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Promoting Health and Nutrition through Sport: Attitudes of the Junior Sporting Community

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Promoting Health and Nutrition through Sport: Attitudes of the Junior Sporting Community

Abstract

This study aimed to provide information on parents', children's and sporting officials' attitudes to sponsorship arrangements, and their support of potential policy interventions to reorient sponsorship to be more health promoting. Methods: Sports clubs (n=20) known to have food and beverage sponsors in Sydney, Illawarra and Canberra/Queanbeyan were selected. Parents and children at sports clubs were recruited through convenience sampling by approaching those attending the sports club at the time of the survey and those children who had a signed consent form. Sports clubs were visited between May and November 2010. At each club, one sports club official, ten parents of players aged 5 to 14 years, and five children aged 10 to 14 years were surveyed. Results: The majority of sporting officials and parents were supportive of policies to restrict unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of elite sport and children's sports clubs. More than two-thirds of all children were able to correctly recall sponsors of their sports club and almost half could correctly name at least one sponsor of their favourite elite sports team. Most children thought that food and beverage companies sponsored sport to help out sports clubs and liked to return the favour to these sponsors by buying their products. Conclusion: Children's high level of recall of food and beverage sponsors is concerning as this recall is likely to be linked to children's product preferences and consumption behaviours. Alternative funding mechanisms are required to replace community and elite sport sponsorship from unhealthy food and beverage companies to reduce the promotional effects of this marketing on children's food choices and eating behaviours.

Keywords

community, health, sporting, promoting, junior, attitudes, sport:, nutrition

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1.0 Executive summary

1.1 Introduction

Community sport provides important opportunities for children to be physically active. However, data from Australian surveys on children's organised sport participation indicate that sport is not equitably distributed across population groups, with those from disadvantaged backgrounds less likely to participate (1). Understanding parent's perceptions and satisfaction with the delivery of organised sport, including its cost, safety and healthiness, is necessary to understand potential barriers to children's participation and to guide structural changes that may reduce inequalities in sport. As well as the promotion of physical activity, community sporting clubs offer opportunities for the promotion and dissemination of broader health agendas into settings accessed by children. One component of this is the promotion of healthy messages through club partnerships with commercial organisations or sponsors.

This study aimed to provide information on parents', children's and sporting officials' attitudes to sponsorship arrangements, and their support of potential policy interventions to reorient sponsorship to be more health promoting. This survey also aimed to assess children's awareness and perceptions of sponsors and their intentions to purchase sponsors' products as a result of this marketing. In addition, this study aimed to determine sports clubs' policies and practices directed towards promoting equal access to organised sports and opportunities to increase children's sport participation.

1.2 Methods

Sports clubs (n = 20) known to have food and beverage company sponsors, as identified in a previous survey of randomly sampled sports clubs in Sydney, Illawarra and Canberra/Queanbeyan (2), were selected. Sampled sport types included outdoor soccer, netball, rugby league, outdoor cricket, basketball and athletics/track and field, which represent some of the most popular sports for children aged 5 to 14 years in NSW (3).

The corresponding regional associations of participating sports clubs were also approached to participate in the survey. Parents and children at sports clubs were recruited through convenience sampling by approaching those attending the sports club at the time of the survey and those children who had a signed consent form.

Four separate questionnaires were developed for: sports club officials, regional sporting association officials, and parents and children who were members of sports clubs. Questionnaires related to opportunities for sport to contribute to health promotion; including through written policies and practices relating to a range of health and social inclusion issues. Parents and sporting officials were also asked about their attitudes towards sponsorship; the extent they think children are influenced by sponsorship; and support of policy interventions to restrict unhealthy food and beverage company sport sponsorship. Children were asked about their awareness of sport sponsorship arrangements; their perceptions of sport sponsors, in terms of their attitudes, purchase

intentions and consumption behaviours; and the value they place on sponsorship activities.

Sports clubs were visited by a team of interviewers between May and November 2010. At each club, one sports club official, ten parents of players aged 5 to 14 years, and five children aged 10 to 14 years were surveyed. Regional sporting associations were contacted following the visit to their affiliated sports club. Where preferred, regional association officials were interviewed by telephone rather than in-person.

1.3 Results

Increasing participation and health promotion in sport

The majority of parents and children perceived that the delivery of community sport was 'mostly adequate', including the amount of playing time given to all children (74% of parents and 69% of children); the facilities and equipment available (72% and 80%); the management of conflicts (66% and 71%) and the training of coaches (61% and 83%). However, aspects of sport delivery that were rated more poorly included the healthiness of food and beverages sold at sports canteens and the behaviour of parents at games.

Nevertheless, increasing the affordability of sport was suggested by the greatest proportion of parents and sports club officials as a strategy to increase children's sport participation (21% and 35% of parents and officials, respectively).

The majority of regional associations (n = 20) and sports clubs (n = 18) reported having a written policy on fair play. The majority of sporting organisations also had a written policy relating to anti-discrimination (n = 18 and 15). Fewer regional associations had written policies on smoke-free facilities (n = 14), sun protection (n = 7) and healthy eating (n = 1). Only eight regional associations and five sports clubs had written policies on participation by children with a disability.

Sport sponsorship

The majority of sporting officials and parents perceived children to be 'very' influenced by the sponsorship of elite sporting teams or athletes, in terms of influencing the products that children preferred, requested and purchased (65% of regional association officials, 53% of parents and 45% of sports club officials). Children were thought to be less influenced by the sponsorship of their own sports clubs, with only 10% of sporting officials perceiving that children were very influenced by this sponsorship and 11% of parents.

However, the majority of sporting officials and parents were supportive of regulations or policies to restrict unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of both elite sport and children's sports clubs. For regional associations and sports clubs, around 50% of respondents supported sponsorship restrictions for elite and children's sport. As well, 63% of parents supported elite sport sponsorship restrictions and 70% supported restrictions to children's sport sponsorship. In particular, sporting officials and parents were supportive of policy initiatives that restricted the use of logos for unhealthy food

and beverage companies on children's uniforms (70% of sports club officials, 64% of parents and 60% of regional association officials).

More than two-thirds of all children (68%) were able to correctly recall sponsors of their sports club, with these children able to name a median of two sponsors each, including one food and beverage company sponsor. In addition, 47% of children could correctly name at least one sponsor of their favourite elite sports team.

Overall 85% of children thought that food and beverage companies sponsored sport to help out sports clubs, while the majority also thought that food and beverage sponsors were cool (69%), and liked to return the favour to these sponsors by buying their products (59%). Most children also thought that other children bought food and drink products because these companies sponsored their sport (66%). However, almost three-quarters of children (72%) thought that companies only sponsored sport to advertise their products.

Younger children aged 10 to 11 years were significantly more likely to report that they thought about sponsors when buying something to eat or drink compared to older children aged 12 to 14 years ($P = 0.005$). Younger children were also more likely to agree that they liked to return the favour to sports clubs by buying their products ($P = 0.007$) and thought that sponsors were cool ($P = 0.02$).

Most children (86%) had previously received a voucher from a food or beverage company to reward good school or sport performance. Of these children, 86% reported liking the voucher 'a lot' or 'a little' and 30% reported liking the company more after they received this reward. More than three-quarters of children (76%) had previously received a sporting or school certificate displaying a food or beverage company logo. The majority of these children also liked receiving these certificates (86%), while 38% liked the company more afterwards.

1.4 Conclusion

Children's high level of recall of food and beverage company sponsors is concerning as this recall is likely to be linked to children's product preferences and consumption behaviours. Alternative funding mechanisms are required to replace community and elite sport sponsorship from unhealthy food and beverage companies to reduce the promotional effects of this marketing on children's food choices and eating behaviours. Such replacement funding would maintain sports club revenue whilst reducing children's exposure to unhealthy sponsorship arrangements, and is supported by the junior sporting community.

As well, community sport provides an important setting in which to embed other health promotion messages into everyday activities (4). Efforts to encourage the development of healthy sports clubs should emphasise the need for healthy policies, as well as attempt to simplify the development and implementation of these policies for sports clubs. To this end, strategies such as increased government funding for policy development and implementation, and assistance with policy content through training and policy templates would be useful.

2.0 Introduction

Organised sport provides a valuable opportunity for young people to be physically active. However, while 63% of all children aged 5 to 14 years in Australia were reported to participate in organised sport in 2006 (5), children from disadvantaged backgrounds, such as those from non English-speaking countries, one-parent families, and those whose parents are unemployed, are less likely to participate (1).

A range of factors have been identified as influencing children's participation in sport. A systematic review of factors affecting children and adolescents' sports participation identified that perceived physical competence, and support and assistance from parents and significant others, were significantly associated with participation (6). Also, the provision of appropriate physical activity environments, including programs, facilities and opportunities to be active, was recognised as an important policy objective for improving youth physical activity (6).

The extent to which parents and children are satisfied with the quality of sporting activities and organisations, including; the availability of adequate equipment and instruction; the cost of participation; the safety and healthiness of sport; and club culture and attitudes, including the behaviour of other parents at games, may impact on their participation (7). In order to increase children's participation in organised sport, it is important to understand any perceived barriers to participation as well as structural mechanisms which may reduce inequalities in sport, such as club policies on social inclusion.

As well as physical activity participation, sports clubs offer opportunities to interrelate broader health promotion agendas into frequently accessed settings for children (8). To this end, components of sporting environments which can act to undermine these health promoting abilities of sports clubs, such as unhealthy food and beverage promotion should be minimised. In particular, the issue of food and beverage company sponsorship of children's sport has been considered as one component of the broader sporting environment (9).

A recent telephone survey by the investigators with sports club officials, representing popular children's sports in NSW, revealed a large number of corporate sponsors of these community organisations, including food and beverage companies (2). Overall, 347 individual sponsors were identified across 108 sports clubs, 17% of which were food and beverage companies and a further 13% of sponsors were businesses that served alcohol. Importantly, 50% of all food and beverage company sponsorship agreements were from companies that did not meet independently developed criteria specified for appropriate sponsors, and 85% of agreements with alcohol-related businesses did not meet these criteria (2).

In general, there is an accumulating body of evidence on the nature and extent of food marketing internationally and the negative effects of this marketing on children's food knowledge, preferences and behaviour (10, 11). Authoritative and comprehensive

reviews of studies on the nature and extent of food marketing to children indicate that globally children are exposed to high levels of food marketing, and that the 'marketed diet' is typically the antithesis of dietary recommendations; comprising predominantly energy-dense, micronutrient poor foods (10-14).

Children are viewed by the food industry as a major market sector; having influence over their own purchases, as well as that of their parents. Developing brand loyalty at a young age will also ensure lifelong product purchases. From a psychological perspective, there is substantial evidence to suggest that children are highly vulnerable to marketing (15). Children, particularly those less than eight years of age, have been reported to have an impaired ability to interpret marketing messages critically as they lack the necessary cognitive skills and experience (15). In effect, children are unable to evaluate marketing and tend to accept this as truthful, accurate and unbiased.

While the majority of research and attention has focused on television advertising to children, more recent studies have found high levels of food marketing across other media (16). These other non-broadcast (non-television) forms of food marketing, including sponsorship, are thought to add to, and reinforce, the effects of television advertising on children's brand awareness, food choices and dietary intake (13). As well, sponsorship is seen as an alternative to mainstream media advertising and helps companies to develop trust and rapport within the general community (17).

Currently, in Australia there are no statutory regulations that restrict the promotion of unhealthy food products to children through sponsorship. However, a small amount of research is available which suggests that community support for food sponsorship restrictions exists. A recent survey of adults living in Victoria (n = 1,500), conducted by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) found that more than 80% of respondents supported the removal of unhealthy food and alcohol sponsorship if government were to provide replacement funding for this lost revenue (18).

This survey is also supported by national research. In a telephone survey of 400 randomly selected Australian parents in 2007, three-quarters of parents were concerned about the practice of food marketing to children through sports sponsorship (19). As well, the online advocacy group Parents Jury has conducted an opinion poll of its members (n > 4,000) relating to the sponsorship of children's sport by unhealthy food and beverage companies (20). Almost 70% of parent members agreed that government should establish regulations to prohibit this type of sponsorship for all sports while 20% thought this should only be banned for children's sports (20). Further, the industry group Sweeney Sports conducted a survey of over 1,000 consumers in 2003/04 and identified that fast food restaurants were one of the least favoured types of sports sponsors, coming only before gambling and lottery companies and cigarette manufacturers (21). In contrast, health promotion campaigns, such as *Life. Be in it* were amongst the most favoured of potential sponsors (21).

This study aimed to provide information on parents', children's and sporting officials' attitudes to sponsorship arrangements, and their support of potential policy interventions

to reorient sponsorship to be more health promoting. The acceptability of policy arrangements and the perceived impact that these may have on the viability and growth of children's sport are important considerations in determining the broader consequences of sponsorship restrictions. Parent and children's awareness of, and ability to recall sports club sponsors was also assessed, as well as children's perceptions of sponsors, to gauge their attitudes and behavioural intentions in response to this marketing. In addition, this study aimed to establish the level of engagement of sports clubs in promoting equal access to organised sports for all children, opportunities to increase children's participation in sport and potential strategies to make this participation more health promoting.

3.0 Methods

3.1 Sampling

i. Children's sports clubs

Selected sports clubs were identified from a list of 108 children's sports clubs from the Sydney and Illawarra Statistical Divisions and the Canberra/Queanbeyan Statistical District. These sports clubs had previously participated in an earlier survey relating to health promotion in sport by the researchers in 2009 (2). Originally these sports clubs had been randomly sampled from a list of all eligible clubs in selected Local Government Areas within these regions. Sports clubs represented the most popular organised sports for children aged 5 to 14 years in New South Wales (NSW), including outdoor soccer, swimming, netball, rugby league, tennis, outdoor cricket, martial arts, basketball and athletics/track and field, as determined by Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data (3). Details of this original sampling have been provided elsewhere (2).

Eligible clubs included those known to have any food and drink company sponsorship, as identified from the previous survey. Those with a larger number of child players and with more food and drink company sponsors were approached preferentially. As martial arts, swimming and tennis had previously been identified as having few sponsors, particularly for food and beverage companies, these sports were excluded.

At the time of the sports club visits, parents were recruited through convenience sampling by approaching parents present at the venue. Children who had a signed consent form were interviewed.

ii. Regional sporting associations

The corresponding regional associations of participating sports clubs were also approached to participate in the survey. Where a regional association was affiliated with more than one participating sports club, an alternative regional association was also approached from a similar demographic area, as based on the areas' socio-economic status, using the ABS Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) Index of Advantage/Disadvantage (22), and their regional or metropolitan locality. In some cases, an alternative regional association was selected for another sport where these were less represented.

3.2 Measures

Four separate questionnaires were developed for: sports club officials, regional sporting association officials, and parents and children who were members of sports clubs (Appendices 1-4). These questionnaires were informed by previous surveys relating to health promotion practices and policies and sponsorship at community level sports clubs by the researchers (23), as well as surveys measuring children and adults' awareness and recall of sport sponsorship (24-28), and children's attitudes towards this sponsorship (29, 30). The questionnaires were initially piloted with a convenience sample of adults (n = 11) and children (n = 5) and the questionnaire modified accordingly. Selected adults

included those working in a sport-related field, persons working/volunteering at sports clubs and those with experience in conducting surveys with children.

Sporting official questionnaires

The questionnaires for sports club and regional sporting association officials comprised:

- i. The characteristics of sports clubs and regional associations; including their predominant members' age and gender (clubs); and number of affiliated clubs (associations).
- ii. Opportunities for sport to contribute to health promotion; including the perceived health benefits of organised sport; recommended changes to sport to make this more health promoting; existing health-related policies relating to fair play, anti-discrimination and participation by children with a disability (clubs and associations) and sun protection, smoke-free facilities and healthy eating (associations); the availability of policies and support for affiliated sports clubs to develop health-related policies (associations); and any barriers obstructing the development and implementation of health-related policies.
- iii. Sports sponsorship; including the perceived risks and benefits of sponsorship; any previous experience with attempting to establish sponsors that promote healthy products; the extent they think children are influenced by sponsorship; and support of policy interventions to restrict unhealthy food and beverage company sports sponsorship.

Parent questionnaire

The questionnaire for parents addressed:

- i. The demographic characteristics of parents; including their gender; age; number of children; education; and postcode of residence.
- ii. Opportunities for sport to contribute to health promotion; including the perceived health benefits of organised sport; recommended changes to sport to make this more health promoting; and the adequacy of sports clubs in terms of coaching, equipment, cost of participation, conflict management and healthiness of canteens.
- iii. Sports sponsorship; including perceived risks and benefits of sponsorship; their awareness of sponsorship arrangements; the appropriateness of a range of company types for sponsoring children's sport; the extent they think children are influenced by sponsorship; and support of policy interventions to restrict unhealthy food and beverage company sports sponsorship.

Child questionnaire

The questionnaire for children addressed:

- i. The demographic characteristics of children; including their gender; age; suburb of residence; and other leisure time activities.
- ii. Opportunities for sport to contribute to health promotion; including satisfaction with sports clubs in terms of coaching, equipment, conflict management and healthiness of canteens; and barriers to sports participation.
- iii. Sports sponsorship; including their awareness of sports club and elite sport sponsorship arrangements; their perceptions of sport sponsors, in terms of their

attitudes, purchase intentions and consumption behaviours; and the value they place on sponsorship activities, such as vouchers and branded certificates.

The socio-economic status of sports clubs, regional associations, parents and children were determined according to the SEIFA Index, using postcode of residence as a proxy measure (22). SEIFA scores were stratified as high (>1,100), medium (1,000-1,100) and low (<1,000) socioeconomic areas.

3.3 Procedures

Sports club visits were conducted between May 2010 and November 2010. Sports clubs were initially contacted by telephone and provided with a written information letter to assess their interest in, and eligibility to participate in the survey. Sports clubs that did not have a team with players aged 5 to 14 that registration season were considered as outside the scope of the survey.

Sports clubs were visited by a team of interviewers, from a pool of four trained research officers (BK, SS, HF and AR). Research officers were provided with a half-day training session, conducted by the lead investigator (BK), including practice interviews. As well, all research officers attended the first sports club visit. Those sports clubs that played during the winter season were approached first (May to August) followed by those playing during the summer season (October to November).

At each club, one sports club official, ten parents of players aged 5 to 14 years, and five children aged 10 to 14 years were surveyed. Consent forms to participate in the survey were signed for all participants. Parents signed these forms on behalf of children aged 10 to 12 years.

Regional sporting associations were contacted following the visit to affiliated sports clubs. Where preferred, regional association officials were interviewed by telephone rather than in-person.

To increase participation incentives were provided, including a \$100 voucher to a sports store for clubs, and smaller voucher denominations for other participants (\$50 for regional associations and \$30 for parents and children). NSW Sport and Recreation, a Division of Communities NSW, and Sport and Recreation Services – ACT both provided support to the project, which was indicated on information letters sent to sports clubs and associations, to further increase participation.

Participating children were those aged between 10 and 14 years, who were members of sports clubs. Ethics approval for this survey was granted by The University of Sydney Human Ethics Committee in April 2010.

3.4 Analyses

Data were entered into SPSS for Windows version 17.0 (SPSS Inc., Chicago IL.) and cleaned/checked for missing and implausible values. Descriptive analyses including frequencies and cross-tabulations were used to describe the availability of policies and

practices by demographic group and sport type; recall of sponsors; the perceived influence of sponsorship on children and support of regulations to limit unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship. Pearson's chi-square test was used to determine differences in responses to these variables by demographic group. Mann-Whitney *U* test was used to determine differences in children's responses to product preferences and consumption behaviours resulting from exposure to sponsorship by age group and gender. Results were considered significant at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level. Responses to open-ended questions were analysed thematically.

4.0 Results

4.1 Sample characteristics

The overall response rate for sports clubs was 95% (20/21). For all sports, the response rate was 100%, with the exception of soccer for which one club declined participation (80%). One basketball club was uncontactable after six attempts and a further two clubs (one basketball and one soccer) were ineligible as they did not have a junior team that season. These clubs were considered outside the scope of the study. The response rate for regional sporting associations was 100%. Only four parents that were approached at sports clubs refused participation. The overall sample comprised 20 sports club officials, 20 regional association officials, 200 parents and 103 children aged 10 to 14 years.

i. Regional associations

The characteristics of the sampled regional associations are shown in Table 1. Regional association respondents were the association president (20%), treasurer (20%), vice president (15%), secretary (10%) or other committee member (35%). Regional associations were affiliated with a median of 13 clubs (Inter-quartile range (IQR) = 7 to 22). Half of all regional associations reported that children aged 5 to 14 years played at all of their affiliated clubs, while 35% reported that more than half of their affiliated clubs had players aged 5 to 14 years and for 15% less than half of their clubs had players within this age group.

Table 1: *Sports club and regional association characteristics*

	Sports clubs n (%)	Regional associations n (%)
Sport type		
Athletics	4 (20)	3 (15)
Basketball	1 (5)	3 (15)
Cricket	3 (15)	3 (15)
Netball	3 (15)	3 (15)
Rugby league	5 (25)	4 (20)
Soccer	4 (20)	4 (20)
Socioeconomic status		
Low	11 (55)	10 (50)
Medium/High	9 (45)	10 (50)
Location		
Illawarra	12 (60)	9 (45)
Greater Sydney	7 (35)	8 (40)
Canberra/Queanbeyan	1 (5)	3 (15)

ii. Sports clubs

Clubs that were for rugby league, soccer and athletics, and those that were located in areas of greater social-disadvantage comprised the greatest proportion of the sample

(Table 1). Interviewed club officials were the club vice president (40%), president (30%), treasurer (15%), secretary (10%) or another committee member (5%). Most clubs had greater than 200 playing members (50%), while the remaining clubs had between 50-99 members (10%), 100-149 members (20%) or 150-199 members (20%). At the majority of clubs (55%) three-quarters to all playing members were children aged 5 to 14 years.

iii. Parents

The greatest proportion of parents was female (60%) and were aged in their 40s (52%) (Table 2). The majority of parents had two (41%) or three (33%) children, and the median age of all children in families was 11 (IQR = 8 to 14). The majority of the sample was tertiary educated, having completed either TAFE/college (27%) or university (37%).

Table 2: *Parent characteristics*

	Parents n (%)
Sport type	
Athletics	43 (21)
Basketball	10 (5)
Cricket	27 (14)
Netball	29 (15)
Rugby league	49 (24)
Soccer	42 (21)
Socioeconomic status	
Low	63 (32)
Medium	99 (49)
High	38 (19)
Education	
Year 10 or below	41 (20)
Year 11 or 12	31 (16)
TAFE/college diploma or certificate	54 (27)
University degree or diploma	74 (37)
Sex	
Female	121 (60)
Male	79 (40)
Age group	
20-29	4 (2)
30-39	65 (33)
40-49	105 (52)
≥50	26 (13)
Number of children	
One	17 (9)
Two	82 (41)
Three	66 (33)
Four or more	35 (17)

iv. Children

Most children (69%) played more than one organised sport, with children playing a median of two sports each (IQR = 1 to 3) (Table 3). The mean age of children was 12 years (SD = 1.3). Most children reported that they usually watched two or less hours of television per day during the school week (85%). Television viewing was generally higher on weekends, with a greater proportion of children watching between two and four hours per day.

