# **Chapter 5**

# Improving prevention measures: better targeting messages and other suggestions

5.1 The previous chapter covered the need to address stigma and stereotypes associated with problem gambling to encourage more people to seek help and to seek it earlier and also to raise awareness in the community and change public perceptions. This chapter covers the remaining suggestions for more effective social marketing campaigns. Key messages in the chapter include the need to understand why people gamble and to find alternatives as well as the need for a range of messages to better target 'at-risk' groups and other key information to be included in social marketing campaigns.

# Need to understand why people gamble

5.2 Dr Samantha Thomas, a public health sociologist from Monash University, indicated that in order to develop effective preventative programs there is a need to understand why individuals engage in gambling as a leisure activity. She stressed that until this occurs:

At the moment for gambling we are constantly trying to patch the road. We do that for a whole range of different issues. That approach puts the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff, rather than the fence at the top. We also constantly try to catch up with all of those individuals who have tumbled into the risk category.<sup>1</sup>

- Work undertaken by Dr Thomas for the Office of Gaming and Racing, Victorian Department of Justice,<sup>2</sup> showed that there are three clear groups of gamblers: low-risk, moderate-risk and problem gamblers, who interact with gambling in different ways. Low-risk gamblers fear losing money so they do not engage in gambling to a significant degree, while moderate-risk gamblers are more regular gamblers; they want the win and see gambling as social activity. This is seen in young men engaging in sports betting. Many moderate-risk gamblers can move in and out of the problem gambling category if they binge. This group is very focused on personal responsibility: that they should be able to control themselves. For problem gamblers, instead of wanting to win, they need to win to recover losses.<sup>3</sup>
- 5.4 When speaking about why people gamble, Dr Thomas highlighted the importance of promoting alternatives to gambling and using messages to shift behaviours to other leisure activities:

<sup>1</sup> Dr Samantha Thomas, *Committee Hansard*, 3 May 2012, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Dr Samantha Thomas, Ms Sophie Lewis, *Conceptualisation of gambling risks and benefits: A socio-cultural study of 100 Victorian gamblers*, 22 May 2012, report prepared for the Office of Gaming and Racing, Department of Justice, Victoria.

<sup>3</sup> Dr Samantha Thomas, *Committee Hansard*, 18 June 2012, pp 1–2.

One of the things we clearly know from social marketing is that you have to offer an alternative to people. You cannot just say, 'Do not gamble.' You cannot have that as your major message. You have to give an alternative. We know that when we have risk behaviours we have to offer something that is of benefit for the individual to then move to. At the moment we do not have that alternative.<sup>4</sup>

#### Offering and finding alternatives to gambling

- 5.5 The Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA), while agreeing that seriously addressing primary prevention methods is important, highlighted the need to address the causes of excessive gambling and people's motivations to gamble as well as better understanding the product. It noted that people gamble for entertainment and excitement, to win money, for social reasons, such as boredom, isolation and loneliness, and to escape from their problems. There may be few other entertainment options in their area. The VLGA stressed that measures to prevent problem gambling need to focus on the motivations for gambling, particularly social connectedness, community strengthening and providing alternatives.<sup>5</sup>
- 5.6 Anglicare Tasmania said that they work with community groups to build their capacity to develop healthy alternatives to gambling in their communities:

For example, we recently commenced work in collaboration with Neighbourhood Houses to provide a range of interventions such as a 'chance to talk' and parenting courses. These programs aim to build the resilience and self-esteem of individuals so they are less likely to go for a game on the poker machines, help the Neighbourhood Houses develop activities that are meaningful and interesting and help them with referral pathways.<sup>6</sup>

5.7 Dr Samantha Thomas emphasised the importance of creating alternatives to gambling in order to create a new range of norms for a community:

There is no point in a town having a pokie venue as the only place of entertainment, the only place where people can go. We have got to create alternatives for communities. Then, with that layering on the top of exposing practices and so on, people shift naturally into different forms of activity and forms of entertainment. We have got to offer the community alternatives as well, otherwise we leave people with nowhere to go and that behaviour is very difficult to shift.<sup>7</sup>

5.8 Dr Jennifer Borrell, Adviser, Australian Churches Gambling Taskforce, emphasised that blaming individuals shames them into silence and a public health approach would look at not only better regulation of the product but also the reasons why people gamble:

<sup>4</sup> Dr Samantha Thomas, *Committee Hansard*, 3 May 2012, p. 22.

<sup>5</sup> Victorian Local Governance Association, *Submission* 25, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Anglicare Tasmania, Submission 12, p. 9.

<sup>7</sup> Dr Samantha Thomas, *Committee Hansard*, 3 May 2012, p. 25.

Another point about the public health approach is that it aims to empower people and communities to address their own health. This is taking it a bit broader. In contrast, the supply of pokies takes away people's control and shames them into silence through casting blame on individuals. An empowering approach would not only see the better regulation of a hazardous product, but it would address the social malaises that entice people into the psychological oblivion of the machines where they are trying to escape. Measures to promote meaningful social engagement and connection with other people should be supported.<sup>8</sup>

#### Committee view

- 5.9 The committee agrees that understanding why people gamble is important in addressing the social and environmental aspects of problem gambling. Communities and governments ensuring there are appropriate alternatives to gambling is also an important preventative measure. The committee notes that the need to find alternatives to gambling is highlighted in many of the problem gambling help websites. It also notes that the need to find recreational alternatives to gaming venues is starting to be recognised with programs such as 'the 3rd Place' concept which aims to connect individuals, decrease social isolation and to re-build strong, healthy, vibrant and interactive communities. 10
- 5.10 A successful example is 'Don't gamble with your group'. This has been produced by the Victorian North East Primary Care Partnership in partnership with Gamblers Help Northern Services, Multicultural Gamblers Help Program, Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre and Northern Federation of Ethnic Senior Citizens Clubs. This resource has been developed for social, senior and ethnic groups in Melbourne's inner and northern suburbs. The aim of the resource is to provide groups that go on outings with appropriate non-gambling related options that can be undertaken at low to moderate cost. <sup>11</sup>
- 5.11 Organisations could draw from these models to develop a resource for their communities. Resources created by and for the community can help bring about a fundamental shift in the public perception of recreational activities.

#### A range of messages are needed for different groups

5.12 The committee heard about the need for a range of public information messages as people can be at different places on the gambling continuum, from low to high risk, and can be in different stages of behavioural change, particularly for those with comorbid disorders. Consequently, there is no one size fits all message.

<sup>8</sup> Dr Jennifer Borrell, *Committee Hansard*, 14 May 2012, p. 22.

