viewing a gambling advertisement, in a way that's hiding that it's an advertisement.

I think adults having a flutter is fine, however there's a reason why clubs do not allow children near gambling areas. I am angry that it is being allowed into our living room during a 7:30 timeslot. I want sport to be a part of my child's life. It's good for his fitness, social skills and it's fun. Children should not be viewing something that links gambling and sport.

I then read an article in the SMH which questioned if Mr Waterhouse is "a bookmaker or a commentator". Of course he's a bookmaker. If he was a commentator, the station would be paying him. No commentator pays a station millions of dollars. He's just disguising his message so that it's entertainment, so that people don't switch off, but listen to what he has to say. This is not acceptable when children are caught up in his message, and unfortunately in the current format, children are.

Whilst I appreciate that this inquiry is broader than my comments on one area alone, it is this one area that has prompted me to write. I feel that children are being exposed to gambling in their home, and this is unacceptable.

Kind regards,

A parent of a sports mad child