Table 3: *Child characteristics*

	Children N (%)
Sport type	
Athletics	21 (20)
Basketball	5 (5)
Cricket	14 (14)
Netball	16 (16)
Rugby league	27 (26)
Soccer	20 (19)
Socioeconomic status	
Low	34 (33)
Medium	50 (49)
High	19 (18)
Sex	
Female	42 (41)
Male	61 (59)
Age	
10 years	27 (26)
11 years	18 (18)
12 years	22 (21)
13 years	27 (26)
14 years	9 (9)
Time spent watching TV	
<i>Weekday</i>	
< 1 hour per day	37 (36)
1 to 2 hours per day	50 (49)
2 to 3 hours per day	8 (8)
3 to 4 hours per day	4 (4)
> 4 hours per day	4 (4)
<i>Weekend</i>	
< 1 hour per day	15 (14)
1 to 2 hours per day	47 (46)
2 to 3 hours per day	27 (26)
3 to 4 hours per day	10 (10)
> 4 hours per day	4 (4)

4.2 Increasing participation and health promotion in sport

i. Regional associations

Health and developmental benefits of organised sport

The main health and developmental benefits of children's participation in organised sport, other than physical fitness, that were reported by regional association representatives included the development of social skills and interacting with people of different ages, backgrounds and physical abilities (reported by 18 regional association officials); team work, patience and compromise (n = 9); mental development, such as coping with disappointment and problem solving (n = 5); friendship and respect (n = 4); self-confidence and awareness of abilities (n = 4); cooperation, discipline and understanding instruction (n = 3); and other skills such as leadership, listening skills, coordination, balance (all n = 1) (unprompted response). Other perceived health benefits included reducing asthma symptoms, preventing obesity and increasing children's awareness of good nutrition (all n = 1). Sport was also seen as beneficial in keeping children occupied and outdoors rather than sedentary (n = 3).

Written policies on health promotion and social inclusion

- Fair play

All regional associations had a policy or code of conduct which outlined the requirements of fair play (Table 4). All of these written policies focused on good sportsmanship, playing by the rules and respecting others. These requirements applied to players, spectators, officials and coaches. Many of these codes were adopted from national (n = 3) and state sporting organisations (n = 5). Codes of conduct for rugby league (n = 4) also specified penalties and disciplinary action for offenders.

- Anti-discrimination

The majority of regional associations also had a written policy on anti-discrimination (n = 18). These policies all emphasised respect for all persons and prohibited discriminatory behaviour or speech relating to individual's ethnicity, religion, race, sexuality and gender.

- Smoke-free environments

Fourteen regional associations had a policy on smoke-free environments, some of which were derived from state sporting organisations (n = 2) or the local council (n = 3). The majority of these policies (n = 11) prohibited smoking by players, spectators, staff and officials in all competition and spectator areas, while others prohibited smoking indoors and on the playing field (n = 2), or within 10m of play (n = 1).

- Participation by children with a disability

Written policies relating to participation by children with a disability were available for eight associations, and particularly for athletics, basketball and cricket (Table 4). These policies emphasised equality and equal opportunities for all players. For athletics, written policies were developed at the state level and outlined separate competition categories for children with a disability to promote fairness in competition (n = 3).

- Sun protection

Overall, seven regional associations had a written policy on sun protection. Three of these policies were adopted from the association's affiliated state sporting organisation. These policies specified the provision and promotion of sunscreen (n = 7); requiring the use of appropriate protective clothing (n = 7) and hats (n = 4); disseminating sun safety information to members (n = 6); ensuring adequate shade, including by working with local authorities (n = 6); scheduling games outside periods of peak UV exposure (n = 4); and role modelling good behaviours (n = 4). No rugby league, netball or basketball associations had a policy on sun protection, although these sports are typically played during winter or indoors.

- Healthy eating

Only one cricket association had a written policy on healthy eating. This related to the types of food and beverages that should be consumed before training and competitions.

Table 4: Availability of *regional association* written health promotion policies, by sport type

	Athletics n (%)	Basketball n (%)	Cricket n (%)	Netball n (%)	Rugby league n (%)	Soccer n (%)	Total n (%)
Fair play	3 (100)	3 (100)	3 (100)	3 (100)	4 (100)	4 (100)	20 (100)
Anti-discrimination	2 (67)	3 (100)	3 (100)	2 (67)	4 (100)	4 (100)	18 (90)
Smoke-free	3 (100)	1 (33)	3 (100)	1 (33)	2 (50)	4 (100)	14 (70)
Participation by children with a disability	3 (100)	2 (67)	2 (67)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (25)	8 (40)
Sun protection	2 (67)	0 (0)	2 (67)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (75)	7 (35)
Healthy eating	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (33)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (5)

Other written policies that were reported by regional associations included policies on alcohol sale and consumption (n = 6), safe play and injury prevention (n = 3) and heat and hydration management (n = 2).

The majority of regional associations made their written policies available to affiliated clubs (n = 19). These policies were available through regional association's websites (n = 18), sent to all clubs (n = 12), promoted at meetings with club and state organisation representatives (n = 7) and were given to club members at registration (n = 2).

Only eight regional associations reported that they had experienced difficulties in developing or implementing health and social policies. Barriers included a lack of support from state sporting organisations (n = 2) or parents (n = 1); lack of time and expertise (n = 2); and a lack of awareness by officials, players and spectators that the policies existed (n = 2). Three associations also reported that they had not recognised the need for health related policies previously, other than having a code of conduct to promote fair play.

Half of the surveyed regional associations had previously provided support to their affiliated clubs in developing or implementing health and social policies. This included providing opportunities for policy discussion and training (n = 5); providing information and policy content (n = 1) and providing funding to support these activities (n = 1). However, clubs were most frequently encouraged to adopt association policies rather than develop their own.

For regional associations to provide more support to clubs in developing and implementing these policies, regional associations reported that they would require more resources. These resources included funding that was specifically intended for policy development and implementation (n = 11), training and personnel to develop policies (n = 9) and policy templates and content information (n = 8), including in accessible formats such as PowerPoint slides for communication with clubs (n = 1). Government (n = 7) was suggested as the major source of funding support for regional associations in developing and implementing health and social policies, while other agencies and organisations could be responsible for policy content, including peak national and state sporting organisations (n = 6), the NSW Department of Sport and Recreation (n = 1) and Good Sports (n = 1).

ii. Sports clubs

Health and developmental benefits of organised sport

As with regional associations, sports club officials most frequently reported that the development of social skills and interacting with others, and team work, patience, compromise and sportsmanship were the main benefits of children's participation in organised sport (16 and 13 sports club officials, respectively). Other frequently reported benefits of sport included: friendship, respect and sense of community (n = 8); mental development, such as coping with disappointment and losing and problem solving (n = 5); cooperation, discipline and understanding instruction (n = 5); and self-confidence and awareness of abilities (n = 3). Other benefits were having a positive, fun, outdoors lifestyle (n = 2), and getting exposure to other health promotion messages and campaigns (n = 1), knowledge of nutrition (n = 1) and knowledge of injury and risk reduction (n = 1). Other personal attributes, such as motivation (n = 1), commitment and responsibility (n = 1), and leadership (n = 1) were also cited.

Barriers to children's sport participation

A major barrier to children's sport participation was perceived to be the cost involved, including registration and uniforms (n = 12). This was seen as particularly difficult for families with multiple children and when payments coincided with other costs, such as school fees. Time was another perceived barrier, including the amount of time required to travel to competitions, especially in rural areas (n = 8), a lack of time for parents to attend training and competitions for working or single parents (n = 8) and a lack of time for children who were distracted by other interests, such as screen time activities (n = 3). Other barriers included a lack of enthusiasm and encouragement from parents (n = 6), children's shyness, self-consciousness about abilities and fear of bullying or injury (n =

5), the large availability of different activities that compete against each other for membership (n = 2), the standard of facilities (n = 1) and children's physical limitations (n = 1).

Improving the healthiness, inclusiveness and safety of children's sport

Sports club officials offered a wide range of suggestions to make community sport healthier, safer and more inclusive, particularly for disadvantaged children. Strategies directed towards increasing participation in sport included making sport more affordable for parents by reducing the cost of registration (n = 7). It was suggested that this could be achieved by reducing council fees for ground hire and providing government subsidies to sports clubs, or by introducing payment structures to allow fees to be paid to clubs in installments. Sports club officials also recommended getting parents more actively involved in sport (n = 3), to provide volunteer support and to encourage children to participate. Strategies also related to reducing the time commitment required to participate (n = 5), including reducing the number of away games played per season, providing collective travel options to reduce the burden on parents, reducing the amount of training time and providing an alternative to weekend competitions. Promoting sports participation in the community and through schools was also highlighted (n = 3), as well as increasing the enjoyment of sport by focusing more on fun rather than winning (n = 2).

To improve the safety of sport, recommended strategies included providing additional training opportunities for coaches (n = 3), having compulsory safety equipment (e.g. head gear, mouth guards) (n = 1), and having modified rules for children (n = 1). Sports clubs were also seen to provide opportunities for broader social improvements, such as the introduction of social welfare or chaplaincy programs to support children and address conflicts (n = 1).

Social inclusion practices

The majority of clubs (n = 17) reported engaging in at least one practice to encourage participation in sport by children from disadvantaged groups, such as those with financial or physical restraints, and children from minority groups. These practices most commonly included having additional training opportunities available (n = 12) and modifying game times (n = 11) (Figure 1).

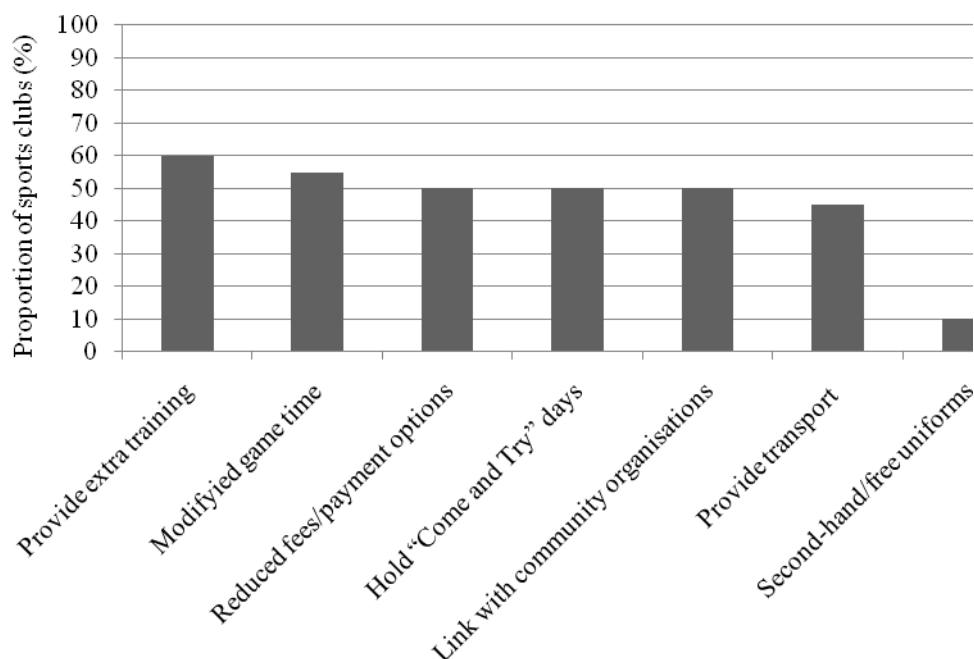


Figure 1: Proportion of *clubs* reporting social inclusion practices

The mean number of social inclusion practices reported by club officials was the same for clubs in both low and medium/high SES areas (3 practices each). The mean number of reported practices differed by sport type, with the highest number of practices reported for rugby league, followed by cricket (Table 5).

Table 5: *Sports club* social inclusion and fair play practices, by sport type

	Social inclusion practices Mean no. practices (SD)	Fair play practices Mean no. practices (SD)
Rugby league	4 (1.48)	7 (0.55)
Cricket	3 (2.08)	6 (1.00)
Athletics	2 (1.83)	6 (0.96)
Soccer	2 (1.41)	6 (0.96)
Netball	2 (2.08)	5 (2.52)
Basketball	- ^a	- ^a
<i>Total</i>	<i>3 (1.77)</i>	<i>6 (1.23)</i>

^a Only one basketball club official

Fair play practices

All clubs reported engaging in at least one practice to encourage fair play amongst junior players. In particular, all clubs offered equal play time for children, while the majority also provided education and training on fair play, and had strategies to monitor, identify and address conflicts and unsportsmanlike behaviour (Figure 2).

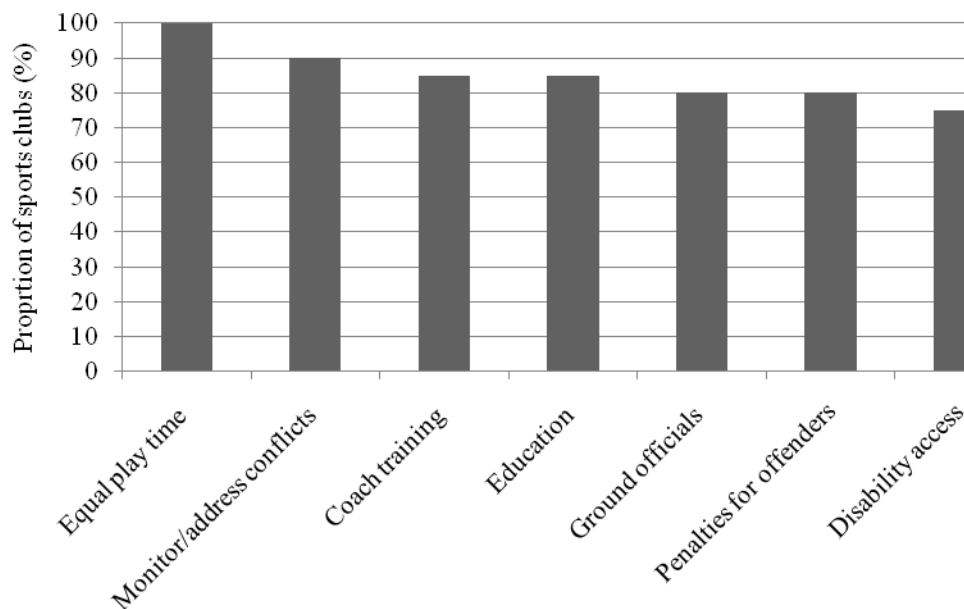


Figure 2: Proportion of clubs reporting fair play practices

Again, the mean number of fair play practices was the same across both low and medium/high SES areas, with club officials from each of these demographic areas reporting that their clubs engaged in an average of six fair play practices each. Rugby league and cricket also had the largest number of fair play practices per club (Table 5).

Written policies on social inclusion and fair play

- Fair play

The majority of sports clubs ($n = 18$) had a written policy or code of conduct relating to fair play (Table 6). All athletics, cricket, netball and rugby league clubs had a fair play policy. As with regional associations, all of these policies focused on good sportsmanship, playing by the rules, respecting others and outlined appropriate behaviours, with specifications applying to players, spectators, officials and coaches. Many club officials reported that their club's written policy on fair play was adopted from their affiliated state or national sporting organisations ($n = 6$).

- Anti-discrimination

The majority of sports clubs had a written policy on anti-discrimination ($n = 15$), which in some cases was incorporated into the clubs' code of conduct. These policies promoted fairness and equity for all, and prohibited discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, race, sexuality and gender. The majority of these policies came from state or national sporting organisations ($n = 10$).

- Participation by children with a disability

All athletics clubs and one soccer club had a written policy relating to participation by children with a disability (Table 6). All policies outlined fairness in competition regardless of physical ability. Written policies at athletics clubs were from their affiliated state sporting organisation and specified the creation of inclusive sporting environments with separate competition categories for children with a disability to allow for fair competition.

Table 6: Availability of *sports club* written social inclusion and fair play policies, by sport type

	Athletics n (%)	Basketball n (%)	Cricket n (%)	Netball n (%)	Rugby league n (%)	Soccer n (%)	Total n (%)
Fair play	4 (100)	0 (0)	3 (100)	3 (100)	5 (100)	3 (75)	18 (90)
Anti-discrimination	4 (100)	0 (0)	2 (67)	1 (33)	4 (80)	4 (100)	15 (75) ^a
Participation by children with a disability	4 (100)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (25)	5 (25)

^a Don't know; n = 1

Few clubs reported that they had experienced any barriers to the development or implementation of social inclusion and fair play policies (n = 3). For those clubs that did experience difficulties in this area, reported barriers included being too busy with other priorities (n = 2), a lack of support from players and families (n = 1) and the time involved in developing policies (n = 1) (unprompted). The organisational structure of sports clubs, which are mainly comprised of volunteers, was also seen to hinder the development of written policies. Those clubs that reported barriers to policy development and implementation perceived that the provision of training (n = 2), content information (n = 2), policy templates (n = 2) and incentives and/or funding (n = 2) would be useful in overcoming these issues.

iii. Parents

Health and developmental benefits of organised sport

The main health and developmental benefits of children participating in organised sport were perceived by parents to be the development of social skills and learning to interact with people of different ages, backgrounds and physical abilities (n = 133 parents); team work, patience and compromise (n = 113); friendship and respect of peers and elders (n = 65); and cooperation, discipline and understanding instruction (n = 43) (unprompted).

Other reported benefits of sport included increasing children's self-confidence and awareness of their abilities (n = 24); learning fair play, sportsmanship and how to win and lose gracefully (n = 22); goal setting, motivation and commitment (n = 20); coordination and motor skills, endurance, strength and/or flexibility (n = 16); and competitiveness and determination (n = 5). Parents also thought that organised sport kept children occupied and outdoors rather than sedentary or idle (n = 30), as well as allowing them to expend energy and aggression on "constructive" activities (n = 8). Sport was seen as an

opportunity to develop skills in leadership and mentoring others (n = 11), and to promote healthy, active lifestyles including good nutrition (n = 19) and mental health (n = 13). Direct health benefits of sport included weight management (n = 5), reducing asthma symptoms (n = 1) and the prevention of chronic disease (n = 1). Sport also provided a friendly environment which was fun and enjoyable (n = 6) and promoted a feeling of community and belonging (n = 6).

Perceived adequacy of sport delivery

The majority of parents thought that playing time was mostly fairly distributed amongst all children (Table 7). Parents also perceived that club facilities and equipment; management of conflicts; training of coaches and the cost of sports participation were mostly adequate at children's sports clubs (Table 7). Fewer parents perceived sports club canteens to sell healthy food and beverages, with 37% of parents reporting that available food and drinks were somewhat or mostly inadequate.

Table 7: Parent perceptions of sport structure and delivery

	Mostly adequate n (%)	Somewhat adequate n (%)	Somewhat inadequate n (%)	Mostly inadequate n (%)
Equal distribution of playing time for all children ^a	148 (74)	43 (21)	7 (4)	1 (1)
Facilities/equipment available	144 (72)	41 (20)	10 (5)	5 (3)
Club management of conflicts ^b	133 (66)	49 (25)	7 (4)	0 (0)
Training of coaches ^c	122 (61)	59 (29)	13 (7)	3 (2)
Cost of participation ^d	121 (61)	58 (29)	16 (8)	4 (2)
Behaviour of parents at games	70 (35)	97 (48)	30 (15)	3 (2)
Healthiness of canteens ^e	24 (12)	87 (43)	54 (27)	20 (10)

^a Don't know; n = 15; ^b Don't know; n = 11; ^c Don't know; n = 3; ^d Don't know; n = 1; ^e Don't know; n = 15;

A greater proportion of parents attending rugby league and athletics perceived the behaviour of other parents at games to be inadequate, with 31% and 23% of parents at these sports reporting that parents' behaviour was 'somewhat' or 'mostly' inadequate, compared to 17% overall. The healthiness of sports canteens was perceived to be inadequate for all sport types, with between 31% of parents perceiving that canteens were 'somewhat' or 'mostly' inadequate at rugby league to 50% at basketball clubs.

Improving the healthiness, inclusiveness and safety of children's sport

Fifteen percent of parents (n = 29) were satisfied with the way children's sport operated and did not think that any changes were required to make sport healthier, safer or more inclusive. For those parents that did perceive that children's sport could be improved, strategies to increase participation included making sport more affordable (n = 42), particularly for families with multiple children and those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Suggestions for how this could be achieved included increased government funding for sport (n = 5), tax rebates (n = 1), and scholarships and subsidies for lower income families (n = 8). Other suggestions to reduce the cost of sport included increasing the sponsorship of clubs (n = 1), more funding provisions from peak sporting

organisations (n = 1), increasing club contributions from gaming machine taxes (n = 1) and reducing the cost of club insurance (n = 3). Reducing travel time to games was also suggested to increase the accessibility of sport for parents (n = 6).

More promotion of sport, such as through schools and the community, was suggested to better inform parents and children about the activities that are available and the health benefits of participation (n = 13). In particular, the introduction of more organised sporting activities at school was seen as an opportunity to engage children in these activities (n = 6). The need for a greater variety of activities was also noted (n = 4), as well as opportunities for children to trial different sports and develop initial skills, such as through sports gala events (n = 4). Providing incentives for children to participate (e.g. BBQ, drink bottles, rewards, vouchers) was also suggested (n = 4).

Further education and encouragement for parents to be more actively involved in community sports as volunteers was recommended (n = 19), which has mutual benefits of assisting in the function of clubs and encourages children's participation. Parent education could also assist in controlling spectator behaviour if parents are more aware of the game processes. Better communication between clubs and regional associations was also suggested, to keep clubs and parents informed about new policies and events (n = 1). In general, better control of parent behaviour and over competitiveness (n = 11) was seen as important.

To improve the healthiness of children's sport, many parents perceived the need for improving the healthiness of food and beverages promoted and sold at sports canteens (n = 17), the provision of fruit to players during breaks (n = 3) and healthy food options as sporting rewards, rather than McDonald's vouchers (n = 1). Education for players and families on health and nutrition (n = 3) and other aspects of health promotion (n = 1) were also suggested. As well, the provision of more shade at facilities was required for players and spectators (n = 5).

To improve the safety of sport for children, recommended changes included improving coaching, including coach training (n = 13) and increasing the number of coaches per child/decreasing the number of children per team (n = 6). For contact sports, such as rugby league, parents recommended the mandatory use of safety equipment (n = 3), training on injury prevention (n = 3) and basing team grading on weight rather than age (n = 5). Facility improvements were also needed (n = 24), including the availability of indoor facilities for winter sports (n = 5). Local councils were specifically mentioned in providing maintenance and upgrade of facilities (n = 7).