<sup>9</sup> See <a href="http://www.problemgambling.sa.gov.au/aspx/helpful\_tips\_and\_support.aspx">http://www.problemgambling.sa.gov.au/aspx/helpful\_tips\_and\_support.aspx</a> (accessed 6 July 2012).

<sup>10</sup> See <a href="http://www.ld.swin.edu.au/crd/thirdplace.htm">http://www.ld.swin.edu.au/crd/thirdplace.htm</a> (accessed 6 July 2012).

See <a href="http://www.nepcp.org.au/resources/social-outings-guide-don%E2%80%99t-gamble-yourgroup">http://www.nepcp.org.au/resources/social-outings-guide-don%E2%80%99t-gamble-yourgroup</a> (accessed 16 July 2012).

<sup>12</sup> Professor Dan Lubman, *Committee Hansard*, 3 May 2012, p. 37.

Messages need to be targeted to the different groups as people will only attend to what is relevant to them. Dr Samantha Thomas emphasised the need to target campaigns to reach different groups.

We cannot take a one-size-fits-all approach to gambling. Within gambling as an umbrella term there are a huge number of different types of products, and different types of individuals engage with those products in different ways. <sup>13</sup>

5.13 Dr Thomas provided a few possible examples of social marketing campaigns but cautioned that in order to develop appropriate messages it will be important to understand what a particular group values about gambling:

Social marketing campaigns should be targeted. They should be segmented. We should work out what that message needs to say. It may not be a message about taking personal responsibility with gambling. It may be something that is more around the benefits of engaging in different types of activities. The best social marketing campaigns will take something that has already been reformed. For example, it may be that we offer tax incentives for pubs to offer live music if they do not have pokie machines within the pubs. And then the social marketing campaign comes on top of that to encourage people to change their behaviour and to move away from the venue which has the pokie machines and move into the venue that has the live music and still offers all the same benefits that the pokie venue may have. It may also be something around value—so what you get for \$100 in a pokie machine venue and what you might get for \$100 somewhere else. But in order to really appropriately craft those campaigns, we need to work out what it is the community values about these activities in the first place. 14

5.14 She emphasised that a better understanding of socio-cultural factors would facilitate appropriately tailored messages, social marketing campaigns and policies that respond to risky behaviour in different groups: 15

At the moment we are seeing a concentration of effort in a certain area of gambling. What we need to do is to broaden that out to start to think about how we engage with and target different groups of individuals who may value engaging with different types of products in different ways. It is not until we really start to understand that that we will be able to really craft our prevention initiatives. <sup>16</sup>

# Highlight the risk for various groups, particularly moderate risk

5.15 The committee heard about the need for messages to be targeted to the different risk groups, particularly those at moderate risk who could quickly develop riskier gambling behaviour. Greater awareness of risky behaviours could assist this

Dr Samantha Thomas, *Committee Hansard*, 3 May 2012, p. 20.

<sup>14</sup> Dr Samantha Thomas, *Committee Hansard*, 3 May 2012, pp 22–23.

<sup>15</sup> Dr Samantha Thomas, Submission 52, p. 2.

<sup>16</sup> Dr Samantha Thomas, *Committee Hansard*, 3 May 2012, p. 20.

group to develop control strategies and seek help early. Professor Dan Lubman, Fellow, Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, stressed that:

There are no warning messages or health messages out there about people who are particularly at risk and what they can do to reduce their harms. Certainly there are a whole range of health promotion efforts that the government is pushing in a whole range of different disorders, and they increase people's knowledge around what their personal risk is and what they can do to minimise harms. <sup>17</sup>

5.16 Ms Kate Roberts, Gambling Impact Society NSW, also emphasised:

There needs to be some kind of information about giving consumers the real story around the potential risk that is more than about odds. <sup>18</sup>

5.17 Dr Samantha Thomas stated that apart from those at risk with poker machines the increase of sports and online betting has seen the emergence of new groups of individuals at risk:

...with the rise of things like sports and online betting, we are starting to see a number of different types of individuals who are coming into these moderate risk categories. In particular, we are focusing on young men.<sup>19</sup>

- 5.18 The Productivity Commission (PC) cautioned that with gambling, increasing knowledge can be overridden by irrational beliefs and campaigns can have little effect if people are not obliged to attend to the information or have no fundamental interest in it. The PC concluded that targeting campaigns at at-risk groups, to assist them to develop control strategies and know where to access help, may be effective.<sup>20</sup>
- 5.19 The committee notes the range of gambling help campaigns undertaken by the Queensland Government which expressed the view that specific campaigns targeted to each 'at-risk' group are more effective than broad-based community awareness campaigns. The ACT also advised that it is currently undertaking research to help better target messages to key risk groups. 22

Need to target CALD/ATSI communities

5.20 The committee asked about information and resources available for people from a culturally and linguistically diverse background (CALD) and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) communities. The PC noted that while there is little published data about gambling in Indigenous communities, the available evidence

<sup>17</sup> Professor Dan Lubman, Committee Hansard, 3 May 2012, p. 42.

<sup>18</sup> Ms Kate Roberts, Committee Hansard, 2 May 2012, p. 38.

<sup>19</sup> Dr Samantha Thomas, Committee Hansard, 3 May 2012, p. 20.

Productivity Commission, *Gambling*, vol.1, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 2010, p. 7.9.

Office of Regulatory Policy, Liquor, Gaming and Fair Trading, Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Queensland, correspondence received 4 June 2012.

<sup>22</sup> Correspondence from the ACT Gambling and Racing Commission, received 8 June 2012.

suggests that gambling is a common activity in these communities. Having a problem with gambling is often seen as a weakness and seeking help as shameful.<sup>23</sup> Mr David Pigott, National Manager, Government Relations, Mission Australia, noted gambling is a concern in Indigenous communities:

The anecdotal evidence I have is that it is a huge issue for the Northern Territory, with backyard bingo or any number of kinds of gambling going on in communities, kids involved in the sense of running errands for parents and getting cash and things. It is a major hidden issue. Alcohol and drug abuse get the focus in Indigenous communities but, underlying that, there are a whole lot of forms of gambling going on which I presume are all illegal in some form or another but they are just happening within communities and groups. <sup>24</sup>

5.21 Associate Professor Peter Harvey, Director, Flinders Centre for Gambling Research, advised that their project officer working in Indigenous communities in Ceduna reported anecdotally on the impact of problem gambling on Aboriginal families:

They seem to be a much more vulnerable group, and the gambling is actually affecting the families to a larger extent than it would in mainstream communities.<sup>25</sup>

5.22 In their submission Associate Professor Peter Harvey and Professor Malcolm Battersby advised that:

Engagement with the wider ATSI communities, including enlistment of social networks and community leaders reduces the considerable denial, stigma and shame experienced by problem gamblers within ATSI communities that are barriers to treatment uptake and retention (see Clarke, Abbott, DeSouza & Bellringer, 2007).

