



## **PRESS RELEASE**

Press Release:

Embargoed: Immediate Release

### **Personal Safety Charity Asks for Parents' Support to Protect Children from Alcohol Promotion**

The national personal safety charity, the Suzy Lamplugh Trust, have launched a campaign calling for a ban to be introduced on all alcohol advertising before the 9pm watershed and in cinemas before under 18 films, and are appealing for the public – especially parents - to support it.

Julie Bentley, Chief Executive of the Trust, says:

*“Alcohol and drunkenness play a very significant role in people becoming victims of crime and almost 50% of all violent crimes involve alcohol. Yet as a society we have regulations that stop children from being exposed to scenes of sex, violence and swearing on television and in cinemas but not from alcohol promotions. There is no logic to protecting our children from hearing a few swear words but not from images which glamorise alcohol and its use. When was the last time someone was admitted to A & E on a Saturday night because they swore too much!”*

*“Alcohol is a powerful drug, it should not be promoted to anyone until they are old enough to understand the possible dangers associated with it.”*

It is an uphill struggle to shift current government action on this issue, not least because the alcohol industry has a very powerful lobbying presence inside government. The regulations regarding the scheduling of alcohol advertising, as they stand at the moment, appear to be putting the welfare of the alcohol industry before that of children.

The Trust firmly believes that parents are the best people to support and guide their children when making choices about alcohol. They believe that a watershed ban and cinema restrictions will help parents to have control over their children's exposure to alcohol promotion.

A 9pm watershed and cinema restrictions would protect children whilst still allowing adults to be reached by the alcohol promoters. This isn't about being anti alcohol; it's about supporting parents and children to deal with the difficult subject of alcohol.

At the Suzy Lamplugh Trust, they are under no illusions that binge drinking and under-age drinking will stop simply by banning the promotion of alcohol to children but they believe this move is essential if we want society to take the potential dangers of alcohol seriously. Rating it as less dangerous, or more appropriate, for children than swearing, sends out completely the wrong message.

Julie Bentley has the final word:

*"Any parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, cousin, teacher or simply concerned member of the public, who agrees that alcohol promotions should not be shown to children, can help us put pressure on the government by signing up to our online campaign. It only takes a minute and it could help to make a important impact on the future of children in the UK". .*

Readers can support the campaign by visiting [www.suzylamplugh.org](http://www.suzylamplugh.org) and signing the online petition.

Ends

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### **NOTES to the EDITOR**

At present, alcohol can be promoted in cinemas before films rated for 15 year olds and even younger and television regulations only prohibit alcohol advertising around children's programmes. However 'children's programmes' are classified by the *percentage* of the audience who are children as opposed to the *actual number* of children watching. This means many family programmes, some of which have child audiences of a million or more, are still deemed suitable for alcohol advertising. That leaves millions of children exposed on a regular basis to images of young, attractive, successful looking adults having a great time drinking.

**The Suzy Lamplugh Trust**, a registered charity, is the leading authority on personal safety. The Trust works to raise awareness of the importance of personal safety and to provide solutions that effect change in order to help people to avoid violence and aggression and live safer, more confident lives.

The Trust works alongside government, the police, the educational establishment, public bodies and the business sector to encourage safety wherever people may be at risk - in the home, at work, in public and in schools and colleges, on public transport and when travelling at home or abroad.