Parents also recognised the need to foster a more inclusive sporting culture that allowed children from disadvantaged or minority backgrounds (n = 2), different levels of physical abilities and fitness (n = 12), and females (n = 3) to participate. As part of this inclusive environment, there was a need to reorient sport to focus more on fun and participation rather than winning (n = 13). Some parents also suggested modifying the structure of games so that children spent more time actively engaging in sport rather than watching/waiting for their turn (n = 4).

iv. Children

Perceived adequacy of sport delivery

The majority of children thought that the training of coaches; the management of conflicts and bullying by the club; the facilities and equipment available; and the equal distribution of playing time for all children were mostly adequate at their sports clubs (Table 8). More than one-third of children thought that the healthiness of food and beverages sold at sports canteens was inadequate. Sports canteens were thought to be inadequate for all sport types, with between 20% (basketball) and 48% (rugby league) of children perceiving canteens to be inadequate across different sports.

Table 8: *Child perceptions of sport structure and delivery*

	Mostly adequate n (%)	Somewhat adequate n (%)	Somewhat inadequate n (%)	Mostly inadequate n (%)
Training of coaches	85 (83)	17 (16)	0 (0)	1 (1)
Facilities/equipment available	82 (80)	21 (20)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Club management of conflicts ^b	73 (71)	23 (22)	3 (3)	1 (1)
Equal distribution of playing time for all children	71 (69)	29 (28)	3 (3)	0 (0)
Behaviour of parents at games	46 (45)	49 (48)	7 (7)	1 (1)
Healthiness of canteens ^a	15 (15)	49 (48)	32 (31)	6 (6)

^a Don't know; n = 1; ^b Don't know; n = 3

Barriers to children's sport participation

The majority of children (63%) thought that they already played enough organised sport. This perception was not associated with the number of sporting activities played, with 69% of those children participating in one sport reporting that they already played enough compared to 60% of children engaged in five activities. Despite this, the main barriers to organised sport participation included the limited number of activities available and the amount of time involved in participation (Figure 3). Boys in particular reported that time was a major barrier to sport participation (71% vs. 55% of girls, $\chi^2_2 = 3.8$; $P = 0.15$)

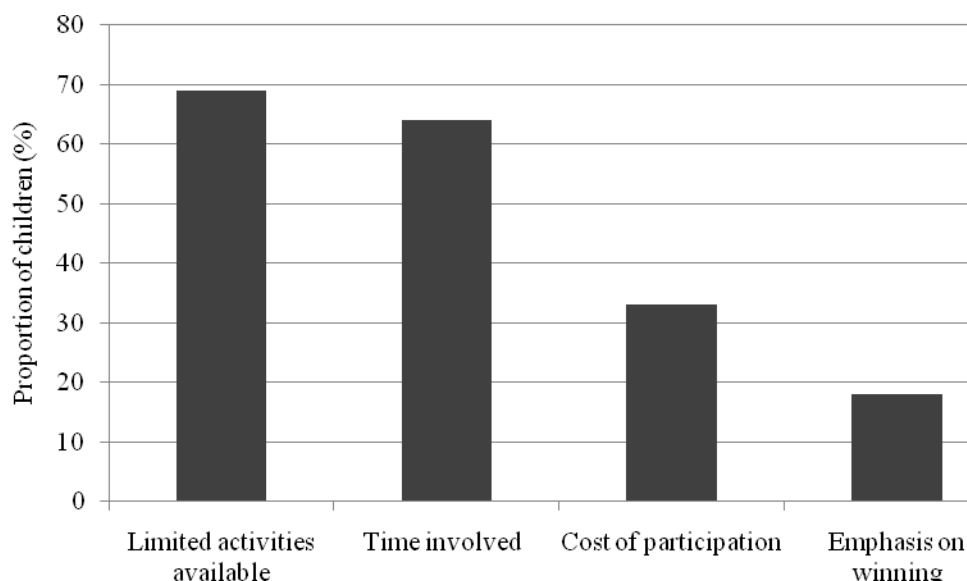


Figure 3: *Child* reported barriers to organised sport participation

4.3 Sport Sponsorship

i. Regional associations

Perceived benefits and risks of community sport sponsorship

The main benefit of sponsorship reported by regional associations was in subsidising registration fees, which was reported by 12 of the 20 surveyed regional association representatives. This was seen as making sport more affordable for families, thereby increasing sport participation. Sponsorship was seen to allow sports clubs to purchase the best/safe equipment and resources ($n = 10$) and to maintain and improve facilities ($n = 8$). Sponsorship also contributed to purchasing uniforms ($n = 3$) and administration costs ($n = 2$). Other than direct funding, sponsorship was perceived as having additional benefits including raising the profile of sport and making teams look professional ($n = 2$) and reducing clubs' reliance on fundraising activities ($n = 1$). Sponsors were also viewed as being able to promote healthy messages to children ($n = 1$). Notably, the example provided in this instance was the promotion of McDonald's healthy choices.

The majority of regional associations representatives thought that sponsorship could have a potential negative effect on children ($n = 17$), especially if children's sport was sponsored by companies selling alcohol ($n = 8$), unhealthy food and beverages ($n = 6$) or tobacco ($n = 3$) (unprompted). In particular, McDonalds was perceived to be an inappropriate company to sponsor children's sport, while vouchers given to players as sporting rewards were seen to cause conflict within families and promote unhealthy food ($n = 4$). However, one respondent reported that they were now more accepting towards McDonald's sponsorship since the introduction of healthier options at these fast food restaurants.

Experience in establishing health promoting sponsors

Seven regional associations reported that they had previously sought sponsorship arrangements with businesses or companies that sold healthy products. This included companies that were aligned with sport, such as sporting goods companies (n = 3 associations) and major sporting leagues (n = 1). Some associations had also received sponsorship from companies manufacturing bottled water (n = 2) and milk (n = 1), while one association had refused sponsorship from a local hotel as this business was seen as incongruous with children's sport. Some food companies and products that are typically considered to be high in fat, sugar and/or salt were also mentioned as 'healthy' sponsors, including companies selling fruit straps, Gatorade and McDonalds.

Influence of sponsorship on children's product preferences and purchases

The majority of regional association respondents (95%) thought that children aged 5 to 14 years were influenced by the sponsorship of *elite* sporting teams or athletes, in terms of influencing the products that children preferred, requested and purchased; with 65% perceiving that children were 'very influenced' and 30% perceiving that they were 'slightly influenced' by this sponsorship (Figure 4). Children were thought to be less influenced by the sponsorship of their own sports clubs (10% very influenced; 65% slightly influenced) and their club's affiliated regional association (60% slightly influenced).

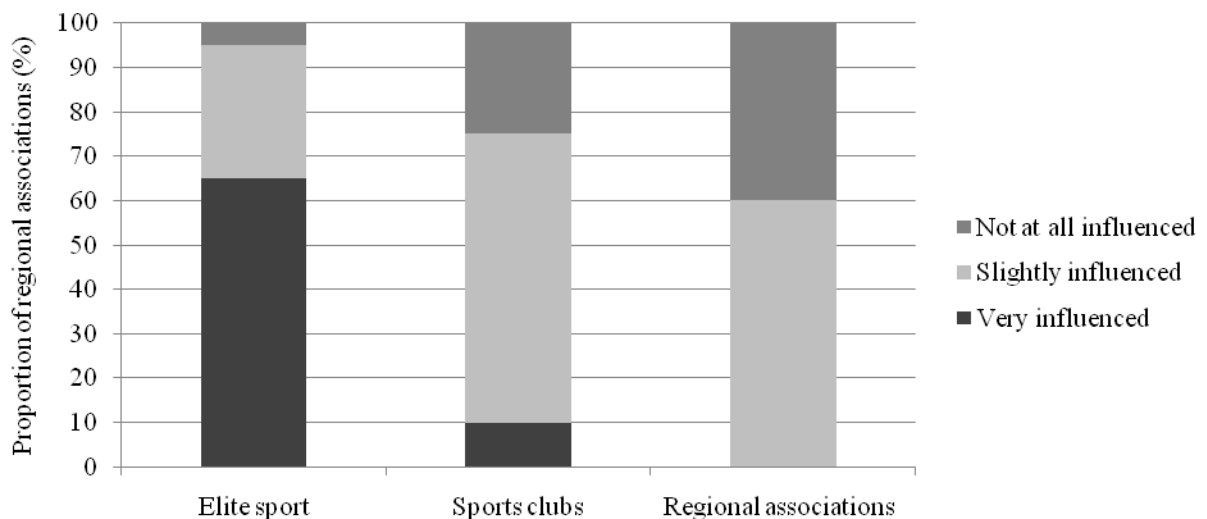


Figure 4: *Regional association officials'* perceived influence of sport sponsorship on children

A greater proportion of regional association representatives from athletics, basketball, cricket and soccer perceived children to be very influenced by the sponsorship of elite sport (Table 9). Children were thought to be only slightly influenced by the sponsorship of sports clubs by respondents from most sport types, with the exception of rugby league

for which half of respondents thought that children were not at all influenced by this sponsorship.

Table 9: *Regional association officials'* perceived influence of sport sponsorship on children, by sport type

	Athletics n (%)	Basketball n (%)	Cricket n (%)	Netball n (%)	Rugby league n (%)	Soccer n (%)	Total n (%)
<i>Elite sport</i>							
Very influenced	2 (67)	2 (67)	3 (100)	1 (33)	1 (25)	4 (100)	13 (65)
Slightly influenced	1 (33)	1 (33)	0 (0)	2 (67)	2 (50)	0 (0)	6 (30)
Not at all influenced	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (25)	0 (0)	1 (5)
<i>Sports clubs</i>							
Very influenced	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (33)	0 (0)	1 (25)	0 (0)	2 (10)
Slightly influenced	2 (67)	2 (67)	2 (67)	2 (67)	1 (25)	4 (100)	13 (65)
Not at all influenced	1 (33)	1 (33)	0 (0)	1 (33)	2 (50)	0 (0)	1 (25)
<i>Regional associations</i>							
Very influenced	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Slightly influenced	2 (67)	2 (67)	3 (100)	1 (33)	2 (50)	2 (50)	12 (60)
Not at all influenced	1 (33)	1 (33)	0 (0)	2 (67)	2 (50)	2 (50)	8 (40)

Support of restrictions to limit unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship

The majority of regional association respondents were supportive of regulations or policies to restrict unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of elite sport (55%) and children's sports clubs (50%) (Figure 5). Only 25% of respondents were unlikely or very unlikely to support this restriction for elite sport and 35% would be unlikely to support this restriction for children's sports clubs.

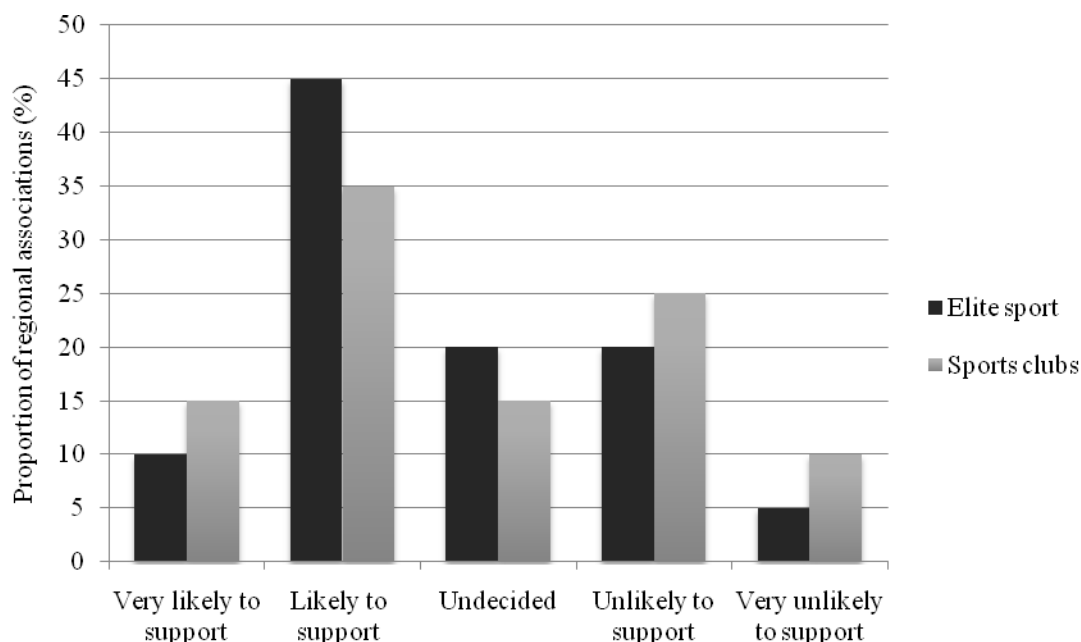


Figure 5: *Regional association support of restrictions to limit unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship*

More respondents from areas of greater social disadvantage reported that they would be *unlikely* to support restrictions to unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of both elite and children's sport compared to respondents from medium/high SES areas (Table 10). For elite sport, 40% of respondents from low SES areas would be unlikely or very unlikely to support these sponsorship restrictions compared to 20% of those from medium/high SES areas. For children's sport, 60% of respondents from low SES areas reported were unlikely or very unlikely to support these restrictions compared to only 10% of respondents from less socially disadvantaged areas.

Table 10: *Regional association support of restrictions to limit unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship, by SES of area*

		Low SES (n = 10) n (%)	Medium/High SES (n = 10) n (%)	Total (n = 20) n (%)
Very likely to support	Elite sport	1 (10)	1 (10)	2 (10)
	Sports clubs	1 (10)	2 (20)	3 (15)
Likely to support	Elite sport	5 (50)	4 (40)	9 (45)
	Sports clubs	3 (30)	4 (40)	7 (35)
Undecided	Elite sport	0 (0)	4 (40)	4 (20)
	Sports clubs	0 (0)	3 (30)	3 (15)
Unlikely to support	Elite sport	3 (30)	1 (10)	4 (20)
	Sports clubs	5 (50)	0 (0)	5 (25)
Very unlikely to support	Elite sport	1 (10)	0 (0)	1 (5)
	Sports clubs	1 (10)	1 (10)	2 (10)

All regional association representatives from athletics (n = 3) were supportive of restricting unhealthy food and beverage companies from sponsoring elite sport (Table 11). For other sports there was more mixed support for these restrictions.

Table 11: *Regional association support of restrictions to limit unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of elite sport, by sport type*

	Athletics n (%)	Basketball n (%)	Cricket n (%)	Netball n (%)	Rugby league n (%)	Soccer n (%)	Total n (%)
Very likely to support	1 (33)	1 (33)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (10)
Likely to support	2 (67)	1 (33)	1 (33)	1 (33)	3 (75)	1 (25)	9 (45)
Undecided	0 (0)	1 (33)	1 (33)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (50)	4 (20)
Unlikely to support	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (33)	1 (33)	1 (25)	1 (25)	4 (20)
Very unlikely to support	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (33)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (5)

For children's sport, there was mixed support for sponsorship restrictions across all sport types (Table 12). A greater number of respondents from athletics (n = 2), basketball (n = 2) and rugby league (n = 3) were supportive or very supportive of restrictions to unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of children's sport.

Table 12: *Regional association support of restrictions to limit unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of children's sports clubs, by sport type*

	Athletics n (%)	Basketball n (%)	Cricket n (%)	Netball n (%)	Rugby league n (%)	Soccer n (%)	Total n (%)
Very likely to support	1 (33)	1 (33)	1 (33)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (15)
Likely to support	1 (33)	1 (33)	0 (0)	1 (33)	3 (75)	1 (25)	7 (35)
Undecided	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (33)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (50)	3 (15)
Unlikely to support	1 (33)	1 (33)	0 (0)	1 (33)	1 (25)	1 (25)	5 (25)
Very unlikely to support	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (33)	1 (33)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (10)

Of the ten regional associations who reported that they would be supportive of restrictions to limit the sponsorship of children's sports clubs by unhealthy food and beverage companies, three thought that government should introduce these restrictions. Other respondents thought that state or national sporting organisations should be responsible or a combination of these organisations (n = 5). Three respondents also thought that regional sporting associations should have at least some responsibility for introducing these restrictions.

Regional association respondents were asked to describe how they thought these sponsorship restrictions of children's sport could be structured (unprompted). Of the 10 respondents who were supportive of restrictions, four thought that these should apply

across both elite and children's sport, while three thought they should specifically apply to children's clubs (aged 5 to 17 years). The majority of respondents thought that restrictions should apply to all types of sponsorship activities (n = 6). However, some respondents thought that unhealthy food and beverage company sponsorship was appropriate as long as the visibility and size of sponsorship promotions was reduced, such as vouchers and signage (n = 2) and excluded the sale of these unhealthy products at sports club canteens (n = 3). Restricting alcohol-related sponsorship was seen as most important, as suggested by five respondents, followed by all unhealthy food and beverages (n = 2), fast food (n = 2), sugary drinks (n = 1) and sports drinks (n = 1). However, some respondents thought that healthy options at fast food restaurants should still be promoted (n = 2).

Other than a complete ban on unhealthy food and beverage company sponsorship of children's sport, the majority of regional association respondents reported that they would support limits to the use of vouchers for these sponsors' products (75%), logos on children's uniforms (60%) and billboards and signage at sports clubs (55%) (Figure 6).

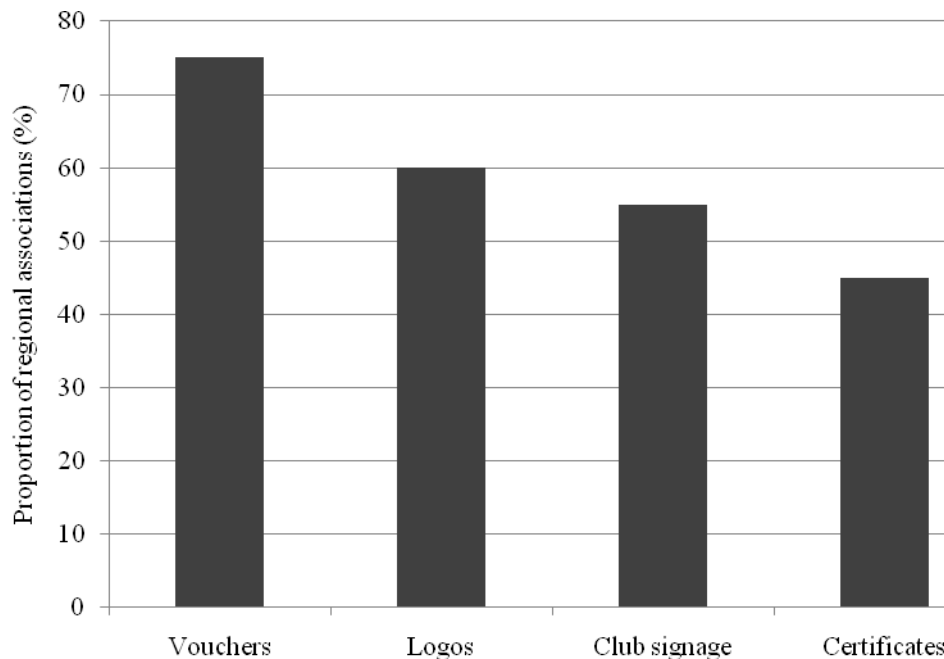


Figure 6: *Regional association support for restricting sponsorship activities at children's sport by unhealthy food and beverage companies*

The majority of respondents from athletics were supportive of restricting all sponsorship activities by unhealthy food and beverage companies at children's sport (Table 13). Most respondents from all sport types supported limiting the provision of vouchers for these

companies' products, with the exception of cricket. Support for limiting other sponsorship activities was mixed.

Table 13: *Regional association support for restricting sponsorship activities at children's sport by unhealthy food and beverage companies, by sport type*

	Athletics n (%)	Basketball n (%)	Cricket n (%)	Netball n (%)	Rugby league n (%)	Soccer n (%)	Total n (%)
Vouchers	3 (100)	3 (100)	0 (0)	3 (100)	3 (75)	3 (75) ^a	15 (75)
Logos on uniforms	3 (100)	2 (67)	1 (33)	1 (33)	2 (50)	3 (75)	12 (60)
Club signage	2 (67)	3 (100)	1 (33)	1 (33)	2 (50)	2 (50)	11 (55)
Branded certificates	3 (100)	2 (67)	0 (0)	1 (33)	2 (50)	1 (25)	9 (45)

^a Don't know; n = 1

Effect of sponsorship restrictions on children's sport

Most regional association respondents believed that restricting unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of children's sport would have a large financial impact on clubs when restrictions were first introduced (n = 14). This may increase the cost of sport for families, thereby potentially limiting children's participation (n = 3). Sports clubs would need to find alternative sources of funding and replacement sponsors, but this would eventually be possible (n = 5). Other respondents thought that restricting this sponsorship would have very little impact on children's sport and restrictions would only affect state and national sporting organisations and larger events (n = 4). The health benefits of limiting unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of children's sport were also acknowledged (n = 3). To reduce the financial impact of sponsorship restrictions it was recommended that tax concessions could be introduced for companies sponsoring children's sport, to encourage alternative sponsors (n = 1); that restrictions were introduced gradually (n = 1); and that clear definitions of unhealthy food and beverages were developed so that only the most unhealthy companies were restricted (n = 1).

ii. Sports clubs

Perceived benefits and risks of community sport sponsorship

Half of all sports club officials named the purchase of safe and good quality equipment as a major outcome of sponsorship funding. Sponsorship was also seen as being able to make sport more accessible for families by reducing the cost of registration (n = 8). Further, sponsorship contributed to maintaining and improving sporting facilities (n = 6), providing subsidised or free uniforms (n = 3) and providing coach and umpire training (n = 2). Other less tangible benefits included building a sense of community at sports clubs (n = 3) and providing promotional opportunities for clubs within the community through local businesses (n = 3). Some sports club officials also perceived that encouragement awards and vouchers from sponsors also benefited the club and were enjoyed by children (n = 2).

The majority of sports club officials perceived that sponsorship could have a potential negative effect on children (n = 11). In particular, companies and products that were thought to be a risk included unhealthy food (n = 4) and alcohol (n = 2) as these sponsorship arrangements promoted unhealthy products (unprompted). Other perceived risks associated with sponsorship included the over-commercialisation of children (n = 1) and family disharmony if parents did not agree with vouchers and rewards given by sponsoring companies (n = 1). Again, one respondent reported that they were now more accepting of sponsorship by McDonald's following the introduction of healthier options.

Experience in establishing health promoting sponsors

Forty percent of sports club officials (n = 8) reported that they had some experience in trying to recruit sponsors that sold healthy products. This included sporting goods companies (n = 3 clubs), from which clubs received equipment, uniforms and product discounts. Some clubs had also applied for funding from Woolworths, as part of the community grants scheme, but were unsuccessful (n = 2). One club had received funding from tinned fruit and bottled water companies.