5.23 The Australian Psychological Society (APS) noted an increased prevalence of gambling among Indigenous people and emphasised the importance of targeted interventions. It recommended that:

...further attention is given to gambling in Indigenous communities. In particular, interventions should be culturally appropriate and include broader community capacity building components.<sup>27</sup>

5.24 The APS also highlighted the risk in CALD communities:

Emerging evidence suggests that there are indicators of risk in recently arrived and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities.

Productivity Commission, *Gambling*, vol.1, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 2010, p. 7.12.

<sup>24</sup> Mr David Pigott, Committee Hansard, 2 May 2012, p. 6.

<sup>25</sup> Associate Professor Peter Harvey, *Committee Hansard*, 14 May 2012, p. 6.

<sup>26</sup> Flinders University, Submission 8, Attachment 1, p. 38.

<sup>27</sup> Australian Psychological Society, Submission 49, p. 3, 14.

Multiple risk factors for these communities include dislocation, social isolation, lack of support systems in Australia, language barriers, cultural beliefs about gambling, luck and fate and lower income levels.<sup>28</sup>

5.25 The committee notes there has been reporting in the media of people from the Vietnamese community resorting to crime to pay gambling debts.<sup>29</sup> The Victorian Local Governance Association noted concern for CALD communities:

A number of studies have showed that rates of problem gambling may be higher for CALD communities compared with the mainstream population. Although CALD communities had lower rates of overall participation in gambling than the general community, local governments in Victoria have recorded higher incidences of problem gambling...in CALD communities.<sup>30</sup>

5.26 Research undertaken for Gambling Research Australia confirmed low rates of help-seeking behaviour among problem and moderate risk gamblers and particularly those from CALD and Indigenous populations. It found that the CALD survey and interviews:

...revealed strong reticence by CALD people to confide in others about gambling problems and, when they do, strong family ties and a desire to keep the problem hidden can prompt family and friends to extend funds to the gamblers, often exacerbating the gambling problem.<sup>31</sup>

5.27 However, in contrast, it found that Indigenous gamblers:

...may more readily seek help from family and friends, although a problem can be that these family and friends are also keen gamblers. Yet, many family members reported that they encouraged their significant others to seek help, although this advice was not often heeded.<sup>32</sup>

5.28 The research found that shame and stigma were also significant barriers to seeking help in these populations:

Amongst the CALD interview and survey respondents, strong cultural values of success, self-reliance and pride reportedly deter help-seeking, as do shame and fears over confidentiality. Thus, severe crises generally develop before professional help is sought. Further, once financial problems

Ian Munro, 'Gambling turns Vietnamese women to crime', *The Age*, 22 June 2010; Mr Thang Ngo, 'Pokies and the victims who have no voice', *The Drum*, 2 November 2011.

Professor Nerilee Hing, Dr Elaine Nuske, Dr Sally Gainsbury, *Gamblers at risk and their help seeking behaviour*, Centre for Gambling Education and Research, Southern Cross University, final report for Gambling Research Australia, September 2011, Executive summary, p. xx.

Australian Psychological Society, Submission 49, p. 14.

<sup>30</sup> Victorian Local Governance Association, Submission 25, p. 6.

<sup>32</sup> Professor Nerilee Hing, Dr Elaine Nuske, Dr Sally Gainsbury, *Gamblers at risk and their help seeking behaviour*, Centre for Gambling Education and Research, Southern Cross University, final report for Gambling Research Australia, September 2011, Executive summary, p. xx.

are resolved, some CALD gamblers seem reluctant to address the underlying cause, which is the gambling problem.<sup>33</sup>

5.29 The Productivity Commission emphasised the importance of awareness campaigns and education being conducted in consultation with relevant community groups, particularly culturally and linguistically diverse groups to ensure they are effective:

The evidence suggests that cultural differences can affect how gambling and gambling help are perceived which points to the importance of culturally appropriate messages and forms of providing information.<sup>34</sup>

5.30 Anglicare Tasmania reported that they work on education with these communities:

Our educational work is particularly focussed on at-risk groups and communities such as those with mental health issues, those utilising DHHS family and disability services, CALD groups, young people, Indigenous people, seniors, people with intellectual disability or cognitive impairments, and people on community services or corrective orders. <sup>35</sup>

#### Resources

5.31 The research by Hing et al contains guidelines for CALD and Indigenous specific initiatives which aim to increase help-seeking behaviour in at-risk gamblers. The Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW has identified gambling in Indigenous communities as a significant public health issue needing attention. Resources are available via the website. The Aboriginal Safe Gambling Program is a program aiming to raise community awareness, provide information and help local gambling services with access, intervention and cultural awareness. The committee notes that media company Isee-ilearn has uploaded cartoons to YouTube

Australasian Gaming Council, *Submission 33*, pp 10–11; Professor Nerilee Hing, Dr Elaine Nuske, Dr Sally Gainsbury, *Gamblers at risk and their help seeking behaviour*, Centre for Gambling Education and Research, Southern Cross University, final report for Gambling Research Australia, September 2011, Executive summary, p. xxvi.

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Professor Nerilee Hing, Dr Elaine Nuske, Dr Sally Gainsbury, *Gamblers at risk and their help seeking behaviour*, Centre for Gambling Education and Research, Southern Cross University, final report for Gambling Research Australia, September 2011, Executive summary, p. xxiii.

Productivity Commission, *Gambling*, vol.1, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 2010, p. 7.11.

<sup>35</sup> Anglicare Tasmania, Submission 12, p. 9.

<sup>37</sup> See <a href="http://www.aboriginalgamblinghelp.org.au/">http://www.aboriginalgamblinghelp.org.au/</a> (accessed 5 July 2012).

<sup>38</sup> See <a href="http://www.koorimail.com/index.php?&row=6675&field=05">http://www.koorimail.com/index.php?&row=6675&field=05</a> HotlinksAdvertising pdf upload (accessed 5 July 2012); See also 'Tackling Indigenous gambling Problems', *Manning River Times*, 7 December 2011.

which aim to educate people about gambling addiction. They are in nine territory languages and English.<sup>39</sup>

- 5.32 The PC reported that the Victorian Government's Problem Gambling Community Awareness and Education Strategy identifies target community segments at risk of developing a gambling problem and this includes people of Indigenous and CALD backgrounds as well as people with health issues (e.g. mental health and comorbid conditions), people in socio-economically vulnerable communities, people who are socially isolated and people with intellectual disability/cognitive impairments. 40
- 5.33 The committee notes that the Multicultural Gambler's Help Program works to ensure that the needs of CALD communities are included in statewide (Victorian) responses to problem gambling. The Program is run by the Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health. The website provides short films on problem gambling, multilingual resources, the latest research on working with CALD communities and how to work with interpreters.<sup>41</sup>
- 5.34 The committee also notes that the NSW Government committed \$15 million in the 2012–13 Budget to the Responsible Gambling Fund<sup>42</sup> to address problem gambling through counselling services, research and education and awareness activities. Most will go towards counselling and support services. However, there will be \$1.5 million over three years to establish a cadetship program for Aboriginal workers in Gambling Help counselling services. And there will be \$237,600 for a CALD problem gambling awareness campaign for multicultural communities.<sup>43</sup>
- 5.35 Further discussion of gambling treatment services available for CALD and ATSI communities is in chapter nine.

#### Target growing gambling opportunities

Online

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5.36 Witnesses highlighted the growth of gambling opportunities online and the need to incorporate this into preventative measures. Dr Sally Gainsbury told the committee:

<sup>39 &#</sup>x27;Cartoon hints', *Northern Territory News*, 7 June 2012, p. 2. See: <a href="http://www.isee-ilearn.com/">http://www.isee-ilearn.com/</a> (accessed 5 July 2012).

<sup>40</sup> Productivity Commission, *Gambling*, vol.1, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 2010, p. 7.9.

<sup>41</sup> See <a href="http://ceh.org.au/mghp.aspx">http://ceh.org.au/mghp.aspx</a> (accessed 3 July 2012). See also Gambling Help online: <a href="http://www.gamblinghelponline.org.au/accessing-support/non-english-speakers.aspx">http://www.gamblinghelponline.org.au/accessing-support/non-english-speakers.aspx</a> (accessed 3 July 2012); Gambling Help NSW <a href="http://www.gamblinghelp.nsw.gov.au/">http://www.gamblinghelp.nsw.gov.au/</a> (accessed 3 July 2012).

<sup>42</sup> Funded by a two per cent levy on gambling revenue from Star City Casino.

NSW Budget 2012-23, Budget paper 2, Chapter 5, p. 5-9, 5-10.; See also Justine Ferrari, 'Punters tipped to add \$70m windfall to state coffers', *The Australian*, 13 June 2012.

There are differences between the different types of gambling. Sports gamblers are different from gaming machine players, and now internet gambling is introducing a whole new variable that we are currently looking at to understand how it impacts. It seems that existing problem gamblers gravitate to that form, and this unique mode also creates problems for gamblers who would not otherwise have had problems. The games develop and change. A gaming machine today is not the same as a gaming machine 20 years ago. That is why, as an ongoing research project, we really need to look at the differences in the games. With sport betting, you now have inplay betting, where it is possible to make bets every 30 seconds or every other minute instead of one bet once a week. It is important that different activities appeal to different types of people and cause their own unique problems as well. 44

5.37 Mr David Pigott, National Manager, Government Relations, Mission Australia, also highlighted the need to start looking at preventative measures for newer but growing gambling opportunities online:

I am not sure, looking at the future, how that mix is going to change other than that online gambling is going to be an increasing part of the mix. I am not sure whether, if you put tough regulations on poker machines, people are going to migrate to online gambling. I think you are dealing with a different client base which is, again, equally important and equally as devastating in terms of the impact on their lives and their families. It is probably a wake-up call for all of us to start thinking about how we grapple with those potential clients as well.<sup>45</sup>

5.38 The committee notes that in recognition of the rapid increase of sports betting advertising and the accessibility of online gambling, in September 2011 the Victorian Government launched a campaign to raise awareness of the risks and consequences of excessive online gambling. The campaign generated a 1,213 per cent increase in online visits to *Gambling Help Online* which resulted in a 27 per cent increase in the number of live online counselling sessions provided. The campaign ran for eight weeks and during this time there was also a 23 per cent increase in calls to the Gambler's Help line. The advertisements were targeted at young males aged between 20 and 39. In March 2012 the Victorian Government announced that the Tasmanian Government would be adopting the online gambling campaign. 46

#### Youth

5.39 Ms Kate Roberts, Gambling Impact Society NSW, also spoke about the exposure of young people to gambling products:

44 Dr Sally Gainsbury, *Committee Hansard*, 2 May 2012, p. 12.

<sup>45</sup> Mr David Pigott, *Committee Hansard*, 2 May 2012, p. 5.

The Hon Michael O'Brien MP, Minister for Gaming, 'Victoria taking the lead with online gambling campaign', *Media release*, 5 March 2012.

What we also talked about is the need for young people who are really struggling out there. We know they are getting highly exposed to gambling products in all sorts of areas, not just to electronic gaming machines.<sup>47</sup>

5.40 UnitingCare Community recommended raising awareness in adults of the effects of gambling on children and young people:

With increasing online issues it is noticeable that young people are becoming more involved. Within the Wide Bay Burnett the team have worked with a teenage girl who, using her father's credit card, lost a significant amount of money in one week. Children are being groomed by witnessing the actions of their parents who normalise gambling behaviour. 48

5.41 UnitingCare Community also reported that they work with children in schools to raise awareness:

The Gambling Educator for the Wide Bay Burnett has been presenting in school for over five years and has seen gambling move up into one of the top three issues that schools are dealing with, in particular the school students using internet gambling.<sup>49</sup>

5.42 Ms Penny Wilson, Chief Executive Officer, Responsible Gambling Advocacy Centre, told the committee about the Public Health Gambling Project in Ontario. She said one of their most successful campaigns has been an animation developed by young people for young people which is available on YouTube offering two contrasting pathways through life and gambling. <sup>50</sup> She added:

That model is impressive because they have faced all the kinds of issues and questions that we are facing here now: is it appropriate; will it encourage people to gamble; to what age group do you start using words like 'gambling' and listing 'choice'? They have looked at that for some years and I would encourage the committee to look at that very closely.<sup>51</sup>

#### Committee comment

5.43 Witnesses stressed the need to better target messages to at-risk groups such as those at moderate risk who may quickly develop risky gambling behaviour. Greater awareness of risky behaviours could assist this group to develop control strategies and seek help early. The committee was pleased to note the resources available and being developed for Indigenous and CALD communities. As noted by the Productivity Commission, the committee stresses the importance of developing campaign and educational material in consultation with relevant community groups to ensure their effectiveness. The committee agrees there is a need to include messages targeting

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<sup>47</sup> Ms Kate Roberts, Committee Hansard, 2 May 2012, p. 38.