Influence of sponsorship on children's product preferences and purchases

Almost all sports club officials (95%) believed that children aged 5 to 14 years were influenced by the sponsorship of *elite* sporting teams or athletes (45% 'very influenced' and 50% 'slightly influenced') (Figure 7). This compared to only 10% of sports club officials perceiving that children were very influenced by the sponsorship of their own club, and 55% perceiving that children were slightly influenced by this sponsorship.

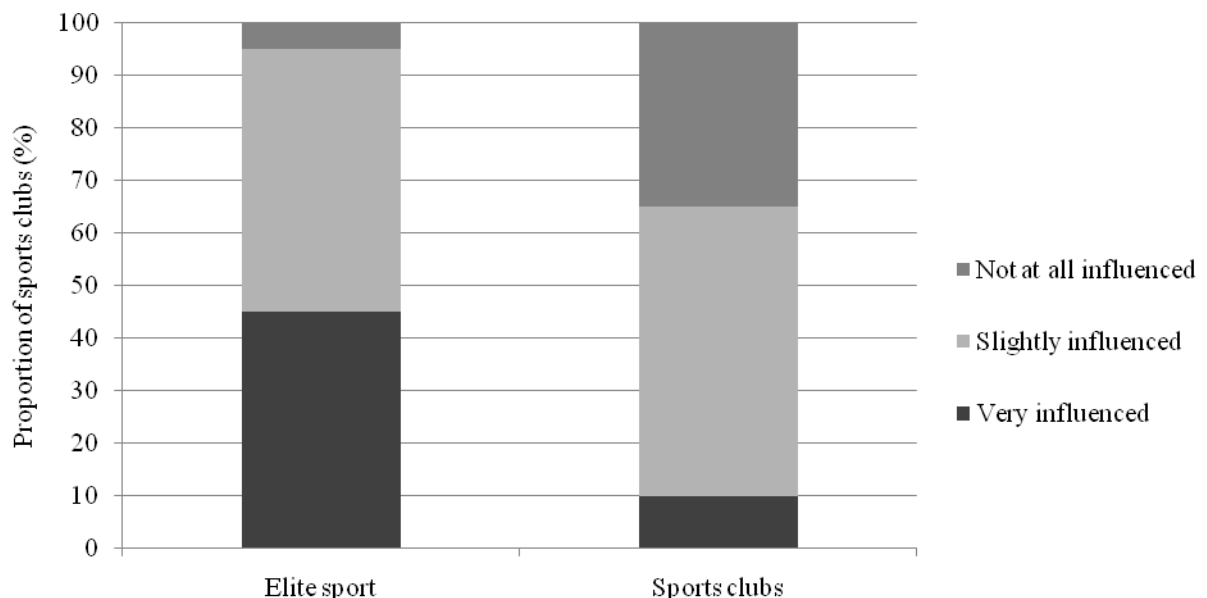


Figure 7: *Sports club officials' perceived influence of sport sponsorship on children*

A greater proportion of sports club officials from cricket, netball and rugby league perceived children to be very influenced by the sponsorship of elite sport (Table 14).

Across most sports, the majority of club officials thought that children were only slightly influenced by the sponsorship of sports clubs. However for netball clubs, two of the three clubs sampled did not think that children were influenced by this sponsorship.

Table 14: *Sports club officials' perceived influence of sport sponsorship on children, by sport type*

	Athletics n (%)	Basketball n (%)	Cricket n (%)	Netball n (%)	Rugby league n (%)	Soccer n (%)	Total n (%)
<i>Elite sport</i>							
Very influenced	1 (25)	0 (0)	2 (67)	2 (67)	3 (60)	1 (25)	9 (45)
Slightly influenced	3 (75)	1 (100)	1 (33)	1 (33)	2 (40)	2 (50)	10 (50)
Not at all influenced	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (25)	1 (5)
<i>Sports clubs</i>							
Very influenced	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (33)	0 (0)	1 (25)	2 (10)
Slightly influenced	3 (75)	0 (0)	2 (67)	0 (0)	3 (60)	3 (75)	11 (55)
Not at all influenced	1 (25)	1 (100)	1 (33)	2 (67)	2 (40)	0 (0)	7 (35)

Support of restrictions to limit unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship

Half of all sports club officials were supportive of regulations or policies to restrict unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of elite sport and children's sports clubs (Figure 8). A greater proportion of respondents were undecided about their support of regulations to restrict unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship at the club level compared to elite sport (15% vs. 5%).

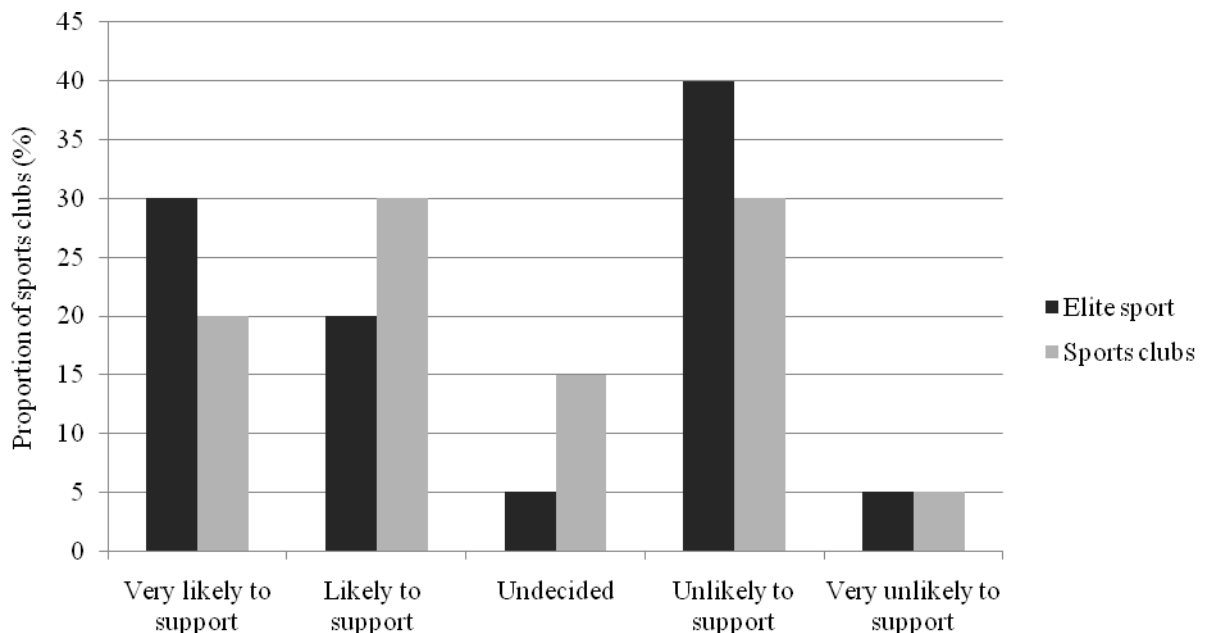


Figure 8: *Sports club support of restrictions to limit unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship*

Respondents from less socially disadvantaged areas were more supportive of restrictions to limit unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of children's sport compared to those from lower SES areas (67% were 'very likely' or 'likely' to support vs. 36%) (Table 15). However, support for elite sport sponsorship restrictions was similar between socio-demographic groups.

Table 15: *Sports club* support of restrictions to limit unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship, by SES of area

		Low SES (n = 11) n (%)	Medium/High SES (n = 9) n (%)	Total (n = 20) n (%)
Very likely to support	Elite sport	5 (36)	2 (22)	6 (30)
	Sports clubs	1 (9)	3 (33)	4 (20)
Likely to support	Elite sport	2 (18)	2 (22)	4 (20)
	Sports clubs	3 (27)	3 (33)	6 (30)
Undecided	Elite sport	0 (0)	1 (11)	1 (5)
	Sports clubs	3 (27)	0 (0)	3 (15)
Unlikely to support	Elite sport	5 (46)	3 (33)	8 (40)
	Sports clubs	4 (36)	2 (22)	6 (30)
Very unlikely to support	Elite sport	0 (0)	1 (11)	1 (5)
	Sports clubs	0 (0)	1 (11)	1 (5)

Support for restricting unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of both elite sport and children's sport was mixed across sport types (Tables 16 and 17). Sports club officials from cricket and soccer were the most supportive of restrictions to this sponsorship across both levels of sport.

Table 16: *Sports club* support of restrictions to limit unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of **elite** sport, by sport type

	Athletics n (%)	Basketball n (%)	Cricket n (%)	Netball n (%)	Rugby league n (%)	Soccer n (%)	Total n (%)
Very likely to support	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (67)	2 (67)	1 (20)	1 (25)	6 (30)
Likely to support	1 (25)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (75)	4 (20)
Undecided	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (20)	0 (0)	1 (5)
Unlikely to support	3 (75)	1 (100)	1 (33)	1 (33)	2 (40)	0 (0)	8 (40)
Very unlikely to support	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (20)	0 (0)	1 (5)

Table 17: *Sports club support of restrictions to limit unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of children's sports clubs, by sport type*

	Athletics n (%)	Basketball n (%)	Cricket n (%)	Netball n (%)	Rugby league n (%)	Soccer n (%)	Total n (%)
Very likely to support	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (33)	1 (33)	0 (0)	2 (50)	4 (20)
Likely to support	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (67)	0 (0)	2 (40)	2 (50)	6 (30)
Undecided	1 (25)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (33)	1 (20)	0 (0)	3 (15)
Unlikely to support	3 (75)	1 (100)	0 (0)	1 (33)	1 (20)	0 (0)	6 (30)
Very unlikely to support	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (20)	0 (0)	1 (5)

Of the ten sports club officials who were supportive of restrictions to limit the sponsorship of children's sports clubs by unhealthy food and beverage companies, the majority (n = 7) thought that government should be at least partly responsible for introducing these restrictions. Government restrictions were generally viewed as being more effective and less able to be criticised or circumvented by sports clubs and members. Six club officials also thought that restrictions should also be supported and directed by regional sporting associations, either in isolation or in combination with government. Sports clubs (n = 3) and peak national sporting bodies (n = 2) were also seen to have a role in introducing and supporting these regulations.

Of the sports club officials that were supportive of restricting unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of children's sport (n = 10), the majority thought that these restrictions should apply across all sporting clubs and events, including children's, adult's and elite sport (n = 5). Alternatively, two respondents thought that restrictions should apply to elite and children's sport (n = 2). These restrictions could be introduced using a staged approach, where regulations were first applied to children's clubs and then introduced at higher sporting levels. However, some respondents thought that restrictions should only apply to children's sports clubs (n = 2).

Suggested restrictions included limiting promotional opportunities at larger games and competitions (n = 2), where there was greater opportunity for exposure; or limiting the visibility of promotions while still allowing these companies to be silent sponsors (n = 2). Some respondents recommended limiting all promotional activities by these companies (n = 2), and particularly the use of children as 'advertising props', such as having companies' logos on uniforms (n = 1). Restrictions were specifically recommended to apply to alcohol (n = 4), fast food (n = 4), sugary drinks (n = 4) or 'junk' food (n = 2) companies. One respondent thought that restrictions should only apply to large multinational corporations and exclude restrictions to local or small businesses (n = 1), although larger companies, such as McDonalds, were also seen to have healthy products which could be promoted (n = 1).

Other than a complete ban on unhealthy food and beverage company sponsorship of children's sport, the majority of sports club respondents reported that they would support

limits to the use of logos on children's uniforms (70%) and billboards and signage at sports clubs (55%) (Figure 9).

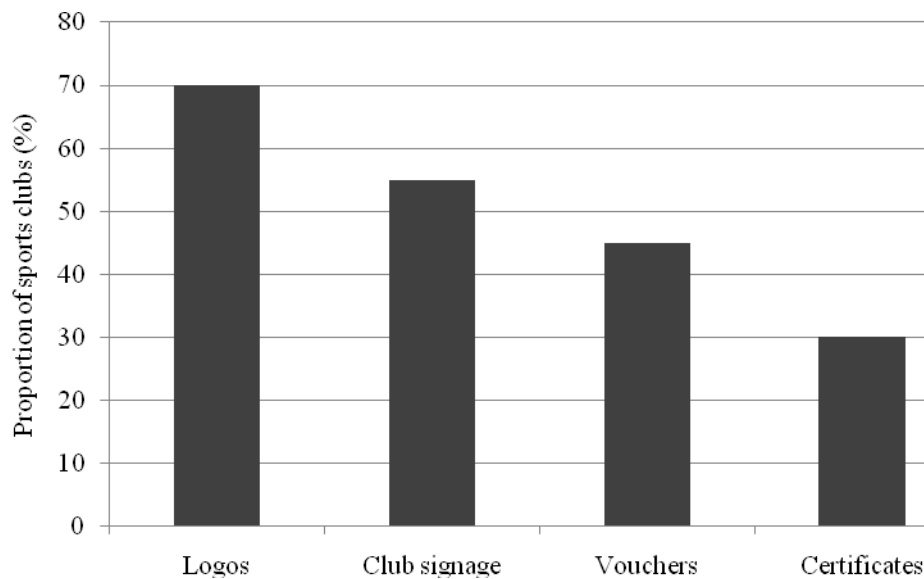


Figure 9: *Sports club* support for restricting sponsorship activities at children's sport by unhealthy food and beverage companies

The majority of club officials from basketball, cricket, rugby league and soccer were supportive of restricting the use of logos for unhealthy food and beverage companies on children's uniforms (Table 18). Support for limiting other sponsorship activities was mixed.

Table 18: *Sports club* support for restricting sponsorship activities at children's sport by unhealthy food and beverage companies, by sport type

	Athletics n (%)	Basketball n (%)	Cricket n (%)	Netball n (%)	Rugby league n (%)	Soccer n (%)	Total n (%)
Vouchers	1 (25)	0 (0)	2 (67)	2 (67)	2 (40)	2 (50) ^a	9 (45)
Logos on uniforms	1 (25)	1 (100)	2 (67)	1 (33)	5 (100)	4 (100)	14 (70)
Club signage	1 (25)	0 (0)	1 (33)	2 (67)	4 (80)	3 (75)	11 (55)
Branded certificates	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (33)	0 (0)	3 (60)	2 (50)	6 (30)

^a Don't know; n = 1

Effect of sponsorship restrictions on children's sport

Half of all sports club officials thought that restricting unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of children's sport would lead to financial losses for clubs (unprompted). These financial losses may affect the viability of sporting organisations (n = 10), thereby increasing the cost of sport for parents (n = 1) and influencing the quality of facilities and

equipment that could be provided (n = 4). In some cases, this financial impact was perceived to only be a short-term consequence of sponsorship restrictions, and funding could feasibly be replaced by alternative sponsors over time (n = 6) or by government contributions (n = 1).

Conversely, some respondents thought that sponsorship restrictions would have minimal or no financial impact to sports clubs (n = 4), although this may vary between sport types and for clubs in metropolitan areas that did not receive as much sponsorship from local businesses. Larger clubs with more corporate sponsors may also be more affected by these restrictions (n = 1). One respondent perceived that sponsorship mostly provided vouchers and certificates for clubs, and the removal of these would not impact on clubs financially but would result in reducing children's requests to parents to patron McDonalds. Restrictions could also be a potential incentive for food and beverage companies to improve the nutritional quality of their products, so that they would be permitted to sponsor children's sport (n = 2).

iii. Parents

Awareness and recall of sports club sponsors

Overall, 76% of parents reported that they were aware of the companies and businesses that sponsored their child's sports club. Across the sample, parents recalled 368 current sports club sponsors, 44 regional association sponsors and one sponsor of a sports development program operating through the club. In addition, eight past club sponsors were named. Of all correct current and past sport sponsors recalled, 56% (n = 237) were for non-food companies, 34% (n = 144) were food and beverage companies and 10% (n = 40) were alcohol-related businesses, including pubs and clubs.

Of those parents that could recall any sponsors (n = 152), parents could correctly recall a median of two sponsors each (IQR = 1 to 4); half of which were food companies. These parents could each name a median of 25% (IQR = 10 to 41) of all club sponsors, and 33% (IQR = 0 to 67) of all food and beverage sponsors. Almost all parents who reported that they could recall sport sponsors were able to correctly name at least one current sponsor (95%), while 61% could correctly name at least one current food and beverage company sponsor.

Perceived benefits and risks of community sport sponsorship

The most frequently reported benefit of sponsorship of children's sports clubs was the purchase of safe and good quality equipment (n = 95). Other major benefits included reducing the cost of participation for parents, including registration and uniforms (n = 76). This was also seen to allow economically disadvantaged families to participate (n = 2) and those with multiple children (n = 2). Sponsorship was thought to contribute to maintaining and improving sporting facilities (n = 40), including paying council fees for grounds (n = 2); providing subsidised or free uniforms and hats (n = 36); and paying for other club overheads, including coach and umpire training (n = 8), sporting and social events (n = 8), trophies (n = 6), and insurance (n = 3). Some parents were less specific

and stated that sponsorship provided general financial support for clubs (n = 35) and reduced the need for other fundraising activities (n = 6). However, a small number of parents thought that sports clubs received little financial benefit and sponsorship only benefited the participating companies (n = 5).

Parents also perceived that sponsorship by local businesses helped to build a sense of community at sports clubs (n = 16), and a feeling of community support and recognition for children (n = 6). Partnerships with local businesses also provided promotional opportunities for clubs within the community (n = 10). Some parents thought that encouragement awards and rewards from sponsors were enjoyed by children (n = 6), including McDonald's vouchers (n = 2), and that some sponsors were able to promote healthy products to children, such as healthy food companies (n = 3).

More than half of parents (n = 125) did not perceive there to be any risks or potential negative effects of sponsorship on children. However 38% of parents did perceive that sponsorship could have negative effects on children (n = 75). Those companies that were considered to be a risk included unhealthy food and beverage companies (n = 49) (unprompted). McDonald's fast food restaurant was specifically named as being a potentially unhealthy sponsor by 31 parents, however some parents were more accepting of McDonalds following the introduction of their healthier choices (n = 2). In particular, vouchers to fast food restaurants were seen to encourage patronage at these venues (n = 5). One parent also disliked the use of certificates with the McDonald's logo.

Other potentially unhealthy or risky companies to sponsor children's sport included businesses or companies selling alcohol (n = 23), tobacco (n = 11), those with gambling facilities (n = 2), and companies that were not environmentally friendly (n = 1). However, a small number of parents thought that it was ultimately parents' responsibility for ensuring their children did not consume these products (n = 3).

Influence of sponsorship on children's product preferences and purchases

The majority of parents (86%) perceived that children aged 5 to 14 years were either 'very' or 'slightly' influenced by the sponsorship of *elite* sporting teams or athletes (Figure 10). However, only around half of all parents (48%) thought that children were influenced by the sponsorship of their own sports clubs.

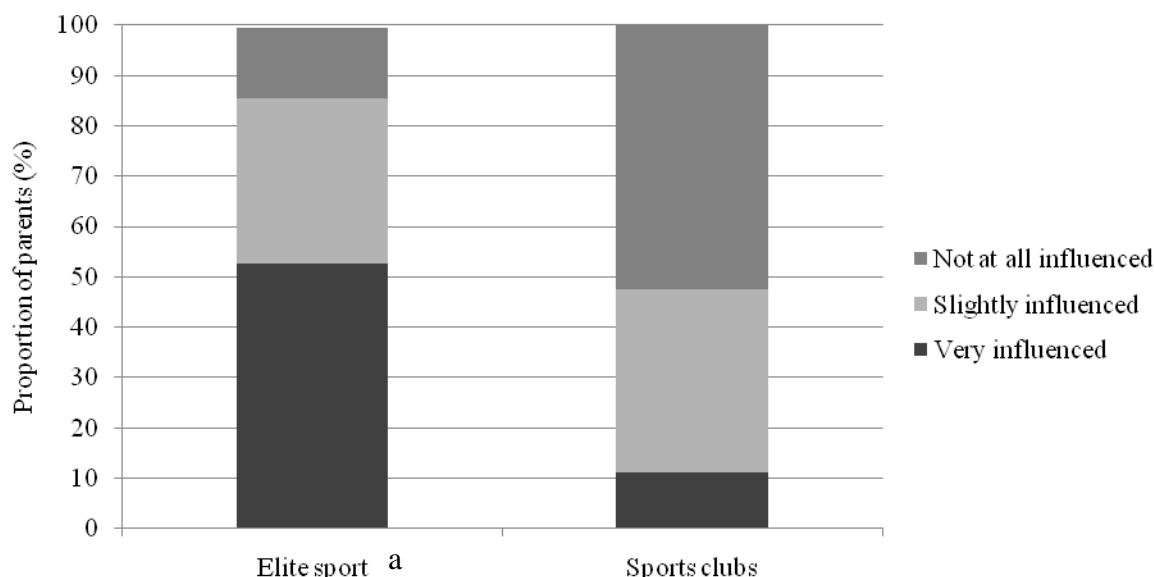


Figure 10: Parents' perceived influence of sport sponsorship on children

^a Don't know; n = 1

Parents of children playing athletics and cricket were more likely to perceive that children were influenced by the sponsorship of their own sports clubs (63% and 56%) (Table 19). The majority of parents from all sport types thought that children were influenced by the sponsorship of elite sport.

Table 19: Parents' perceived influence of sport sponsorship on children, by sport type

	Athletics n (%)	Basketball n (%)	Cricket n (%)	Netball n (%)	Rugby league n (%)	Soccer n (%)	Total n (%)
<i>Elite sport</i>							
Very influenced	28 (65)	7 (70)	11 (41)	11 (38) ^a	30 (62)	18 (43)	105 (53)
Slightly influenced	11 (26)	2 (20)	11 (41)	14 (48)	12 (25)	16 (38)	66 (33)
Not at all influenced	4 (9)	1 (10)	5 (18)	3 (10)	7 (14)	8 (19)	28 (14)
<i>Sports clubs</i>							
Very influenced	7 (16)	1 (10)	4 (15)	2 (7)	3 (6)	5 (12)	22 (11)
Slightly influenced	20 (47)	1 (10)	11 (41)	10 (35)	20 (41)	11 (26)	73 (37)
Not at all influenced	16 (37)	8 (80)	12 (44)	17 (59)	26 (53)	26 (62)	105 (53)

^a Don't know; n = 1

Parents living in high SES areas were slightly more likely to report that they perceived children to be influenced by the sponsorship of elite sport (92% vs. 83% and 86% for medium and low SES areas) and children's sports clubs (58% vs. 43% and 49%), although this difference was not statistically significant (Table 20).

Table 20: Parents' perceived influence of sport sponsorship on children, by SES

	Low SES n (%)	Medium SES n (%)	High SES n (%)	Total n (%)
<i>Elite sport</i>				
Very influenced	31 (49) ^a	50 (51)	24 (63)	105 (53)
Slightly influenced	23 (37)	32 (32)	11 (29)	66 (33)
Not at all influenced	8 (13)	17 (17)	3 (8)	28 (14)
<i>Sports clubs</i>				
Very influenced	7 (11)	13 (13)	2 (5)	22 (11)
Slightly influenced	24 (38)	29 (30)	20 (53)	73 (37)
Not at all influenced	32 (51)	57 (57)	16 (42)	105 (52)

^a Don't know; n = 1

There was no difference in the proportion of parents who perceived that children were influenced by the sponsorship of elite sport between those that had older children (aged ≥ 10 years), those with younger children (< 10 years) or those with a mix of ages (Figure 11). However, for the sponsorship of children's sport, a greater proportion of parents with older children and those with children with a mix of ages were more likely to report that children were influenced by this sponsorship (53% and 49% vs. 37% for parents of younger children).