<sup>48</sup> UnitingCare Community, Submission 59, p. 3.

<sup>49</sup> UnitingCare Community, Submission 59, p. 3.

Available from: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rOwl0lwGrXA (accessed 6 July 2012).

Ms Penny Wilson, *Committee Hansard*, 3 May 2012, p. 30.

growing gambling opportunities, such as online gambling, and a need to raise awareness in adults of the effects of gambling on children and young people as well as providing information to young people. This issue is addressed in more detail below.

### Other information to be included in social marketing campaigns

5.44 Most social marketing campaigns include the following areas which were highlighted to the committee.

#### Raise general awareness

5.45 Part of de-stigmatising help-seeking and encouraging people to seek help earlier is raising the level of general awareness in the community. Mr Mark Henley, Member, Australian Churches Gambling Taskforce, discussed the different types of messages that are needed. He pointed out that simple messages can be effective for awareness—for example, that help is available:

I think the first thing to note is that there are very different experiences in different states. Victoria has had much more public health type advertising than have most other states. What this sort of advertising campaign can do is provide really simple messages. I think the first simple message that needs to go out on a semi-regular basis into the public space is, 'If you or someone you know is likely to be experiencing gambling harm, then ring the helpline number.' That straight awareness stuff about the helpline number is still very helpful advertising. I note from South Australian campaigns in the past that, as soon as public advertising started occurring, calls to gambling help services generally increased by 100 per cent or 200 per cent. So that sort of semi-regular, straight message of, 'Go to the helpline if needs be,' is helpful.<sup>52</sup>

5.46 Ms Christina Sanchez, Team Leader, Mission Australia, pointed out the effect such advertising to raise community awareness can have:

We have just finished discussing this at the launch of our new ad campaign. I think the big issue is that gambling seems to be like the ignored topic. It has not been discussed in the same way that drugs and alcohol have been discussed. I do not think people have encouraged families to discuss gambling like they have drug and alcohol issues. You see the ads around speed use, and they encourage families to sit around the TV and talk or to sit around the dinner table and talk. I do not think that has been encouraged with gambling. I do not think gambling has, until recently, been a topic that people have wanted to talk about. It is still like the hidden taboo. I think once that gets happening, once people start talking more and having these conversations about gambling, more people will see that there is an issue. The thing that I like to point out as the big one that did a really quick turnaround is binge drinking. Ten or 15 years ago, who thought of binge drinking as an issue? Yet, once it was identified and there were some parameters put in place as to what binge drinking is and people started

talking about it, then it became a recognised issue. I think that is something that has been lacking for gambling until now. <sup>53</sup>

#### Increasing knowledge

- 5.47 Mr Christopher Hunt, Psychologist, Gambling Treatment Clinic, School of Psychology, University of Sydney, stressed the need for information campaigns to address the core pathology of problem gambling which is the belief that you can win money in the long term.<sup>54</sup>
- 5.48 The committee notes that many but not all gambling help websites include information on knowing the odds of winning and addressing common gambling myths.<sup>55</sup>

# Messages for others affected

5.49 Mr Mark Henley pointed out that for every person with a gambling problem between seven and ten others are affected. Therefore the importance of the family in dealing with gambling harm needs to be highlighted:

So one of the public health measures that we will be supporting is recognising the role families can play in either helping people to deal with gambling risk or encouraging them to seek more formal help through gambling help services. Certainly as part of a prevention approach we need to better empower families and friends to identify the signs of problem gambling and encourage people to either accept help from family or seek help from agencies. <sup>56</sup>

5.50 Ms Kate Roberts, Gambling Impact Society NSW, stressed that a lot of the current messages are in venues which won't assist family members.<sup>57</sup>

If I can add to that, the focus has to be away from the venue as well as at the venue. We need to have this as early intervention in the community, not just be looking at venues. Obviously a venue is a place where you have a captive audience in the people there, but you have a lot of people who are also struggling to be away from the venue. And, most importantly, you have family members, who may or may not be attending the venues, and they need resources and information to actually help them, because often they are the person to whom the person with a gambling problem turns, or they are the ones who are aware of it a lot earlier and are dealing with the impacts of it. 58

<sup>53</sup> Ms Christina Sanchez, *Committee Hansard*, 14 May 2012, p. 36.

<sup>54</sup> Mr Christopher Hunt, Committee Hansard, 14 May 2012, p. 58.

<sup>55</sup> See for example *Gambling Help Online*: <a href="http://www.gamblinghelponline.org.au/regaining-control/thinking-straight.aspx">http://www.gamble.aspx</a> (accessed 3 July 2012); the Victorian gamble aware website: <a href="http://www.gambleaware.vic.gov.au/">http://www.gambleaware.vic.gov.au/</a> (accessed 3 July 2012); South Australian Gambling Help <a href="http://www.problemgambling.sa.gov.au/aspx/the">http://www.problemgambling.sa.gov.au/aspx/the</a> odds.aspx (accessed 3 July 2012).

<sup>56</sup> Mr Mark Henley, Committee Hansard, 3 May 2012, p. 11.

<sup>57</sup> Ms Kate Roberts, Committee Hansard, 2 May 2012, p. 38.

<sup>58</sup> Ms Kate Roberts, Committee Hansard, 2 May 2012, p. 42.

- 5.51 Ms Roberts mentioned a self-help guide developed by the Gambling Impact Society NSW based on a Canadian resource.<sup>59</sup> She emphasised the positive role family members can play in early intervention if they can find sufficient information and resources.<sup>60</sup>
- 5.52 The committee notes that many gambling help websites include a section for families and friends of problem gamblers.<sup>61</sup> Further discussion of the role family members can play in treatment is in chapter eight.

### **Format issues**

# Change messages frequently to prevent message fatigue

5.53 The committee notes the range of gambling help campaigns and evaluations undertaken by the Queensland Government. The evaluations highlighted the importance of refreshing information regularly to prevent message fatigue.<sup>62</sup>

#### New formats needed

5.54 Witnesses emphasised that it is not just different messages that are needed but different formats as well. Professor Malcolm Battersby, Director, Statewide Gambling Therapy Service, Southern Adelaide Health Service and Professor, Flinders University, suggested the use of social media—for example, using the internet and YouTube to engage people and link with an anonymous initial treatment option via the internet.<sup>63</sup>

# Need for sustained campaigns utilising all forms of media

5.55 The committee heard that advertising campaigns tend to be occasional rather than systematic or sustained. Associate Professor Peter Harvey, Director, Flinders Centre for Gambling Research, noted that when the state government launches a gambling related initiative, increased activity is seen and if these initiatives were more sustained then more people would take notice and seek help:

At a lower level from *beyondblue*, when the state government does have an initiative here, we do see increased activity. If that were prolonged then you would probably get more people taking notice and eventually seeking help. But in the last few years here we have had no media coverage. The only media coverage we get for our service is when we are on the radio, Malcolm [Battersby] is on the television or something is happening that is

60 Ms Kate Roberts, *Committee Hansard*, 2 May 2012, p. 42.

61 See for example Gambling Help NSW: <a href="http://www.gamblinghelp.nsw.gov.au/content/help-for-friends-and-family.aspx">http://www.gamblinghelp.nsw.gov.au/content/help-for-friends-and-family.aspx</a> (accessed 3 July 2012); Gambling Help Online: <a href="http://www.gamblinghelponline.org.au/helping-others.aspx">http://www.gamblinghelponline.org.au/helping-others.aspx</a> (accessed 3 July 2012).