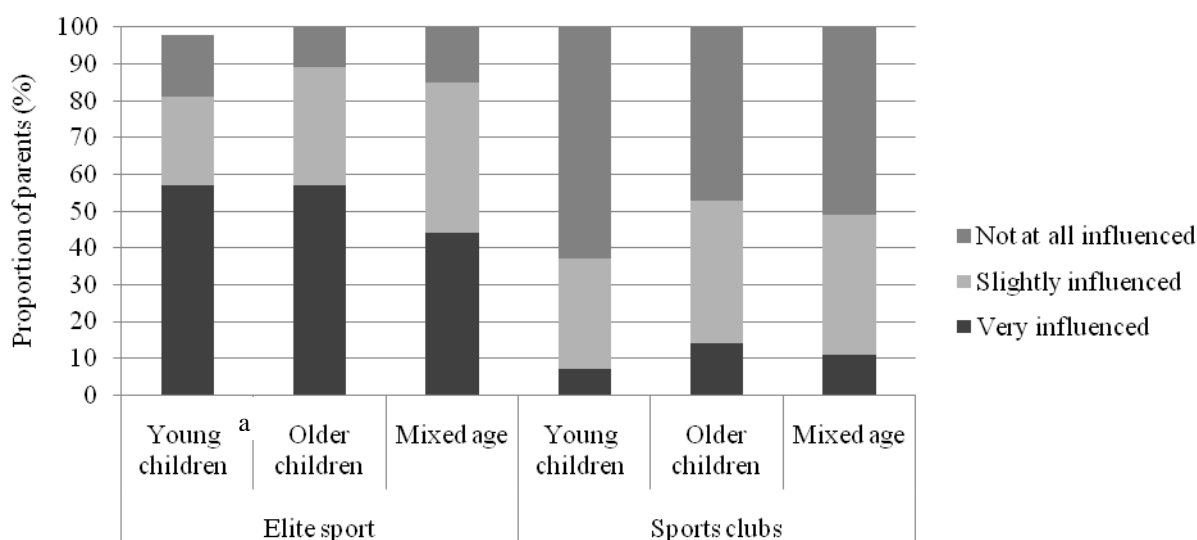


Figure 11: Parents' perceived influence of sport sponsorship on children, by child age

^a Don't know; n = 1

Appropriateness of sponsors for children's sports clubs

The most appropriate businesses or companies to sponsor children's sport were perceived by parents to be those that sold sporting goods, with 99% of parents reporting that these were appropriate sponsors. This was followed by businesses that sold fruit and vegetables (98%), groceries (89%) and building supplies and hardware (87%) (Table 21, Figure 12). Conversely, almost all parents (94%) thought businesses that sold alcohol were

inappropriate sponsors, while snack food companies (73%), fast food restaurants (72%) and chocolate and confectionery companies (64%) were also mostly considered to be inappropriate.

Table 21: Perceived appropriateness of business and companies to sponsor children's sport

Products sold by companies	Very appropriate n (%)	Somewhat appropriate n (%)	Somewhat inappropriate n (%)	Very inappropriate n (%)
Sporting goods	177 (89)	21 (10)	2 (1)	0 (0)
Fruit and vegetables	165 (83)	30 (15)	5 (2)	0 (0)
Groceries	71 (36)	107 (53)	20 (10)	2 (1)
Building supplies/hardware ^a	61 (31)	115 (58)	17 (8)	5 (2)
Sports drinks	50 (25)	105 (52)	31 (16)	14 (7)
Electronic games ^b	21 (10)	58 (29)	61 (30)	59 (30)
Soft drink	15 (7)	57 (28)	71 (36)	57 (29)
Snack food, like donuts and cakes	11 (6)	43 (21)	79 (39)	67 (34)
Chocolate and confectionery	11 (5)	62 (31)	81 (41)	46 (23)
Fast food	10 (5)	46 (23)	68 (34)	76 (38)
Alcohol	7 (3)	5 (3)	12 (6)	176 (88)

^a Don't know; n = 2; ^b Don't know; n = 1

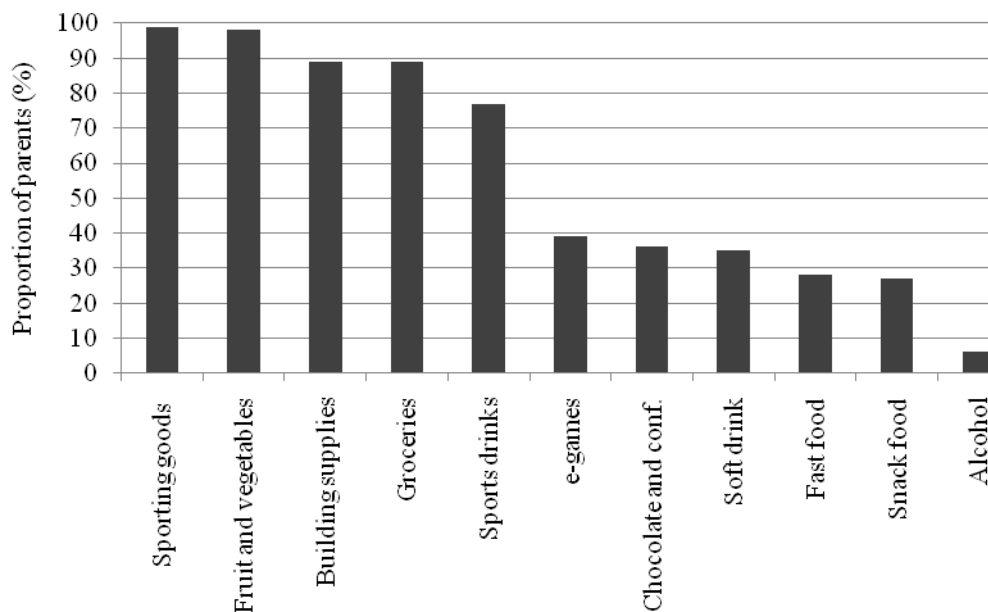


Figure 12: Perceived appropriateness ('very' and 'somewhat' appropriate) of business and companies to sponsor children's sport

Support of restrictions to limit unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship

For those parents who perceived that *any* of the above food, beverage or alcohol-related sponsors were inappropriate (n = 195), the majority were supportive of regulations or policies to restrict unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of elite sport and children's sports clubs (63% and 70%) (Figure 13). Only around one-fifth of parents would not be supportive of these sponsorship restrictions across elite and children's sport.

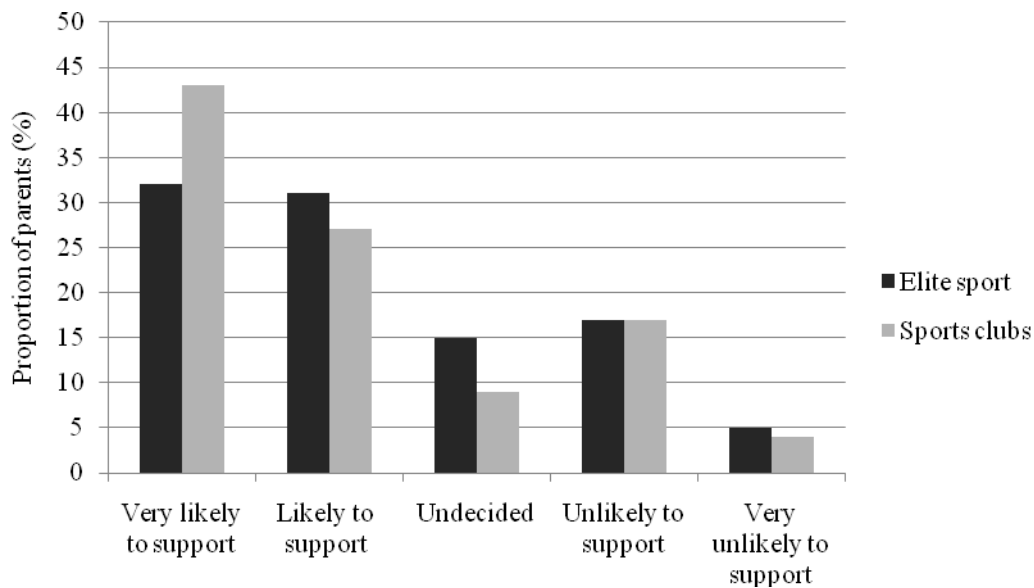


Figure 13: Parent support of restrictions to limit unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship

Parents living in higher SES areas were slightly more supportive of restrictions to limit unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of children's sport compared to those from lower SES areas; 76% were 'very likely' or 'likely' to support vs. 71% and 62% for medium and low SES areas (Table 22). However, this difference was not statistically significant ($\chi^2_8 = 6.8$; $P = 0.5$). Support for restricting this sponsorship for elite sport was similar between socio-demographic groups.

Table 22: Parent support of restrictions to limit unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship, by SES

		Low SES n (%)	Medium SES n (%)	High SES n (%)	Total n (%)
Very likely to support	Elite sport	18 (30)	30 (31)	14 (38)	62 (32)
	Sports clubs	24 (39)	42 (43)	17 (46)	83 (43)
Likely to support	Elite sport	23 (38)	26 (27)	11 (30)	60 (31)
	Sports clubs	14 (23)	27 (28)	11 (30)	52 (27)
Undecided	Elite sport	7 (11)	18 (19)	5 (14)	30 (15)
	Sports clubs	4 (7)	10 (10)	4 (11)	18 (9)
Unlikely to support	Elite sport	12 (20)	18 (19)	4 (11)	34 (17)
	Sports clubs	15 (25)	13 (13)	5 (14)	33 (17)

Very unlikely to support	Elite sport	1 (2)	5 (5)	3 (8)	9 (5)
	Sports clubs	4 (7)	5 (5)	0 (0)	9 (5)

Support for restricting unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of elite sport was highest for parents with children attending athletics (72%) and cricket (66%) (Table 23). Support for restricting unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of children's sports clubs was high amongst all sport types; ranging from 74% for parents at soccer to 63% at cricket (Table 24).

Table 23: *Parent support of restrictions to limit unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of elite sport, by sport type*

	Athletics n (%)	Basketball n (%)	Cricket n (%)	Netball n (%)	Rugby league n (%)	Soccer n (%)	Total n (%)
Very likely to support	13 (30)	3 (30)	9 (33)	9 (36)	14 (29)	14 (33)	62 (32)
Likely to support	18 (42)	3 (30)	9 (33)	5 (20)	15 (31)	10 (24)	60 (31)
Undecided	4 (9)	3 (30)	5 (19)	8 (32)	3 (6)	7 (17)	30 (15)
Unlikely to support	7 (16)	1 (10)	4 (15)	2 (8)	10 (21)	10 (24)	34 (17)
Very unlikely to support	1 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (4)	6 (13)	1 (2)	9 (5)

Table 24: *Parent support of restrictions to limit unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of children's sports clubs, by sport type*

	Athletics n (%)	Basketball n (%)	Cricket n (%)	Netball n (%)	Rugby league n (%)	Soccer n (%)	Total n (%)
Very likely to support	15 (35)	5 (50)	10 (37)	14 (56)	20 (42)	19 (45)	83 (43)
Likely to support	16 (37)	2 (20)	7 (26)	4 (16)	11 (23)	12 (29)	52 (27)
Undecided	3 (7)	3 (30)	2 (7)	2 (8)	7 (15)	1 (2)	18 (9)
Unlikely to support	7 (16)	0 (0)	6 (22)	3 (12)	9 (19)	8 (19)	33 (17)
Very unlikely to support	2 (5)	0 (0)	2 (7)	2 (8)	1 (2)	2 (5)	9 (5)

Those parents that perceived children to be 'very' or 'slightly' influenced by the sponsorship of elite sport were more likely to be very supportive of regulations to restrict unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of elite sport (46% and 41% vs. 22% of parents who thought children were 'not at all' influenced, $\chi^2_8 = 15.5$; $P = 0.05$). Similarly for children's sport, parents who thought that children were influenced by this sponsorship were more likely to be very supportive of restricting unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of these activities (50% and 42% vs. 19%, $\chi^2_{12} = 19.8$; $P = 0.07$).

Of those parents who were supportive of restrictions on unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of children's sport ($n = 135$), the majority ($n = 91$) thought that government should be at least partly responsible for introducing these restrictions. Some parents also thought that sports club ($n = 31$), regional associations ($n = 26$) or peak sporting bodies (n

= 6) should be responsible for the development and implementation of sponsorship restrictions, either in isolation or in combination with government.

Many parents thought that sponsorship restrictions should only apply to children's sport (≤ 16 years) ($n = 48$), as adults were able to make their own decisions. However, a large proportion of parents also thought that restrictions should apply more broadly across all sporting clubs and events, including children's, adults and elite sport ($n = 30$), or elite and children's sport ($n = 27$). A large number of parents supported restricting the visibility of promotions or sale of unhealthy food and beverage items at clubs, while still allowing these companies to provide funding ($n = 59$). Promotional activities to be restricted included signage at clubs ($n = 11$), the use of logos on players uniforms ($n = 7$), vouchers ($n = 8$) branded certificates ($n = 2$), and television advertisements promoting the sponsorship arrangements ($n = 2$). Some parents also thought that sponsorship restrictions should be aligned with the NSW school canteen classifications for healthy food, and only those foods that were considered to be 'green' or healthy could be sponsors ($n = 4$). Alternatively, these companies could promote only their healthier products at clubs ($n = 2$), which would encourage companies to improve the nutritional quality of their products. Conversely, one-third of parents that supported sponsorship restrictions preferred to limit all promotional activities by unhealthy food and beverage companies ($n = 47$).

Restrictions were specifically recommended to apply to alcohol ($n = 57$), fast food ($n = 38$), sugary drinks ($n = 13$), confectionery ($n = 9$), supermarkets ($n = 1$) or unhealthy food and beverage companies in general ($n = 33$). Some parents also thought that large multinational companies were less acceptable sponsors than local businesses ($n = 2$). One parent recommended the introduction of an agency to oversee the sponsorship of children's sport to ensure that only appropriate sponsors were represented.

Other than a complete ban on unhealthy food and beverage company sponsorship of children's sport, almost two-thirds of parents that had perceived any types of sponsors to be inappropriate ($n = 195$) thought that limitations should apply to the use of these companies' logos on children's uniforms (64%). Almost half of parents were also supportive of restricting vouchers for these companies' products (49%) and billboards and signage at sports clubs (48%) (Figure 14).

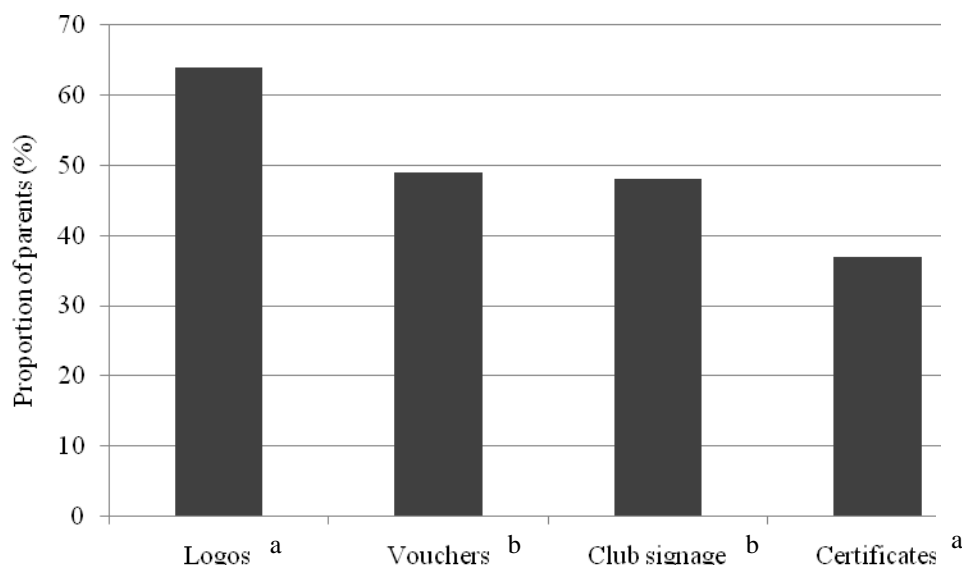


Figure 14: Parent support for restricting sponsorship activities at children's sport by unhealthy food and beverage companies

^a Don't know; n = 1; ^b Don't know; n = 3

The majority of parents across all sport types were supportive of restricting the use of logos for unhealthy food and beverage companies on children's uniforms (Table 25). Support for limiting other sponsorship activities was mixed.

Table 25: Parent support for restricting sponsorship activities at children's sport by unhealthy food and beverage companies, by sport type

	Athletics n (%)	Basketball n (%)	Cricket n (%)	Netball n (%)	Rugby league n (%)	Soccer n (%)	Total n (%)
Vouchers	20 (47) ^a	10 (100)	12 (44)	15 (60)	18 (38) ^a	21 (50) ^a	96 (49)
Logos on uniforms	29 (67) ^a	7 (70)	15 (56)	17 (68)	28 (58)	28 (67)	124 (64)
Club signage	19 (44) ^a	5 (50)	13 (48)	11 (44) ^a	22 (46)	24 (57) ^a	94 (48)
Branded certificates	17 (40)	6 (60)	7 (26)	13 (52)	14 (29) ^a	15 (36)	72 (37)

^a Don't know; n = 1

Parents living in areas lower social disadvantage (medium and high SES) were more supportive of restrictions to the use of vouchers, logos on children's uniforms and the use of signage at sports clubs than parents from areas of lower SES (Table 26).

Table 26: Parent support for restricting sponsorship activities at children's sport by unhealthy food and beverage companies, by SES

	Low SES n (%)	Medium n (%)	High n (%)	Total n (%)
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Vouchers	22 (36)	52 (54) ^b	22 (60) ^a	96 (49)
Logos on uniforms	28 (46)	66 (68)	30 (81) ^a	124 (64)
Club signage	25 (41)	48 (50) ^b	21 (57) ^a	94 (48)
Branded certificates	19 (31)	39 (40) ^a	14 (38)	72 (37)

^a Don't know; n = 1; ^b Don't know; n = 2

Effect of sponsorship restrictions on children's sport

More than half of all parents thought that sports clubs would suffer from financial losses if sponsorship by unhealthy food and beverage companies was restricted (n = 113) (unprompted). Some of these parents perceived that these financial losses would be large and result in difficulties for clubs to continue to deliver sport (n = 33), as these companies were seen to have the most available funding for sponsorship. With these funding losses the cost of registration would increase, thereby limiting sport participation (n = 39), and the equipment and facilities that were available may be impacted (n = 6). A small number of parents also considered the loss of vouchers and awards from these companies to be disappointing for children (n = 6). Some parents thought that financial losses for clubs would only be temporary and this sponsorship could be replaced by alternative healthy sponsors (n = 42), additional fundraising (n = 5) or by government contributions (n = 1).

However, a considerable number of parents thought that sponsorship restrictions would have very little impact on children's sports clubs (n = 42) and that the longer term health implications of not promoting unhealthy food were more important (n = 15).

iv. Children

Awareness and recall of sports club sponsors

Overall, 74% of children reported that they were aware of the companies and businesses that sponsored their sports club. A similar proportion of boys and girls reported that they were aware of club sponsors; 75% of boys vs. 69% of girls. Those children who were 10 years old were less likely to be aware of club sponsors (67% vs. 75% for 11 to 14 year olds), although this difference was not significant ($\chi^2_1 = 0.7$, P = 0.4).

In total, children recalled 119 current sports club sponsors, 22 regional association sponsors and three past sponsors. Of all correct current and past sport sponsors recalled 51% (n = 74) were food and beverage companies, 38% (n = 55) were for non-food companies and 10% (n = 15) were alcohol-related businesses.

For those children who could correctly recall any sponsors, a median of two sponsors were recalled each (IQR = 1 to 3), which included a median of one food sponsor (IQR = 0 to 2). These children could name a median of 18% (IQR = 10 to 29) of all sponsors, and 33% (IQR = 10 to 29) of all food and beverage sponsors. The majority of children who had reported that they could remember sponsors of their sports club were able to correctly name at least one sponsor (92%), and 68% could correctly name at least one food and beverage company sponsor.

Perceptions of sports club sponsors

Considering all sponsors named by children, including those that were correct and incorrect (n = 190 sponsors), the majority of children reported that they liked these companies 'a little' or 'a lot' (70%) (Table 27). A significantly greater proportion of children reported that they liked alcohol-related sponsors a lot compared to non-food or food and beverage companies (59% vs. 35% and 36%, $\chi^2_6 = 14.2$, $P = 0.03$).

Table 27: *Child perceptions of recalled sports club sponsors*

	Non-food companies n (%)	Food and beverage companies n (%)	Alcohol- related companies n (%)	Total n (%)
Like the sponsor a lot	27 (35)	32 (36)	13 (59)	72 (38)
Like the sponsor a little	18 (23)	35 (39)	7 (32)	60 (32)
Dislike the sponsor	3 (3)	3 (3)	0 (0)	6 (3)
Don't think about the sponsor	30 (39)	20 (22)	2 (9)	52 (27)

Reasons given for liking sponsoring companies included the companies' support of the club (n = 26), by providing funding, equipment and products (unprompted). Two children also liked the companies as they sponsored the premier league players for their sport. Other reasons provided were that they liked the products sold by the companies (n = 42) or that it was their parent's company (n = 2).

Awareness and recall of elite sport sponsors

Almost all children (n = 99) reported having a favourite elite sporting team. For these children, 59% reported that they were aware of the companies and businesses that sponsored this team. A total of 67 current team sponsors were recalled, and two sponsors of sports development programs. As well, four companies for which the sports team had appeared in a television advertisement were mentioned. Of the correct sponsors recalled 84% (n = 57) were for non-food companies, 14% (n = 10) were food and beverage companies and 2% (n = 2) were alcohol-related businesses, including one alcohol manufacturer.

A significantly greater proportion of boys reported that they were aware of the sponsors of their favourite sports team; with 72% of boys reporting that they were aware compared to 40% of girls ($\chi^2_1 = 10.3$, $p < 0.001$). There was no difference in awareness of sponsors between children of different ages. There was also a trend for increasing awareness of sporting team's sponsors when more of the team's games were watched by children (Figure 15). Almost three-quarters of children who watched *all* of the team's games during a normal season (n = 23) reported that they were aware of the team's sponsors, compared to 63% of those watching most of the games and 47% for those only watching some. However, this trend did not reach statistical significance ($\chi^2_2 = 4.5$, $P = 0.1$).

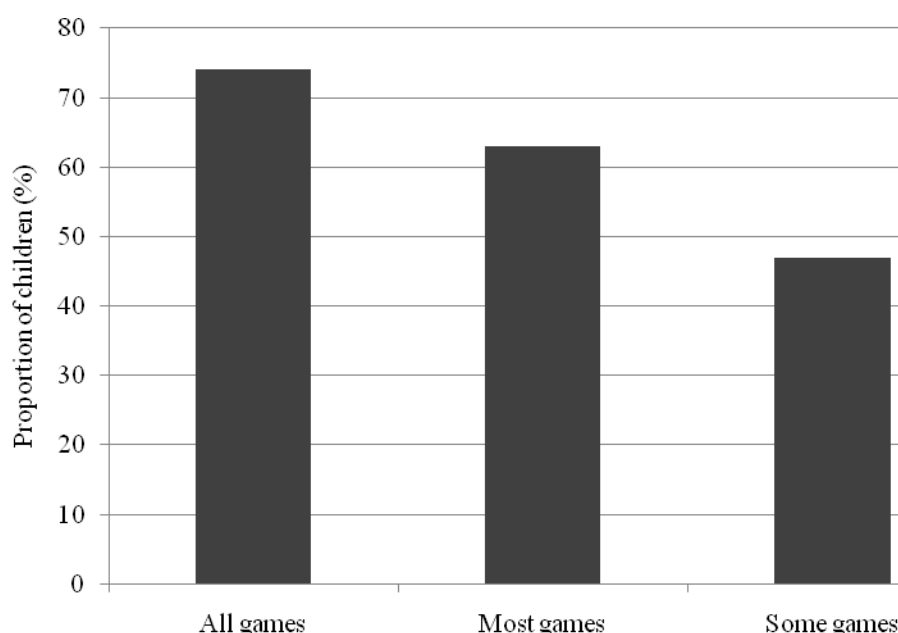


Figure 15: *Child awareness of elite sporting team's sponsors by proportion of games watched*

For those children who correctly recalled any sponsors of their favourite elite sporting team, a median of one sponsor was recalled (IQR = 1 to 2), while most children did not recall any food and beverage sponsors (median = 0, IQR = 0 to 0). Most children (80%) who had said that they were aware of the team's sponsors could correctly name at least one sponsor, while only 15% of children could name at least one food and beverage company sponsor.

Perceptions of elite sport sponsors

Again, for both correct and incorrect sponsors recalled for elite sporting teams (n = 95 sponsors), the majority of children liked these companies 'a little' or 'a lot' (70%) (Table 28). For children that reported liking any of the recalled sponsors, reasons given for liking these companies included the financial support of their team (n = 15), as well as liking their products or services (n = 34) (unprompted).

Table 28: *Child perceptions of recalled elite sport sponsors*

	Non-food companies n (%)	Food and beverage companies n (%)	Alcohol- related companies n (%)	Total n (%)
Like the sponsor a lot	38 (48)	8 (57)	0 (0)	46 (48)
Like the sponsor a little	17 (22)	2 (14)	1 (50)	20 (21)

Dislike the sponsor	1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1)
Don't think about the sponsor	23 (29)	4 (29)	1 (50)	28 (30)

Food preferences and purchase intentions resulting from sport sponsorship

Children were asked a series of questions to determine their perceptions of sponsors; the motivations of companies in sponsoring sport; and their purchase intentions and consumption behaviours as a result of sponsorship. A likert scale was used to indicate agreement: from 1 ('strongly agree') to 4 ('strongly disagree'). A median of 2 ('Agree'), was reported for the statements:

- "I think food and drink companies that sponsor sport are cool";
- "I think that food and drink companies sponsor sport to help out sports clubs";
- "I like to return the favour to food and drink companies that sponsor my favourite sports by buying their products"; and
- "I think other children buy products because they sponsor their favourite sports".

However, children also agreed that "food and drink companies only sponsor sport as a way of advertising" (median = 2).

Overall 85% of children thought that food and beverage companies sponsored sport to help out sports clubs ('Strongly agree' or 'agree'), while the majority also thought that food and beverage sponsors of were cool (69%), and liked to return the favour to these sponsors by buying their products (59%) (Table 29). Most children also thought that other children bought food and drink products because these companies sponsored their sport (66%). However, almost three-quarters of children (72%) thought that companies only sponsored sport to advertise their products.

Table 29: *Child perceptions of sponsors, and product preferences and purchase behaviours as a result of sponsorship*

	Strongly agree n (%)	Agree n (%)	Disagree n (%)	Strongly disagree n (%)
<i>Perception of sponsors</i>				
Think sponsors are cool ^a	13 (13)	58 (56)	27 (26)	4 (4)
<i>Motivations of sponsors</i>				
To help out sports clubs	26 (25)	62 (60)	13 (13)	2 (2)
To advertise their products ^a	15 (15)	59 (57)	25 (24)	3 (3)
<i>Purchase intentions resulting from sponsorship</i>				
Think other children buy sponsor's products	9 (9)	59 (57)	33 (32)	2 (2)
Like to return the favour to sponsors by buying products ^a	8 (8)	52 (51)	41 (40)	1 (1)
Ask parents to buy sponsor's products	7 (7)	37 (36)	53 (51)	6 (6)
Would always buy sponsors product	6 (6)	30 (29)	60 (58)	7 (7)
Think about sponsors when I'm buying ^a	2 (2)	29 (28)	64 (62)	7 (7)
<i>Consumption behaviours resulting from sponsorship</i>				
Prefer to eat sponsor's products	4 (4)	30 (29)	63 (61)	6 (6)

^a Don't know; n = 1

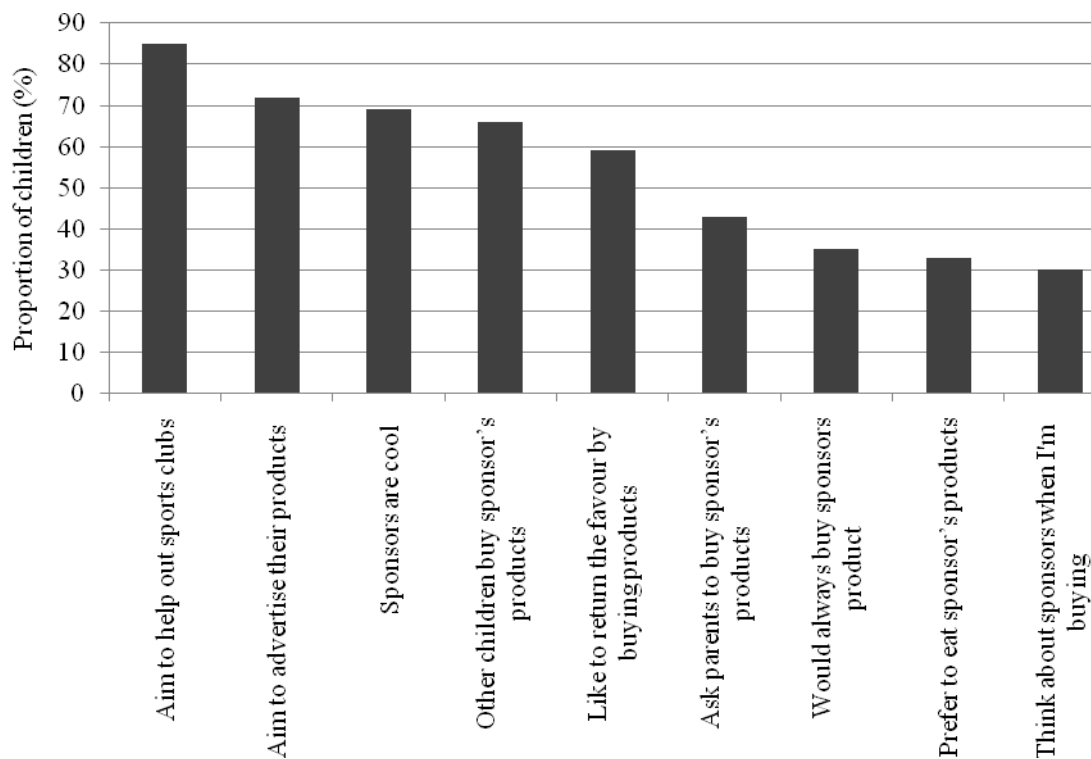


Figure 16: *Child* agreement about sponsorship effects and motivations

Younger children aged 10 to 11 years were significantly more likely to report that they thought about sponsors when buying something to eat or drink compared to older children aged 12 to 14 years (median (IQR) = 3 (2 to 3) vs. 3 (3 to 3); Mann–Whitney $U = 1627.0$, $n_1 = 44$, $n_2 = 58$, $P = 0.005$) (Figure 17).

As well, younger children were more likely to agree that they liked to return the favour to sports clubs by buying their products (median (IQR) = 2 (2 to 3) vs. 3 (2 to 3); Mann–Whitney $U = 1639.5$, $n_1 = 45$, $n_2 = 57$, $P = 0.007$) (Figure 18); and thought that sponsors were cool (median (IQR) = 2 (2 to 2) vs. 2 (2 to 3); Mann–Whitney $U = 1596.0$, $n_1 = 45$, $n_2 = 57$, $p = 0.02$) (Figure 19). There were no significant differences in responses by gender or by the amount of television that children reported to watch on weekdays or weekends.

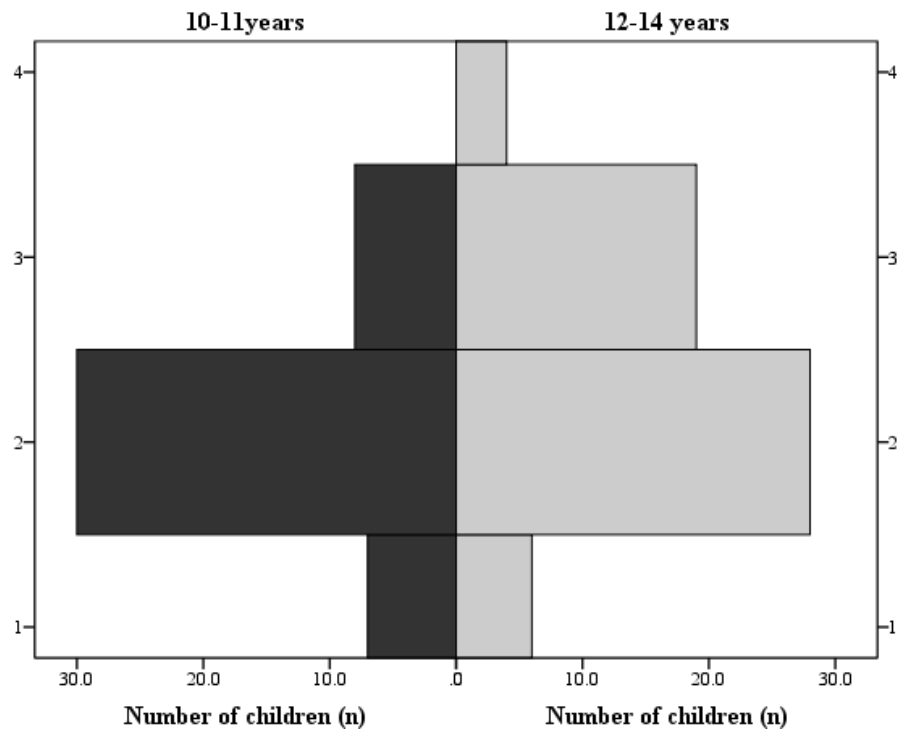


Figure 17: *Child* responses to statement “When I’m in a shop, I think about if a food or drink company sponsors my favourite sports when I’m buying something to eat or drink”, by age group

Note: 1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = disagree; 4 = strongly disagree

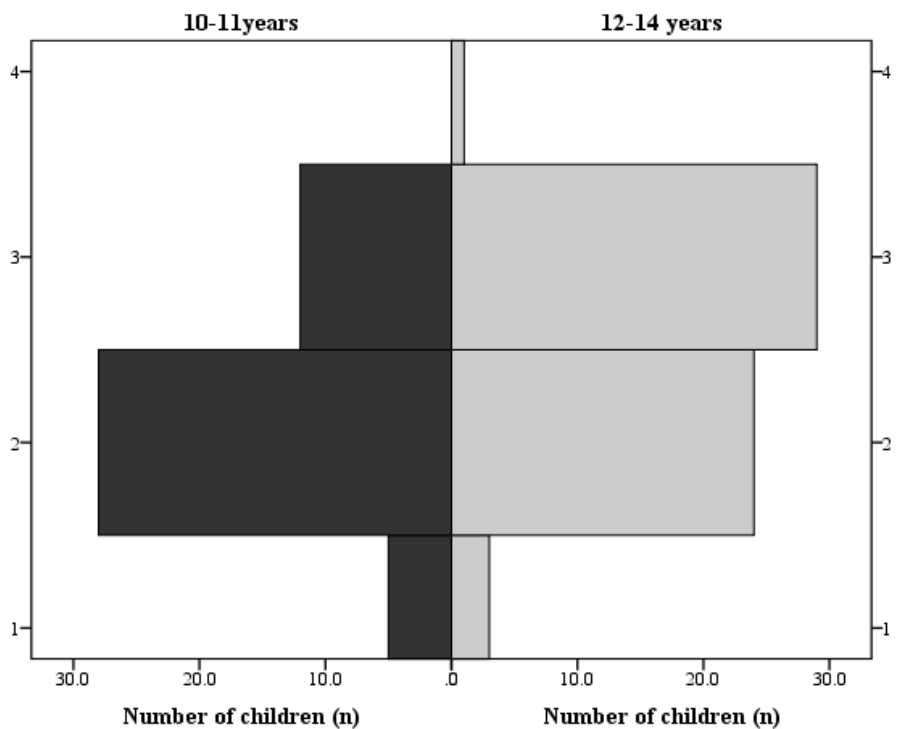


Figure 18: *Child* responses to statement “I like to return the favour to food and drink companies that sponsor my favourite sports by buying their products”, by age group
 Note: 1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = disagree; 4 = strongly disagree

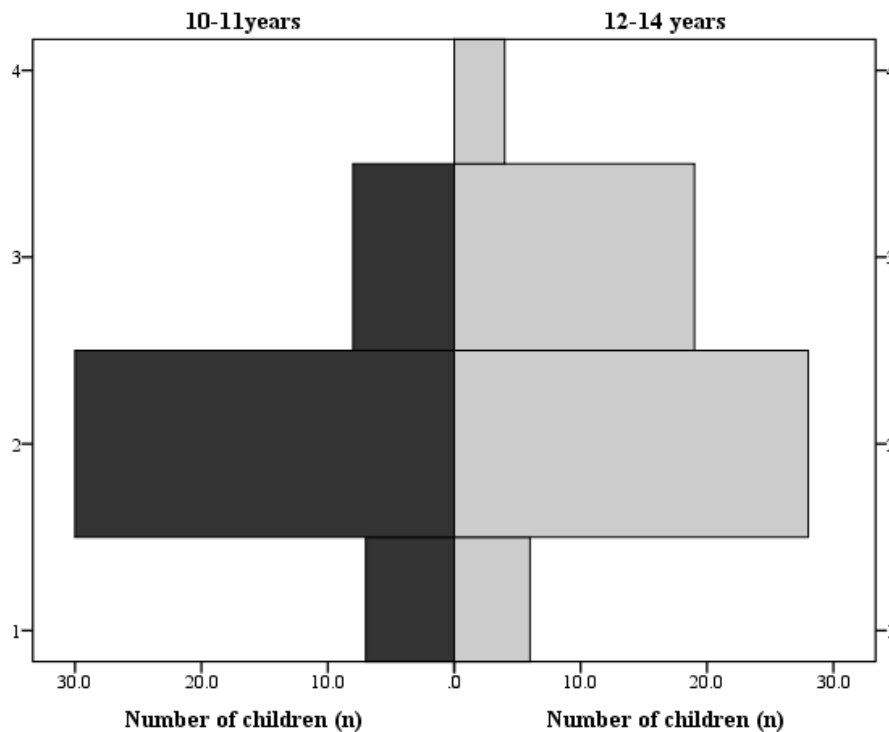


Figure 19: *Child* responses to statement “I think food and drink companies that sponsor sport are cool”, by age group
 Note: 1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = disagree; 4 = strongly disagree

Perceptions of promotional activities

i. Vouchers

The majority of all children (86%) had previously received a voucher from a food or beverage company to reward good school or sport performance. Of these children, 86% reported that they liked receiving the voucher either ‘a lot’ or ‘a little’ (Figure 20). There was no difference between children of different ages in their perceptions of these vouchers; with 42% of 10 to 11 year olds liking the vouchers a lot compared to 43% of 12 to 14 year olds.

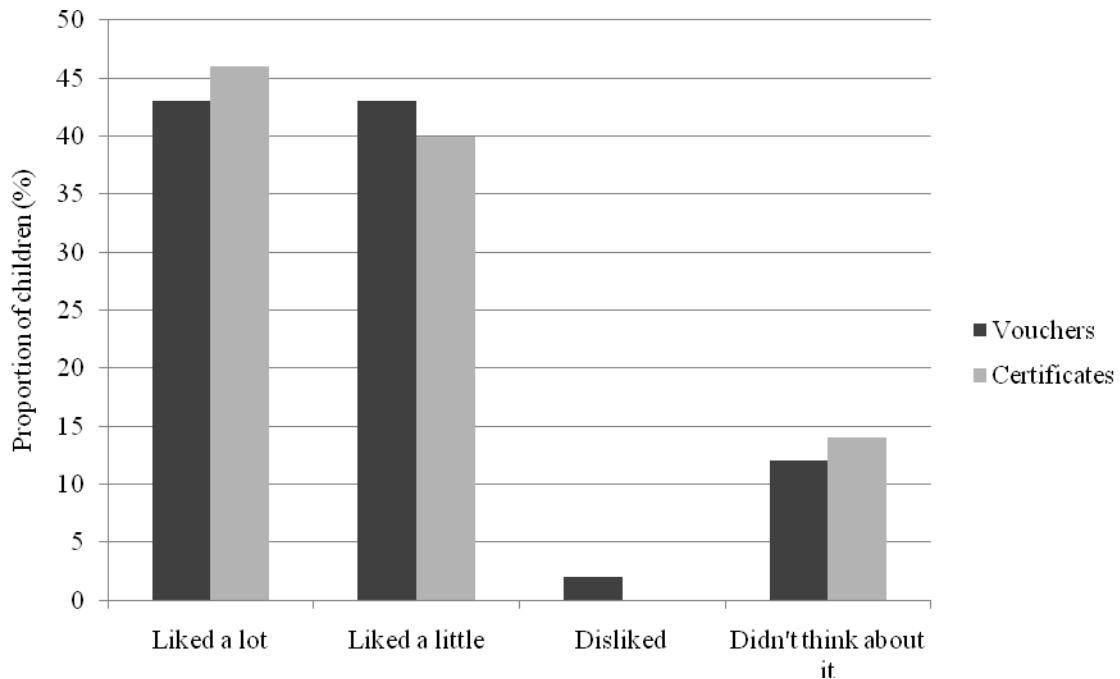


Figure 20: *Child* perceptions of sponsorship activities

For those children that had received vouchers, 30% reported that they had liked the company more after they received this reward (Figure 21). Younger children (aged 10 to 11) were more likely to report liking the company more after they received the voucher compared to older children (12 to 14 years) (34% vs. 28%), although this difference was not statistically significant ($\chi^2_1 = 0.5$, $P = 0.5$).

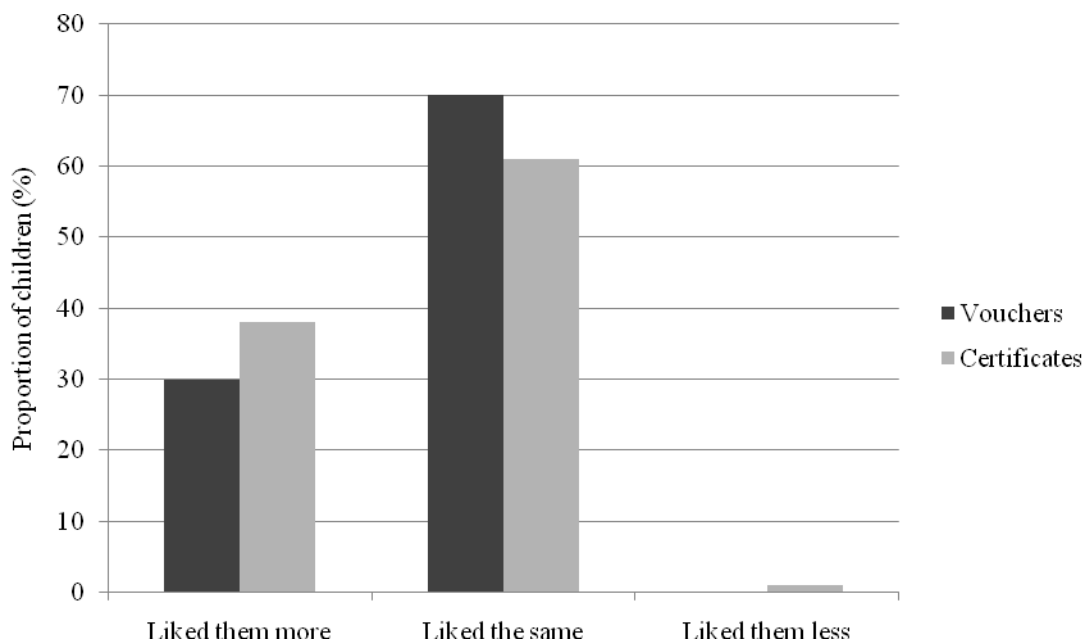


Figure 21: *Child* perceptions of sponsors following the receipt of rewards

ii. Certificates

More than three-quarters of children (76%) had previously received a sporting or school certificate displaying a food or beverage company logo. The majority of these children also liked receiving these certificates (86%), while 38% liked the company more afterwards (Figures 20 and 21).

A greater proportion of younger children reported that they liked the certificates a lot (53% of 10 to 11 year olds vs. 41% of 12 to 14 year olds; $\chi^2_2 = 1.6$, $P = 0.4$). Younger children also reported liking the company that provided this voucher more often than older children (41% vs. 36%), although again this finding was not statistically significant ($\chi^2_2 = 1.6$, $P = 0.4$).

5.0 Discussion

5.1 *Increasing participation and health promotion in sport*

Perceived benefits of, and barriers to, sport participation

Organised sport offers children an opportunity to acquire new motor and cognitive skills, interact with others, meet challenges, develop team skills, and potentially improve self-esteem and self-confidence (31). In this survey, organised sport was perceived by the sporting community to be valuable for children's overall health and development, and particularly for developing social skills and for learning to cooperate in a team environment. However, sporting officials and parents recognised that there were significant barriers to children and families' participation in sport, particularly for those from disadvantaged backgrounds and larger families for whom the costs of sport made participation difficult. Specifically, increasing the affordability of sport, such as through government funding schemes was the strategy suggested by the greatest number of parents to increase participation in sport.