<sup>59</sup> See <a href="http://www.gisnsw.org.au/Gambling%20Impact%20Book/LOW%20RES%20VERSION/GIS%20LOW%20RES%20PRINT%20VERSION.pdf">http://www.gisnsw.org.au/Gambling%20Impact%20Book/LOW%20RES%20VERSION/GIS%20LOW%20RES%20PRINT%20VERSION.pdf</a> (accessed 11 July 2012).

Office of Regulatory Policy, Liquor, Gaming and Fair Trading, Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Queensland, correspondence received 4 June 2012.

Professor Malcolm Battersby, *Committee Hansard*, 14 May 2012, p. 7.

organised in the media but not through a campaign. I think the current promotional campaign around Gambling Awareness Week is radio driven and has a bit of promotion on billboards and so on. The help line that we work with quite closely here have repeatedly said that, when in the past we have had those major media promotions, that is when the numbers increase and people do actually decide it is time to seek help rather than waiting till a crisis and for their life to be in such disarray that they are virtually forced to it as their last choice. So I think a systematic approach through the media would be significant. <sup>64</sup>

5.56 As an example of the possible results, Professor Battersby mentioned a television appearance in Adelaide to discuss and promote a research study. This resulted in 18 calls the next day:

Just one little thing made that [number of calls happen]. That is quite significant. It was life changing for those people. 65

5.57 Ms Sanchez spoke about the ACT campaign for Responsible Gambling Awareness Week which uses posters on buses and in gambling venues as well as print media. However, it did not include radio or television. In discussion with the committee about how to target and get the attention of a younger demographic it was suggested that FM radio advertising might be worthwhile if television was too expensive. Ms Sanchez confirmed that television advertising was very expensive. <sup>66</sup>

# Is there a role for gambling education?

5.58 Earlier in this chapter the committee noted the exposure of children and young people to gambling advertising and products. Some witnesses saw value in including gambling in messages to young people about other public health issues. Mr David Pigott, National Manager, Government Relations, Mission Australia, spoke to the committee about this:

Why I mentioned early intervention at the outset is it is the most effective strategy. Again, we will be gathering evidence and data as time goes on for our clients in these services. The sooner you start the better. We are involved in early intervention and in getting messages out through schools and high schools as campaigns do with drugs and alcohol. The most effective way to start is with families at that stage... <sup>67</sup>

#### 5.59 The APS noted:

Gambling among young people is associated with risk taking behaviours characteristic of adolescence and higher mental health issues such as anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation and attempts (Dickson et al, 2008). 68

<sup>64</sup> Associate Professor Peter Harvey, *Committee Hansard*, 14 May 2012, p. 3.

<sup>65</sup> Professor Malcolm Battersby, Committee Hansard, 14 May 2012, p. 3.

Ms Christina Sanchez, *Committee Hansard*, 14 May 2012, p. 40.

<sup>67</sup> Mr David Pigott, Committee Hansard, 2 May 2012, p. 3.

<sup>68</sup> Australian Psychological Society, Submission 49, p. 14.

5.60 Dr Samantha Thomas told the committee:

In many cases we also need to think very clearly about the education of young people. We have seen that clearly in other public health issues such as alcohol, sexual behaviour and so on. We need to start pre gambling to create better prevention messages for young people. <sup>69</sup>

- 5.61 UnitingCare Community recommended raising awareness on how to control gambling as early intervention educates people about gambling being addictive. <sup>70</sup>
- 5.62 Ms Penny Wilson, Chief Executive Officer, Responsible Gambling Advocacy Centre (RGAC), said that RGAC is frequently asked how to talk to young people about gambling by parents, teachers, principals, schools and sporting clubs. Ms Wilson stated that gambling is part of the community experience and has been normalised. Even those who choose not to gamble cannot escape gambling advertising and venue signage. Ms Wilson added:

Young people we now talk to between the ages of 18 and 21 I refer to as the 'pokies generation'. They have grown up in Victoria with pokies venues. They cannot actually remember when there were not pokies in the pubs and clubs that are around them.

We talk about gambling education from a public health perspective. You have heard from some experts this morning. We see this in a very practical way. It is about increasing the capacity of people to respond to the challenges of the environment around them to their wellbeing and to their health. We believe that education for children on gambling is now necessary so they can make appropriate choices on gambling and fully understand the issues around gambling, problem gambling and responsible gambling. But this education needs to be seated in resilience. Children need to grow up with an understanding of the concepts of advertising—of how people are trying to manipulate them into buying products—and have critical thinking skills about issues.

This is not education about how to gamble. It is not just maths and stats; it is about the whole person and navigating through pressures that come about from our sociocultural settings and by simply living in our community. We come to this view based on evidence of public health approaches to other difficult issues, such as sexual health, drugs and alcohol.

We completely respect the choice of parents and schools who may choose not to talk about gambling and who may teach abstinence from gambling as the appropriate behavioural choice. But we consider this to be an ethical and moral stance not a public health approach.<sup>71</sup>

5.63 Ms Wilson noted there is already a curriculum in Victoria developed by Consumer Affairs and the Office of Gaming and Racing in the Department of Justice, Victoria. The program is called 'Responsible gambling: building resilience for young

<sup>69</sup> Dr Samantha Thomas, *Committee Hansard*, 3 May 2012, pp 22–23.

<sup>70</sup> UnitingCare Community, Submission 59, p. 3.