Earlier surveys have also identified cost as major consideration for parents in allowing their children to participate in sport. In a telephone survey of 400 randomly sampled parents across Australia, a third of parents reported that they would be 'a lot more likely' to allow their child to participate in sport if the cost of participation was lower (32). In this study, the cost of participation was perceived to be a significant barrier to sports participation for families with daughters and those with lower incomes (32).

In Canada, the government has recently introduced a novel funding strategy to increase children's participation in organised sport. The Children's Fitness Tax Credit scheme allows families to claim tax rebates for the registration costs of organised activities that contribute to cardio-respiratory endurance, as well as either muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility or balance (33). Families are able to claim up to \$500 per child towards the cost of registering in sports programs. However, while this tax deduction is useful in incentivising organised sports participation for families and may assist in alleviating some of the costs of sport, it does not effectively target lower income groups who are most in need of this financial support. As the scheme is established as a tax deduction, whereby registration costs reduce payable federal tax, this is of less benefit to those in lower income tax brackets. A more targeted approach, such as bonus payments for sporting costs distributed through government social welfare schemes, would provide a more equitable financial support structure for lower income groups. In addition, lowering the costs of sport, such as by reducing local council fees for hiring sports grounds, would be useful.

Other key areas for improving the inclusiveness and participation in sport included improving player safety, such as through coach training, facility improvements and mandatory use of safety equipment. Similarly, data from the NSW Child Health Survey in 2001, a telephone survey of a random sample of parents of children aged 5 to 12 years, indicated that more than a quarter of parents reported discouraging or preventing children

from playing particular sports because of safety concerns (34). As a result, the modification of some sporting activities, particularly football codes, was considered necessary to reduce injury and ensure safety and participation (34).

As well, improving the healthiness of the food and beverages promoted through sports clubs, including the items sold at canteens, provided by coaches and offered as sport rewards, was cited as a strategy to improve the healthiness of children's sport. In particular, more than one-third of parents and children perceived the food and beverages sold at sports canteens to be inadequate. The behaviour of other parents at games was also noted as an area for improvement, particularly for rugby league and athletics clubs.

These findings are supported by research from Victoria, in which survey respondents (n = 1,500) were asked to nominate the aspects of community sports clubs that were perceived to be less healthy. In this survey, alcohol consumption (30% of respondents), overbearing parents (18%), competitiveness (15%), fights between attendees (12%), and the availability of unhealthy food and drinks (6%) were rated as being the most unhealthy aspects of sport (18). Additionally, half of all respondents thought that there was not enough healthy food sold at canteens at community sporting venues, and opposed the sale of unhealthy foods to bolster club revenue. In this survey, the main benefits of being involved in a local community sports club included socialising (53%), followed by exercise and physical fitness (45%), participating in the local community (35%) and health (27%) (18).

Health promotion and social inclusion policies and practices

Social inclusion practices and supporting written policies, including those relating to fair play and anti-discrimination, were well incorporated into the organisational ethos of both sports clubs and regional associations. Almost all sporting organisations surveyed had a written policy on fair play (n = 20 regional associations and 18 sports clubs) and anti-discrimination (n = 18 and 15). This was also reflected in the reported practices of sports clubs, with the majority of clubs engaging in at least one practice to increase participation by children from disadvantaged groups and to encourage fair play.

However, written policies relating to other health promotion and inclusion issues were less common; including club and association policies on participation by children with a disability, and policies relating to healthy eating and sun protection at regional associations. Notably, only one regional association had a written policy on healthy eating.

Previous surveys of sports clubs and peak sporting organisations have similarly identified a low availability of health promotion policies, particularly relating to healthy eating. In the telephone survey of officials from 108 randomly sampled sports clubs in NSW and the ACT described in section 2.0 above, only three clubs reported that they had a written policy on healthy eating (35). As well, surveys of sports clubs from Victoria and Western Australia have also found that policies relating to healthy eating are more difficult to establish and implement than those for other health promotion issues (36, 37).

These findings are also supported by policy analyses of state and national sporting organisations. In a website analysis of available written health promotion policies for 55 peak sporting organisations, only six organisations had a written policy on healthy eating available on their website (38). Conversely, 33 organisations had a written policy on fair play and 26 had a policy on anti-discrimination.

Few sports clubs and regional associations explicitly reported that they had experienced any barriers to the development of health promotion policies. However, the current low level of uptake for written policies for some issues, including healthy eating and sun protection suggests that many sporting organisations may not see the development of such policies as within their remit or capabilities. Indeed, in this study some sporting officials reported that they had previously not recognised the need for such policies.

5.2 Sport Sponsorship

Support of regulations to limit unhealthy food and beverage sport sponsorship

Findings from this survey indicate that the sporting community, including sports club and regional association officials and parents, support the introduction of regulations to limit unhealthy food and beverage company sponsorship of children's sport. Seventy percent of surveyed parents and half of all club and regional association officials were supportive of sponsorship restrictions. Similarly, a large proportion of parents, and regional association and sports club officials were supportive of restricting unhealthy food and beverage company sponsorship of elite sporting teams or people (63%, 55% and 50%).

Support for restricting unhealthy food and beverage company sponsorship of children's sport was consistently higher amongst respondents from high SES areas, suggesting that concerns about potential financial losses may be influencing community support of restrictions for those with lower incomes. Conversely, for elite sport, for which sponsorship restrictions may not be directly linked to increasing sporting costs for parents and clubs, there was no difference in parents and sports club officials support of restrictions between demographic groups.

The majority of parents and sporting officials thought that government should be responsible for developing and implementing sponsorship restrictions; including 67% of parents and 70% of sports club officials who supported sponsorship restrictions. However, the need for collaboration with other peak sporting bodies and regional associations in introducing these restrictions was evident.

In particular, the sporting community was most supportive of restricting the use of unhealthy food and beverage company logos on players' uniforms, which was supported by 70% of sports club officials, 64% of parents and 60% of regional association representatives. Restricting the provision of vouchers from these companies was also largely encouraged; with support from 70% of regional associations, 45% of club officials and 49% of parents. These sponsorship restrictions were recommended to apply across a range of products, primarily: alcohol, fast food, sugary drinks and confectionery, or unhealthy food and drinks in general. The majority of parents also perceived that

companies that sold these products were the least appropriate businesses or companies to sponsor children's sport. In particular, almost all parents (88%) thought that business selling alcohol were *very* inappropriate sponsors.

Conversely, companies that sold sporting goods, fruit and vegetables, groceries, and building supplies and hardware were perceived by parents to be the most appropriate businesses to sponsor children's sport. These findings are supported by earlier research on consumer responses to food and beverage sponsorship of sporting events, which found that attitudes towards food and non-alcoholic beverage products that were perceived to be healthy were more favourable than those perceived to be less healthy (39). In this survey by Danyichuk *et al.* (2009) of Canadian university students and fitness club members (n = 253), the most desirable food and non-alcoholic beverage sports sponsors were perceived to be water companies, sports drinks, healthy snacks and juice manufacturers and the least desirable were junk food and fast food sponsors, as these did not correspond with sport's healthy message (39).

In the survey by VicHealth described in section 2.0 above, which surveyed a random sample of 1,500 adults in Melbourne, Victoria the majority of respondents were opposed to sports clubs' acceptance of alcohol and unhealthy food company sport sponsorship (55% and 53%) (18). Interestingly, the level of opposition for the promotion of alcohol and unhealthy food products at sports clubs was higher than for the actual sale of these products at these venues. As in the current study, the majority of respondents were supportive of interventions to remove both alcohol and unhealthy food and beverage company sponsorship from community sport, if government provided financial support for this loss in revenue (18).

Despite respondents' strong support for restricting unhealthy food and beverage company sponsorship of children's sport, there was concern about the implications of sponsorship restrictions on the cost of sports participation and the viability of community sports clubs. These concerns about sport funding following sponsorship restrictions have also been emphasised in policy documents. In the Sydney Principles, developed by the International Obesity Taskforce in consultation with health professionals and consumer and industry bodies, as a benchmark for regulating food marketing to children, limiting commercial marketing through sponsorship was recognised as an important area. However, the need for alternative sponsors to replace unhealthy food and beverage company sponsors was acknowledged (40).

While many respondents thought that the acquisition of replacement sponsors would eventually be possible, alternative regulatory arrangements for restricting sponsorship funding should be considered to avoid increasing the cost of sport in the short term, particularly as cost was reported as a barrier to sports participation. One such regulatory arrangement, as suggested by respondents, included reducing the visibility of unhealthy food and beverage company sponsors whilst still allowing these companies to provide financial contributions. In this way, the promotional opportunities for inappropriate sponsors would be minimised with less impact on club finances. However, the

commercial imperative for companies to continue providing funding in exchange for fewer promotional opportunities would be greatly reduced.

A further policy option for restricting unhealthy food and beverage sponsorship of children's sport could include the development of a sports sponsorship fund, generated through either government or industry contributions, or both. Such a funding scheme has recently been considered by the Australian Government, to attenuate any loss of funding for community groups with the advent of restrictions to alcohol sponsorship of community sport and cultural events (41). This strategy forms one part of the Australian Government's response to reducing alcohol related morbidity and costs, as recommended by the Australian National Preventative Health Taskforce. This Taskforce, established in 2009 by the Federal Minister for Health to develop recommendations to reduce the health consequences pertaining to obesity, tobacco and alcohol, recommended the banning of alcohol company sponsorship of sporting and cultural events as a priority area (42). As part of the Government's resulting *National Binge Drinking Strategy*, \$25 million has been committed towards a Community Sponsorship Fund to provide an alternative to alcohol industry sponsorship (41).

This strategy to replace lost funding from unhealthy corporate sponsors through government contributions was used with the advent of tobacco sponsorship restrictions in the late 1980s. In this case, funding was provided by the state and territory governments of the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia (WA) through Health Promotion Foundations, which provided money to sport and event organisers to offset the revenue losses of organisations who had previously been reliant on tobacco funding (43). Conceivably, such funding mechanisms could also be introduced to replace unhealthy food and beverage company sponsorship of community sport.

However, it is worth noting that while many respondents perceived that sponsorship restrictions would result in funding difficulties for clubs, other evidence on the relative contribution of sponsorship to overall sports club revenue suggests otherwise. In the previous survey of sports clubs from NSW and the ACT by the investigators in 2009, sponsorship contributed to less than a quarter of total club revenue, and substantially less from food and beverage companies (2). This suggests that government could viably replace this unhealthy food and beverage company sponsorship at a reasonable cost.

Effect of sport sponsorship on children

Few parents spontaneously reported that sport sponsorship by companies that promoted unhealthy products, such as unhealthy food and beverages and alcohol, could be potentially harmful to children. However, when asked if they perceived children to be influenced by the sponsors of elite sport, the majority of parents (86%) thought that this sponsorship influenced the products that children liked, requested and purchased. Further, almost half of parents thought that sponsors of children's sports clubs also influenced children's product preferences and purchases. In contrast, the majority of regional association representatives and sports club officials immediately recognised the potential

risks of unhealthy corporate sponsorship of sports clubs for children, and also reported that children were influenced by this sponsorship.

Interestingly, a greater proportion of parents with children attending athletics clubs perceived that children were influenced by the sponsorship of community sports clubs. In the previous telephone survey of sports club officials by the investigators in 2009, which assessed the nature and extent of community sports club sponsorship, athletics clubs were found to have the greatest number of food and beverage company sponsors of all of the nine sports assessed (23).

By directly questioning children on their perceptions of sponsoring companies and purchasing behaviours as a result of this sponsorship, this survey was able to better capture the effect of sponsorship on children, rather than by parent proxy report alone. More than two-thirds of all children (68%) were able to correctly recall sponsors of their sports club, with these children able to name a median of two sponsors each, including one food and beverage company sponsor.

Children were able to recall a greater proportion of all food and beverage sponsors of sports clubs compared to other non-food sponsors (33% vs. 18%), suggesting that these food sponsors may have a greater resonance with children. From our previous telephone survey with sports club officials noted above, sports clubs were more likely to sell or use food and beverage company sponsors' products at the club, offer sporting awards using these companies' logo and give vouchers for food and beverage company sponsors, compared to non-food companies (2). Conceivably, these promotional opportunities are likely to be noticed and enjoyed by children. Indeed, in the current survey, the majority of children had previously received vouchers and certificates from food and beverage companies (86% and 76%, respectively) and reported that they liked these rewards. Importantly, around one-third of children reported liking the food or beverage company more after receiving these rewards.

In contrast to the perceptions of parent and sporting officials, who perceived children to be more influenced by the sponsorship of elite sport, a greater proportion of children were able to recall sponsors of their own clubs compared to elite sporting teams. Only around half (47%) of all children were able to correctly name at least one sponsor of their favourite sporting team. Further, these children were only able to recall a median of one team sponsor. However, it is possible that children's heightened awareness of community sports club sponsors was due to their proximity to this setting at the time of the survey.

Children's awareness of sport sponsors, as indicated by their ability to recall sponsoring companies, is an indicator of their brand perceptions and potentially their consumption behaviours. Previous research relating to tobacco and alcohol sport sponsorship has indicated that children's awareness of brands is influenced by sponsorship, and that this awareness positively influences their perceptions and consumption of tobacco and alcohol products. For example, research from the United Kingdom asked boys aged 12 to 13 years about their preferred sport, recall of cigarette brands and smoking behaviours in 1994 (n = 1,461) and again in 1995 (1,268) (44). At these times, 12% and 14% of boys

named car racing as their favourite sport. These boys were significantly more likely than other boys to recall Marlboro (OR 1.91) and Camel (OR 1.92) cigarette brands, which were common sponsors for car racing. Further, those boys who named car racing as their favourite sport in 1994 were significantly more likely to report that they smoked in 1995 (OR 1.96) (44).

Further, research from the United States (US) on adolescents' receptivity to alcohol marketing more broadly (i.e., liking alcohol advertisements and promotions) has been linked to brand recognition and recall, and is a predictor of alcohol use. In one longitudinal study from the US on 1,080 children, those with high receptivity to alcohol, as indicated by a positive attitude towards alcohol marketing and promotions, had a 77% increased odds of drinking initiation compared to those with low receptivity, after controlling for potential confounders (45). As well, higher brand recall was associated with a 10% higher drinking uptake at follow-up (45).

In the current survey, the majority of children reported that they liked both sports club and elite sport sponsors, and particularly alcohol-related sponsors of their own clubs, including pubs and clubs. In many cases, the reasons given for liking these companies were that they provided support to their club or favourite sports team. Finally, when asked about their responses to food and beverage company sport sponsorship, children mostly approved of these sponsors and thought that they were 'cool', as well as indicating that they bought sponsors' products to return the favour for supporting their sport. While children recognised that sponsorship was an advertising activity for companies, they also mostly thought that companies were motivated by philanthropic intentions and wanted to assist sports clubs.

6.0 Strengths and limitations

6.1 Strengths

A major strength of this study was that interviews were conducted in real sport settings, thereby capturing those parents and children who are actively engaged in community sports and most affected by sport sponsorship and health policy issues in these settings. The high response rate achieved across all survey groups was also important in improving confidence in survey findings and for internal validity.

Selected sports clubs were those that were found to have food and beverage company sponsors, as identified in an earlier survey with sports club officials (2). These clubs had originally been randomly sampled from a list of all sports clubs in sampled local government areas in NSW and the ACT. This sampling method allowed a mix of different socio-economic and demographic areas to be selected, which was also reflected in the current study.

Survey questions relating to children's responses to sport sponsorship were asked in different forms and for different survey groups, including parents, sporting officials and children themselves. In this way, responses could be triangulated to verify reported effects between groups.

6.2 Limitations

While respondents were discouraged from looking around the club and at their uniforms during the survey, and particularly for questions relating to sponsorship, some parents and children may have been able to visualise sponsor's logos at the club when asked to recall these. However, based on interviewer reports, this was not an issue for the majority of cases.

In the child survey, questions relating to children's product purchasing behaviours as a result of sport sponsorship were based only on self-report. Objective evidence of the effect of sponsorship on actual product purchases is more equivocal and difficult to capture (46). As well, the evaluation of sponsorship effects on product purchases is difficult to isolate from other marketing practices (25). Nevertheless, future studies should seek to assess the effects of sponsorship on children's purchases using more empirical techniques.

7.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, children's high level of recall of sport sponsors, and particularly food and beverage company sponsors, is concerning as this recall is likely to be linked to children's product preferences and consumption behaviours. Further, sponsorship activities, including vouchers and branded certificates for food and beverage companies, are attractive to children and can favourably influence children's brand perceptions. Alternative funding mechanisms are required to replace community and elite sport sponsorship from unhealthy food and beverage companies to reduce the promotional effects of this marketing on children's food choices and eating behaviours. Such replacement funding would maintain sports club revenue whilst reducing children's exposure to unhealthy sponsorship arrangements, and is supported by the junior sporting community.

As well, community sport provides an important setting in which to embed other health promotion messages into everyday activities (4), with the potential to reach large numbers of children (47). Therefore, efforts to encourage the development of healthy sports settings should, firstly, emphasise the need for healthy policies and secondly, attempt to simplify the development and implementation of these policies for sports clubs. As suggested by the sporting community, strategies such as increased government funding for policy development and implementation, and assistance with policy content through training and policy templates from peak sporting bodies, government sporting agencies and non-government organisations would be useful. Priority areas for creating healthier sports clubs and increasing children's sport participation include improving the healthiness of available food and beverages and making sport more affordable for families.

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Appendix 1: Survey of REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Introduction

Thanks very much for speaking with me today [Insert name]. As we discussed on the phone, we're doing a survey with executive committee members at regional sporting associations to look at opportunities to promote children's health through sports clubs. It should take around 20 minutes. And to thank you for your time we'll give you a \$50 voucher to Rebel Sport.

So are you still OK to do this with me now?

[If yes]

Can I first ask you to read and sign this consent form? This form explains that your answers will only be used for research purposes and will be strictly anonymous. And that ethics approval for this survey has been given by Sydney University.

[Allow participant to read and sign the consent form]

OK, if you're ready we can get started. If there is anything you'd prefer **not** to answer, please let me know. And if you have any concerns about this interview I can give you a number you can contact.

Would you have any objections to me recording the interview, in case I miss writing anything down? *[If yes, turn off telephone recorder]*

[If no]

Would you be available later today to speak with me?

[If yes, arrange time]

[If no]

OK, is there someone else on the executive committee that I can speak with?

[Get contact details]

Section A: Association characteristics

A1

Can I firstly confirm your position at (Insert association name)?

(Do **NOT** read. Tick one)

1	President
2	Vice president
3	Secretary
4	Treasurer
5	Other committee member
9	Not on a committee (Terminate and ask to speak with committee member)

A2

How many [Insert sport type] clubs are affiliated with your association?

A3

And what percentage of these clubs have **any** players aged 5-14 years?

(Read out and tick one)

1	<25%
2	≥25% and <50%
3	≥50% and <75%
4	≥75% and <100%
5	100%
9	Do NOT read: Don't know

Section B: Health Promotion Policies

Now I'd like to ask you some questions about sport and its role in children's health.

When you're thinking about these questions, please particularly focus on children aged 5 to 14 years.

B1

Other than promoting physical activity, what other health benefits do you think children get from playing sport?

(Prompt if necessary: Such as social skills...)

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

B2

Does your association currently have any **written** policies on health or healthy behaviours? Such as for sun protection...?

(Read out. Tick one for each row)

	Yes	No
Sun protection		
Smoke-free		
Healthy eating		
Fair play		

Anti-discrimination		
Participation by children with a disability		
Anything else (Specify)		

(If 'no' for all, go to B7)

B3

Would it be possible to get a copy of this/these policies?

(Do NOT read)

1	Yes (Go to B5)
2	No

[If yes]

OK great, I'll grab these off you at the end of our interview.

B4

Could you briefly tell me what this/these policies cover then?

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

B5 Are these policies available to your affiliated clubs?

(Do NOT read)

1	Yes
2	No (Go to B7)
9	Do NOT read: Don't know (Go to B7)

B6

And how can clubs get access to this/these?

(Do **NOT** read. Tick all that apply)

(Prompt as necessary: Such as through your website...)

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

		Yes	No
1	Website		
2	Sent only to those clubs who ask for a copy		

3	Sent to all clubs by email/mail		
4	Promoted at meetings with clubs		
5	Other (Specify)		

B7

Has your association faced any barriers in **developing** or **implementing** this/these policies?

(Do NOT read)

1	Yes
2	No (Go to B9)

B8

And what have these barriers been?

(Do NOT read. Tick all that apply)

(Prompt as necessary: Such as lack of time, money, support...)

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

		Yes	No
1	Too busy with other priorities		
2	Concerned about the cost involved		
3	Lacked support from affiliated clubs		
4	Lacked support from affiliated state/national sporting organisations		
5	Lacked knowledge		
6	Not considered it before		
7	Other (Specify)		
9	Do NOT read: Don't know		

B9

Does your association currently provide any support to clubs who want to implement their own written policies for any of these issues?

(Do NOT read)

1	Yes
2	No (Go to B11)
9	Do NOT read: Don't know (Go to B11)

B10

And what kind of support does your association provide?

(Do **NOT** read. Tick all that apply)

(Prompt as necessary: Such as training, policies, funding...)

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

		Yes	No
1	Training		
2	Information on how to develop policies		
3	Policy templates		
4	Incentives for the club		
5	Funding opportunities		
6	Other (Specify)		
9	Do NOT read: Don't know		

B11

If your association were to provide more support/support to clubs to implement their own healthy policies, what kind of resources or help would your association need? Such as support from the government or sporting organisations...

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

Section C: Sport sponsorship

OK, thanks for your answers so far, we're about half way through. I'd now like to ask you some questions on sponsorship of children's sport.

C1

What do you think are the main benefits of sponsorship of children's sport?

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

C2

And do you think there may be any risks or potential negative effects of this sponsorship **on children**?

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

C3

How influenced do you think children are by the sponsorship of **elite sporting teams or people**, such as the sponsors of Cricket Australia or the Socceroos? In terms of influencing the products that they like, ask for or buy. Do you think they are...?

(Read out. Tick one)

1	Very influenced
2	Slightly influenced
3	Not at all influenced
9	Do NOT read: Don't know

C4

And how influenced do you think children are by the sponsorship of their **sports clubs**?

(**Do NOT read.** Tick one)

1	Very influenced
2	Slightly influenced
3	Not at all influenced
9	Do NOT read: Don't know

C5

And to what extent do you think children are influenced by the sponsorship of their **sports' regional associations**?

(**Do NOT read.** Tick one)

1	Very influenced
2	Slightly influenced
3	Not at all influenced
9	Do NOT read: Don't know

C6

Has your association had any experience in trying to establish sponsors that promote healthy products, such as healthy food or drinks or sporting companies or anything else...?