<sup>71</sup> Ms Penny Wilson, *Committee Hansard*, 3 May 2012, p. 27.

learners' for students in years 9 to 12. It is taught in around 50 schools and has been running since 2009. Ms Wilson pointed out that:

...it is not unusual for children to gamble, particularly using apps on smart phones. It is not unusual for children to do this and not understand that they are not meant to be doing this. It is not unusual for people under 18 to think that they are not taking a risk gambling, which is of great concern to the people around them, and that is something about understanding risk at appropriate age. 72

- 5.64 Ms Wilson pointed out that the Responsible Gambling Awareness Week would focus on youth and gambling: 'We now think it is necessary. The community, the government and even industry think that we need to talk to young people about gambling'.<sup>73</sup>
- 5.65 The committee asked Ms Wilson to outline what is covered in the school campaigns:

Overall in Victoria there is a concept called 'life skills'. It is about resilience and it is taught from prep to year 12. It is situated in that broad resilience framework. The education about gambling itself comes in at around year-9 age, which is something like 13 to 15 years old in Victoria. They have already addressed concepts of bullying, manipulation by that age in different ways. And it is not just in one subject. It is addressed through a number of different subjects. They look at critical thinking skills. They look at the impact of advertising and what advertising is trying to get you to do. Then they look at more specific contextual questions.

Very recently I was contacted by a school in Melbourne that was looking at this as a current affairs issue, running a series of debates for year 8 and 9 students—who are roughly around 13 to 15 years of age—and wanting some good information. We were able to assist them by pointing out information, such as Dr Thomas's work, that was suitable for children of that age group to look at when preparing for their debates.

That is what the curriculum does. It brings in broad concepts at the appropriate age levels. Of course, heading towards year 12, where students are 17 and 18 years old, they are heading towards actual campaigns, actual gambling concepts and the risk they are taking. They are looking at it in the context of being a risk-taking behaviour: 'You are taking a risk when you are gambling. It is a legitimate entertainment choice if you are of age; however, you need to understand what you are doing when you do it and that all the advertising around gambling is trying to sell you a service.'<sup>74</sup>

Ms Penny Wilson, *Committee Hansard*, 3 May 2012, p. 27.

<sup>73</sup> Ms Penny Wilson, *Committee Hansard*, 3 May 2012, p. 27.

<sup>74</sup> Ms Penny Wilson, Committee Hansard, 3 May 2012, p. 29. See also: The Victorian Problem Gambling Community Awareness and Education Strategy, March 2009 and Taking Action on Problem Gambling, A Strategy for Combating Problem Gambling In Victoria, October 2006.

- 5.66 During the previous inquiry Dr Jeffrey Derevensky, who has focused on youth gambling and problem gambling over two decades, told the committee that the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems has prevention programs designed as school based programs. He explained that adolescents do see the risks associated with gambling but do not attribute those risks to themselves and they view them as occurring later in life. He stressed that most parents are concerned with issues other than gambling in relation to their children. This is why the Centre has included public service announcements in an effort to educate parents and raise awareness that some adolescents will become problem gamblers.<sup>75</sup>
- 5.67 The committee notes that on this issue the Productivity Commission (PC) took a cautious approach:

...we were somewhat sceptical of some of the other ways of trying to engage people in areas of gambling—such as childhood early education—because we considered that there might be risks of perverse outcomes.<sup>76</sup>

#### Committee view

5.68 To summarise, the committee notes the following suggestions to develop and target effective preventative programs:

- the need to better understand why different groups of people gamble;
- ensuring there are alternatives to gambling in the community;
- a range of messages are needed for different groups;
- those in the moderate risk group who can quickly develop risky gambling behaviour should receive particular attention;
- continue development of resources and culturally appropriate messages for CALD and ATSI communities;
- incorporate new and growing gambling opportunities into preventative measures such as online gambling and gambling targeting youth. This includes providing information to children and youth;
- continue messages around raising awareness, increasing knowledge, including for others affected such as families;
- change messages regularly to prevent message fatigue and utilise new formats such as social media; and
- the need for campaigns to be sustained.
- 5.69 The committee noted during its previous inquiry into interactive and online gambling its concern about potential new gambling opportunities which appear to be targeted at youth, such as Slotomania and online poker games such as Zynga poker

Parliamentary Joint Select Committee on Gambling Reform, Second Report: Interactive and Online Gambling and Gambling Advertising and Interactive Gambling and Broadcasting Amendment (Online Transactions and Other Measures) Bill 2011, p. 36.

<sup>76</sup> Dr Ralph Lattimore, *Committee Hansard*, 14 May 2012, p. 41.

which are accessible through Facebook applications. These games normalise the activity and can soften younger people to playing for money. Recent media reporting would appear to confirm this:

"...We believe there will be gambling potential on nearly all of Zynga's games," BTIG analyst Richard Greenfield said in a recent report...

...Zynga Poker starts players off with a sum of virtual money and gives them the ability to get free chips every eight hours and acquire more if they share the game with friends. It would presumably be logical to adopt a platform where players had the ability to use real money.<sup>77</sup>

#### 5.70 In another article:

Most of the games don't involve betting or real money, but they whet players' appetite for gambling and familiarize them with casino brands.

And they hope to promote those games, and ease people into real online gambling, via Facebook.

Over the past year, almost every major casino company has bought or partnered with an online game developer. <sup>78</sup>

- 5.71 In yet another article, a new platform to allow real money bets on almost any online game has been developed. Although the company, which has a British gaming licence, has not announced any specific contracts it could be used by Facebook. Zynga poker has confirmed it is exploring 'real money' online poker ventures. On 7 August 2012 it was reported that Facebook launched the first real-money gambling app which allows users aged 18 and over to play games for cash prizes. 81
- 5.72 Witnesses for the interactive and online inquiry told the committee that young people are encouraged to play free online games which then prepare them to play with real money. Cases such as the 12 year old boy in the UK with a £7,000 gambling bill on his father's credit card from online poker are becoming more frequent. 82
- 5.73 In recommendation 5 of the second report the committee supported the recommendation of the Productivity Commission that the COAG Select Council on Gambling Reform review new gambling opportunities, particularly those which

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<sup>77</sup> See <a href="http://www.foxbusiness.com/technology/2012/07/02/bullish-zynga-analysts-all-in-on-game-maker-prospects/">http://www.foxbusiness.com/technology/2012/07/02/bullish-zynga-analysts-all-in-on-game-maker-prospects/</a> (accessed 5 July 2012); Dr Jeffrey Derevensky; <a href="https://www.foxbusiness.com/technology/2012/07/02/bullish-zynga-analysts-all-in-on-game-maker-prospects/">https://www.foxbusiness.com/technology/2012/07/02/bullish-zynga-analysts-all-in-on-game-maker-prospects/</a> (accessed 5 July 2012); Dr Jeffrey Derevensky; <a href="https://www.foxbusiness.com/technology/2012/07/02/bullish-zynga-analysts-all-in-on-game-maker-prospects/">https://www.foxbusiness.com/technology/2012/07/02/bullish-zynga-analysts-all-in-on-game-maker-prospects/</a> (accessed 5 July 2012); Dr Jeffrey Derevensky; <a href="https://www.foxbusiness.com/technology/2012/">https://www.foxbusiness.com/technology/2012/</a>); Dr Jeffrey Derevensky; <a href="https://www.foxbusiness.com/technology/2012/">https://www.

Ron Sylvester, 'Casinos going online, using Facebook to recruit new players', *Vegas inc*, 22 June 2012.

<sup>79 &#</sup>x27;Startup brings real bets to online games', *Herald Sun*, 10 July 2012.

<sup>80</sup> See <a href="http://www.gambling911.com/poker/zynga-gets-bids-offer-%E2%80%98real-cash%E2%80%99-online-poker-072312.html">http://www.gambling911.com/poker/zynga-gets-bids-offer-%E2%80%98real-cash%E2%80%99-online-poker-072312.html</a> (accessed 24 July 2012).

BBC News, 'Facebook's first real-cash gambling app launched', 7 August 2012.

James Tozer, 'Boy, 12, racks up £7k gambling bill', *IOL News*, 8 June 2012.

appear to target youth, with a view to developing a national regulatory approach. The government responded to this recommendation as follows:

Matter for jurisdictional consultation. New opportunities such as use of social networking sites are being considered in the review of *the Interactive Gambling Act 2001*. The Consultative Working Group on Cybersafety is also considering the issue of gambling services being made available through social networking sites. The Government will discuss this issue further with state and territory governments through the COAG Select Council on Gambling Reform.<sup>83</sup>

- 5.74 The committee covered the issue of gambling advertising and inducements in its second report. However, the issue of advertising and marketing of gambling continues to be a concern that is repeatedly expressed to the committee. The main issue is the amount of gambling advertising, particularly for sports wagering. As with the last inquiry, people were concerned that this level of advertising was normalising gambling for children.
- 5.75 During its previous inquiry the committee heard about the vulnerability of children to the high level of in-venue advertising at sporting matches. Sporting matches are promoted as family friendly, yet the environment exposes children to a very high level of marketing for an adult product. In addition the constant promotion of live odds updates at matches and within game play may have a normalising effect on children where they may consider the live odds, for example, to be part of the game. <sup>85</sup>
- 5.76 The committee recommended (recommendation 12) that the COAG Select Council on Gambling Reform commission further research on the longer-term effects of gambling advertising on children, particularly in relation to the 'normalisation' of gambling during sport. The government responded:

Matter for jurisdictional consultation. The impact of advertising on gambling behaviours is a priority issue for the COAG Select Council. Specific research into the impact of advertising on children will be

See for example: Dr Clive Allcock, *Submission 6*, p. 3; University of Sydney, Gambling Treatment Clinic, *Submission 10*, p. 3; Anglicare Tasmania, *Submission 12*, p. 3; Australian Psychological Society, *Submission 49*, p. 8; Mission Australia, *Submission 17*, p. 5; Social Issues Executive, Anglican Church, Diocese of Sydney, *Submission 26*, p. 2.

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<sup>83</sup> Government Response to the Parliamentary Joint Select Committee on Gambling Reform, Second Report: Interactive and Online Gambling and Gambling Advertising and Interactive Gambling and Broadcasting Amendment (Online Transactions and Other Measures) Bill 2011, p. 4.

Joint Select Committee on Gambling Reform, Second Report: Interactive and Online Gambling and Gambling Advertising and Interactive Gambling and Broadcasting Amendment (Online Transactions and Other Measures) Bill 2011, pp 155–157; p.164; pp 253–255.

discussed with state and territory governments through the COAG Select Council on Gambling Reform. <sup>86</sup>

5.77 The committee also recommended (recommendation 14) that the government legislate a total ban of the promotion of live odds both at venues and during the broadcast of a sporting event. The government responded:

Government announced on 21 January that it is working with the sporting and betting industries to reduce and control the promotion of live odds during sports coverage through amendments to their existing industry codes. If satisfactory amendments have not been put in place by broadcasters by the end of June 2012, the Australian Government will introduce legislation to ban the promotion of live odds in sporting broadcasts.

The promotion of live odds at venues is a matter for the states and territories and the Government will continue to work with states and territories through the COAG Select Council on Gambling to address this issue.<sup>87</sup>

5.78 The committee notes that in relation to live odds, on 29 June 2012 the government announced that:

Broadcasters have agreed to amend their existing codes of practice to restrict live odds promotion including by banning sporting commentators from mentioning live odds and banning all live odds promotion during play. The principles that will underpin these restrictions are expected to be finalised in the coming weeks. <sup>88</sup>

5.79 The committee also recommended (recommendation 19) that the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* be amended to prohibit gambling advertising during times when children are likely to be watching. The government responded:

Noted. As indicated in the response to Recommendation 14, the government priority is to address the promotion of live odds during sports broadcasts.<sup>89</sup>

Government Response to the Parliamentary Joint Select Committee on Gambling Reform – Second Report: Interactive and Online Gambling and Gambling Advertising and Interactive Gambling and Broadcasting Amendment (Online Transactions and Other Measures) Bill 2011, p. 5.

87 Government Response to the Parliamentary Joint Select Committee on Gambling Reform – Second Report: Interactive and Online Gambling and Gambling Advertising and Interactive Gambling and Broadcasting Amendment (Online Transactions and Other Measures) Bill 2011, p. 6.

88 Senator the Hon Stephen Conroy, Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, 'Government achieves agreement to reduce the promotion of live odds in sports broadcasts', *Media release*, 29 June 2012.

89 Government Response to the Parliamentary Joint Select Committee on Gambling Reform – Second Report: Interactive and Online Gambling and Gambling Advertising and Interactive Gambling and Broadcasting Amendment (Online Transactions and Other Measures) Bill 2011, p. 8.

- 5.80 The committee notes that one of the risk factors for problem gambling is early onset: the earlier one starts gambling, the more likely one is to continue gambling and along with that the probability of developing a gambling problem increases. Given the proliferation of gambling advertising and gambling opportunities, the committee believes that providing educational information to children and youth about the possible risks and how to identify risky gambling behaviour may assist with enhancing prevention, awareness and anti-stigma messages.
- 5.81 The next chapter will move to industry measures and the call to shift the focus of responsibility, which currently lies with the individual, to make it more balanced by including the industry and product.

90 Parliamentary Joint Select Committee on Gambling Reform, Second Report: Interactive and Online Gambling and Gambling Advertising and Interactive Gambling and Broadcasting Amendment (Online Transactions and Other Measures) Bill 2011, p. 35.