(Do **NOT** read. Tick one)

1	Yes
2	No (Go to C8)
3	Do NOT read: Don't know (Go to C8)

C7

And what did your association do?
(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

C8

Like what happened with tobacco sponsorship of sport, which was restricted by government, some people think that sport sponsorship by unhealthy food and drink companies should also be restricted.

How likely would you be to **support** a policy which restricted unhealthy food and drink companies from sponsoring **elite** sport? Such as Cricket Australia or the Socceroos.
(If necessary – like regulations or rules)

(Read out. Tick one)

1	Very likely
2	Likely
3	Undecided
4	Unlikely
5	Very unlikely

C9

How likely would you be to support a policy which restricted these companies from sponsoring **children's** sports clubs?

(Do **NOT** read. Tick one)

1	Very likely
2	Likely

3	Undecided (Go to C12)
4	Unlikely (Go to C12)
5	Very unlikely (Go to C12)

C10

And who do you think should introduce such a policy? Such as individual clubs, regional associations, government or anyone else...

(Do **NOT** read)

1	Sports clubs
2	Regional associations
3	Government
4	Other (specify)
9	Do NOT read: Don't know

C11

And what do you think this ban should include? Such as what it covers or how it is set up?

(Prompt: Such as the types of food products it should cover, the promotional activities, if it should apply to all clubs or just kids clubs...)

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

C12

Other than a complete ban on this sponsorship, would you support any of the following actions to limit unhealthy food and drink sponsorship at children's sports clubs?

Restricting the use of their logos on uniforms...restricting them giving out vouchers....giving out certificates with their brand on it...restricting **any** type of promotional activity? Anything else...?

(Read out. Tick one per row)

		Yes	No	Do NOT read: Don't know
1	Logos on uniforms			
2	Vouchers			
3	Certificates			

4	Any promotion			
5	Anything else (specify)			

C13

And finally, in your opinion, how do you think children's sport would be affected if this sponsorship was restricted?

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

Close

Thank you so much for your time today. This information will help us to assess opportunities for making sports clubs even healthier, and potential sponsorship arrangements.

Here is your Rebel Sport voucher.

[If applicable]

Would I be able to get a copy of those policies that we spoke about now?

Do you have any questions about this interview? [If yes, attempt to answer]

[If necessary]

I can give you a number to call about your concerns on the conduct of this interview.

Would you like to write the number down? The number is 9036 3181.

When we have put together all of our surveys, we'll send you a summary of our findings.

Thank you again for your time.

Interviewer record

Sport type: _____

Date of interview: _____

Interviewer initials: _____

Association name: _____

Appendix 2: Survey of SPORTS CLUB OFFICIALS

Introduction

Thanks very much for speaking with me today [Insert name].

As we discussed on the phone, we're hoping to do a survey with a member of the club's executive committee. This should take around 20 minutes. And to thank you and your club for participating we'll give your club a \$100 voucher to Rebel Sport.

Would you be available to do this with me now?

[If yes]

Can I first ask you to read and sign this consent form? This form explains that your answers will only be used for research purposes and will be strictly anonymous. And that ethics approval for this survey has been given by Sydney University.

[Allow participant to read and sign the consent form]

OK, if you're ready we can get started. If there is anything you'd prefer **not** to answer, please let me know. And if you have any concerns about this interview I can give you a number you can contact.

Would you have any objections to me recording the interview, in case I miss writing anything down? *[If yes, turn off telephone recorder]*

[If no]

Would you be available later today to speak with me?

[If yes, arrange time]

[If no]

OK, is there someone else on the executive committee that I can speak with?

[Get contact details]

Section A: Club characteristics

A1

Can I firstly confirm your position at (Insert club name)?

(Do **NOT** read. Tick one)

1	President
2	Vice president
3	Secretary
4	Treasurer
5	Other committee member
9	Not on a committee (Terminate and ask to speak with committee member)

Last year when we spoke with your club, you told us that you had [Insert number] registered players, and that around [Insert percentage] were male and [Insert percentage] were aged 5-14 years. Is this still correct?

A2-4. Yes, still correct

OR (Read out and tick one)

A2. # Playing members	< 50	50-99	100-149	150 – 199	200+
A3. Revised % Male	<25%	≥25% and <50%	≥50% and <75%	≥75% and <100%	100%
A4. Revised % 5-14 years	<25%	≥25% and <50%	≥50% and <75%	≥75% and <100%	100%

Section B: Participation and social inclusion

Now I'd like to ask you some questions about increasing children's participation in sport. When you're thinking about these questions, please particularly focus on children aged 5 to 14 years.

B1

Other than promoting physical activity, what other health benefits do you think children get from playing sport?

(Prompt if necessary: Such as social skills...)

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

B2

What do you think are the main barriers to children participating in organised sports?

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

B3

Can you suggest any changes you would like to see made to children's sport to make this better for the children involved?

Either to make this healthier, safer or to increase participation for **all** children, including those from diverse backgrounds and abilities...

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

B4

Does your club engage in any practices to attract children from disadvantaged groups, such as low income groups, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and those with English as a second language? Such as reduced fees, modified games, extra training...

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

(READ OUT. Tick all that apply)

		Yes	No
1	Reduced fees for disadvantaged children		
2	Provide transport for disadvantaged children		
3	Hold 'Come and Try' days targeting disadvantaged children		
4	Link in with community organisations to recruit disadvantaged children		
5	Modifying game/play time		
6	Provide extra training		
7	Other (Specify)		
9	Do NOT read: Don't know		

B5

And does your club engage in any practices to promote fair play amongst junior players? Such as ground officials, coach training, monitoring parent behaviour, disability access...

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

(READ OUT. Tick all that apply)

		Yes	No
1	Coach training on fair play		
2	Equal play time for juniors		
3	Monitor/address conflicts (e.g. bullying)		
4	Disability access		
5	Ground officials to control crowd behaviour		

6	Education on fair play		
7	Penalties for offenders		
8	Other (Specify)		
9	Do NOT read: Don't know		

B6

Does your club currently hold, or have any plans to hold, a written policy on **fair play**?
(Do **NOT** read. Tick one)

1	Yes, currently hold one
2	No, but planning on having one (Go to B8)
3	No, and no plans for having one (Go to B8)
4	Do NOT read: Don't know (Go to B8)

B7

Can you please tell me briefly what this policy covers? (Probe fully)

B8

And do you have a written policy on **anti-discrimination**?
(Do **NOT** read. Tick one)

1	Yes, currently hold one
2	No, but planning on having one (Go to B10)
3	No, and no plans for having one (Go to B10)
4	Do NOT read: Don't know (Go to B10)

B9

Can you tell me briefly what this policy covers? (Probe fully)

B10

And any written policy on **participation by children with a disability**?

(Do **NOT** read. Tick one)

1	Yes, currently hold one
2	No, but planning on having one (Go to B12)
3	No, and no plans for having one (Go to B12)
4	Do NOT read: Don't know (Go to B12)

B11

Can you please tell me briefly what this policy covers? (Probe fully)

B12

Has your club faced any barriers in developing policies, for any of these areas that we've just talked about?

(Do **NOT** read. Tick one)

1	Yes
2	No (Go to C1)
3	Do NOT read: Don't know (Go to C1)

B13

What have these barriers been?

(Do **NOT** read. Tick all that apply)

(Prompt as necessary: Such as the cost, time involved...)

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

		Yes	No
1	Too busy with other priorities		
2	Just focused on providing sport		
3	Concerned about the cost involved		
4	Lacked support from regional or state sporting organisations		

5	Lacked support from players and families		
6	Lacked knowledge		
7	No considered it before		
8	Other (Specify)		
9	Do NOT read: Don't know		

B14

What kind of support would be useful in overcoming these barriers?

(Do **NOT** read. Tick all that apply)

(Prompt as necessary: Such as training, funding...)

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

		Yes	No
1	Provision of training		
2	Provision of information		
3	Provision of policy templates		
4	Provision of incentives for the club		
5	Provision of funding opportunities		
6	Other (Specify)		
9	Do NOT read: Don't know		

B15

Who do you think could provide this support?

(Do **Not** read. Tick all that apply)

		Yes	No
1	Regional association		
2	State sports organisation		
3	National sports organisation		
4	State Sport and Recreation Department		
5	Australian Sports Commission		
6	Anyone else (Specify)		
9	Do NOT read: Don't know		

Section C: Sport sponsorship

OK, thanks for your answers so far, we're about half way through. I'd now like to ask you some questions on sponsorship of children's sport.

C1

Last year you told us that your sponsors were (show list of sponsors). Are all of these still sponsors of your club? Do you have any additional sponsors?

C2

What do you think are the main benefits of sponsorship of children's sports clubs?
(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

C3

And do you think there may be any risks or potential negative effects of this sponsorship **on children**?
(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

C4

How influenced do you think children are by the sponsorship of **elite sporting teams or people**, such as the sponsors of Cricket Australia or the Socceroos? In terms of influencing the products that they like, ask for or buy. Do you think they are...?

(Read out. Tick one)

1	Very influenced
2	Slightly influenced
3	Not at all influenced
9	Do NOT read: Don't know

C5

And how influenced do you think children are by the sponsorship of their own **sports clubs**?

(Do **NOT** read. Tick one)

1	Very influenced
2	Slightly influenced
3	Not at all influenced
9	Do NOT read: Don't know

C6

Has your club had any experience in trying to establish sponsors that promote healthy products, such as healthy food or drinks or sporting companies or anything else...?

(Do **NOT** read. Tick one)

1	Yes
2	No (Go to C8)
3	Do NOT read: Don't know (Go to C8)

C7

And what did your club do?
(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

C8

Like what happened with tobacco sponsorship of sport, which was restricted by government, some people think that sport sponsorship by unhealthy food and drink companies should also be restricted.

How likely would you be to **support** a policy which restricted unhealthy food and drink companies from sponsoring **elite** sport? Such as Cricket Australia or the Socceroos.
(If necessary – like regulations or rules)

(Read out. Tick one)

1	Very likely to support
2	Likely to support
3	Undecided

4	Unlikely to support
5	Very unlikely to support

C9

How likely would you be to support a policy which restricted these companies from sponsoring **children's** sport?

(Do **NOT** read. Tick one)

1	Very likely to support
2	Likely to support
3	Undecided (Go to C12)
4	Unlikely to support (Go to C12)
5	Very unlikely to support (Go to C12)

C10

And who do you think should introduce such a policy? Such as individual clubs, regional associations, government or anyone else...

(Do **NOT** read. Tick one)

1	Sports clubs
2	Regional associations
3	Government
4	Other (specify)
9	Do NOT read: Don't know

C11

And what do you think this ban should include? Such as what it covers or how it is set up?

(Prompt: Such as the types of food products it should cover, the promotional activities, if it should apply to all clubs or just kids clubs...)

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

C12

Other than a complete ban on this sponsorship, would you support any of the following actions to limit unhealthy food and drink sponsorship at children's sports clubs?
 Restricting the use of their logos on uniforms...restricting them giving out vouchers....giving out certificates with their brand on it...restricting **any** type of promotional activity? Anything else...?

(Read out. Tick one per row)

		Yes	No	Do NOT read: Don't know
1	Logos on uniforms			
2	Vouchers			
3	Certificates			
4	Any promotion			
5	Anything else (specify)			

C15

And finally, in your opinion, how do you think children's sport would be affected if this sponsorship was restricted?

(Probe fully)

Close

Thank you so much for your time today. This information will help us to assess opportunities for increasing children's participation in sport, and will inform sponsorship arrangements.

Here is your Rebel Sport voucher.

Do you have any questions about this interview? [If yes, attempt to answer]

[If necessary]

I can give you a number to call about your concerns on the conduct of this interview.

Would you like to write the number down? The number is 9036 3181.

When we have put together all of our surveys, we'll send you a summary of our findings.

Thank you again for letting us come to your club today.

Interviewer record

Sport type:_____

Date of interview: _____

Interviewer initials: _____

Club name: _____

Appendix 3: Survey of PARENTS

Introduction

Hello, my name is [NAME] and I'm from the Centre for Physical Activity and Health at Sydney University.

We're conducting some research on parents or guardians of children aged **14 or less**, to look at opportunities to create healthy and welcoming sports clubs for juniors, and this includes asking parents of children 14 years or less who play sport about their views. This survey is supported by NSW/ACT Department of Sport and Recreation.

Your club has agreed to us conducting this survey.

So today we're asking parents to participate in a short survey, which takes around 15 minutes and can be done right now, if that's convenient.

As a thank you for participating we'll give you a \$30 voucher to Rebel Sport. Any assistance that you could give would be greatly appreciated. Would you be available to complete this survey with me?

[If yes]

Great, thanks so much.

Can I first ask you to read and sign this consent form? This form explains that your answers will only be used for research purposes and will be strictly anonymous. And that ethics approval for this survey has been given by Sydney University.

[Allow participant to read and sign the consent form]

OK, if you're ready we can get started. If there is anything you'd prefer **not** to answer, please let me know. And if you have any concerns about this interview I can give you a number you can contact.

[If no]

Would you be available later today to speak with me?

[If yes, arrange time]

[If no]

That's fine, thanks for your time.

Section A: Parent characteristics

A1

Record gender

1	Male
2	Female

A2

Do you have a child aged 14 or less who is a member of this sports club?

(Do NOT read)

1	Yes
2	No (Terminate interview)

A3

And overall, how many children do you have?

(Do NOT read. Tick one)

1	One
2	Two
3	Three
4	More than three

A4

And what is/are their age/s?

Child 1: _____

Child 2: _____

Child 3: _____

Child 4: _____

A5

And are they girls or boys?

(If more than one) So for the (insert age) year old? And...?

(Do NOT read. Tick one for each child)

Child 1:	Girl	Boy
----------	------	-----

Child 2:	Girl	Boy
----------	------	-----

Child 3:	Girl	Boy
----------	------	-----

Child 4:	Girl	Boy
----------	------	-----

A6

Can you please tell me which of the following age groups you fall into? Are you...

(Read out. Tick one)

1	In your 20s
---	-------------

2	In your 30s
3	In your 40s
4	50 or more
9	Do NOT read: Refused

Section B: Opportunities to increase children's participation in sport

Now I'd like to ask you some questions on how you think sport can contribute to children's health and development.

B1

Other than promoting physical activity, what other health benefits do you think children get from playing sport?

(Prompt if necessary: Such as social skills...)

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

B2

SHOW CARD A

How adequate or inadequate would you rate the following aspects of children's sport?

Firstly, do you think the training of coaches is...? And...?

(Read out. Tick one for each row)

	1. Mostly adequate	2. Somewhat adequate	3. Somewhat inadequate	4. Mostly inadequate	9. Do NOT read Don't know
Training of coaches					
Healthiness of food and drinks sold at canteens					
Amount of playing time given to all children					
Behaviour of other parents at games (e.g. over competitiveness, sport rage)					
The management of conflicts					

by the club, such as bullying					
The cost of participation (including registration, uniforms etc)					
The facilities/equipment available at the club					

B3

Can you suggest any changes you would like to see made to children's sport to make this better for the children involved? Either to make this healthier, safer, or to increase participation for **all** children, including those from diverse backgrounds and abilities...
(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

Section C: Sponsorship of children's sport

OK, thanks for your answers so far, we're about half way through. I'll now ask you some questions on sponsorship and funding for children's sport.

C1

Are you aware of the businesses or companies that currently sponsor this sports club?

(Do NOT read)

1	Yes
2	No (Go to C3)

C2

And who are these sponsors?
(PROBE FULLY – any others?)

1. _____
3. _____
5. _____
7. _____
9. _____

2. _____
4. _____
6. _____
8. _____
10. _____

C3

What do you think are the main benefits of sponsorship of children's sports clubs?
(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

C4

And do you think there may be any risks or potential negative effects of this sponsorship **on children**?
(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

C5

How influenced do you think children are by the sponsorship of **elite sporting teams or people**, such as the sponsors of Cricket Australia or the Socceroos? In terms of influencing the products that they like, ask for or buy. Do you think they are...?
(Note: refers to children in general)

(Read out. Tick one)

1	Very influenced
2	Slightly influenced
3	Not at all influenced
9	Do NOT read: Don't know

C6

And how influenced do you think children are by the sponsorship of their **sports clubs**?

(**Do NOT read.** Tick one)

1	Very influenced
2	Slightly influenced
3	Not at all influenced
9	Do NOT read: Don't know

C7

SHOW CARD B

How appropriate do you think it is for companies or businesses that... sell sporting goods... to sponsor children's sport? And those that...

(Read out. Tick one for each row)

	1. Very appropriate	2. Somewhat appropriate	3. Somewhat inappropriate	4. Very inappropriate	9. Do NOT read Don't know
Sell sporting goods					
Sell groceries					
Sell snack food, like donuts and cakes					
Sell fast food					
Sell building supplies/hardware					
Sell alcohol					
Sell soft drink					
Sell fruit and vegetables					
Sell chocolate and confectionery					
Sell sports drinks					
Sell electronic games					

Note: IF SAID ALL WERE 'APPROPRIATE', GO TO C13

C8

Like what happened with tobacco sponsorship of sport, which was restricted by government, some people think that sport sponsorship by unhealthy food and drink companies should also be restricted.

For those sponsors you have just said would be inappropriate, such as (insert example from responses above) how likely would you be to support a policy which restricted these companies from sponsoring **elite** sport? Such as Cricket Australia or the Socceroos.

(If necessary – like regulations or rules)

(Read out. Tick one)

1	Very likely to support
2	Likely to support
3	Undecided
4	Unlikely to support
5	Very unlikely to support

C9

How likely would you be to support a policy which restricted these companies from sponsoring **children's** sport?

(Do **NOT** read. Tick one)

1	Very likely to support
2	Likely to support
3	Undecided (Go to C12)
4	Unlikely to support (Go to C12)
5	Very unlikely to support (Go to C12)

C10

And who do you think should introduce such a policy? Such as individual clubs, regional associations, government or anyone else...

(Do **NOT** read. Tick all that apply)

1	Sports clubs
2	Regional associations
3	Government
4	Other (specify)
9	Do NOT read: Don't know

C11

And what do you think this ban should include? Such as what it covers or how it is set up?

(Prompt: Such as the types of food products it should cover, the promotional activities, if it should apply to all clubs or just kids clubs...)

(Probe fully – Anything else...?)

C12

Other than a complete ban on this sponsorship, would you support any of the following actions to limit unhealthy food and drink sponsorship at children's sports clubs?

Restricting the use of their logos on uniforms...restricting them giving out vouchers....giving out certificates with their brand on it...restricting **any** type of promotional activity? Anything else...?

(Read out. Tick one per row)

		Yes	No	Do NOT read: Don't know
--	--	-----	----	-----------------------------------

1	Logos on uniforms			
2	Vouchers			
3	Certificates			
4	Any promotion			
5	Anything else (specify)			

C13

In your opinion, how do you think children's sport would be affected if this sponsorship was restricted?

(Probe fully)

C14

Finally, just so that we can be sure that we've surveyed a range of parents...

Could you please tell me the highest level of education that you have completed?

(Do NOT read. Prompt as necessary)

1	Year 9 or below
2	Year 10
3	Year 11 or 12
4	Diploma or certificate from a college or Tafe (including an apprenticeship)
5	Degree or diploma from a university
6	Other (specify) _____
9	Do NOT read: Refused
10	Do NOT read: Don't know

C15

And can you tell me your postcode?

Close

Thank you very much for your time today. This information will help us to assess opportunities for health promotion through sports clubs, and potential sponsorship arrangements.

Here is your Rebel Sport voucher.

Do you have any questions about this interview? [If yes, attempt to answer]

[If necessary]

I can give you a number to call about your concerns on the conduct of this interview.

Would you like to write the number down? The number is 9036 3181.

When we have put together all of our surveys, we'll send your club a summary of our findings which they can pass on to you.

Thank you again.

Interviewer record

Sport type: _____

Date of interview: _____

Interviewer initials: _____

Club name: _____

Appendix 4: Survey of CHILDREN

Introduction

Hello, my name is [NAME] and I'm from Sydney University. Today we're doing a survey to ask young people who play sport about their views on healthy sports clubs.

Your parents have agreed for you to participate.

If you're happy to do this survey, it will take around 15 minutes and we can do this right now if you like.

And to thank you for participating we'll give you a \$30 voucher to Rebel Sport. Would you be able to do this survey with me now?

[If yes]

Great, thanks so much.

OK, if you're ready we can get started. If there's anything you'd prefer **not** to answer, just let me know.

[If no]

Would you be available later today to speak with me? Or would you prefer if your parents were here too?

[If yes, arrange time]

[If no]

That's fine, thanks for your time.

Section A: Child characteristics

A1

Record gender

1	Male
2	Female

A2

Firstly, can you tell me how old you are?

NOTE: if child not 10-14 years - Thank participant for their time and terminate

A3

Do you play any other sports other than [Insert sport type]?

(Note: only include organised sports)

(Do NOT read)

1	Yes
2	No (Go to A5)

A4

And what sports are they?

- i. _____
- ii. _____
- iii. _____
- iv. _____

A5

SHOW CARD A

On a normal school day, how many hours would you spend watching TV? Would it be...?

(Read out. Tick one)

1	Less than 1 hour per day
2	Between 1 to 2 hours per day
3	Between 2 to 3 hours per day
4	Between 3 to 4 hours per day
5	More than 4 hours per day
9	Do NOT read: Don't know

A6

SHOW CARD A

And on a normal weekend day, how many hours would you spend watching TV?

(Do NOT read. Tick one)

1	Less than 1 hour per day
2	Between 1 to 2 hours per day
3	Between 2 to 3 hours per day
4	Between 3 to 4 hours per day
5	More than 4 hours per day
9	Do NOT read: Don't know

Section B: Opportunities to increase children's participation in sport

Now I'd like to ask you some questions about sport.

B1

SHOW CARD B

How good or bad would you rate these things about sport that **you** play? Firstly, do you think the training of your coaches is...? And...?

(Read out. Tick one for each row)

	1. Mostly good	2. Somewhat good	3. Somewhat bad	4. Mostly bad	9. Do NOT read Don't know
Training of your coaches					
Healthiness of food and drinks sold at sports canteens					
Amount of playing time that's given to all players					
How other parents behave at games					
How the club deals with bullying					
The equipment that's available					

B2

Can you tell me if you agree or disagree with these sentences...?

(Read out. Tick one for each row)

	1. Agree	2. Disagree	9. Do NOT read Don't know
I would play more sport if it took up less of my social time			
I would play more sport if it focused on having fun rather than winning			
I would be allowed to play more sport if it cost less			
I would play more sport if there were more types of activities available			
I already play enough sport			

Section C: Sport sponsorship

Well done, we're almost half way through. Now I'm going to ask you some questions about sport sponsorship.

C1

Do you know the names of any of the businesses or companies that sponsor **your** sports club? Like the ones that have their names on your uniforms...

(Ask not to look at their uniform if branded)

(Do NOT read)

1	Yes
2	No (Go to C5)

C2

And who are they?

(PROBE FULLY – any others?)

1. _____
3. _____
5. _____

2. _____
4. _____
6. _____

C3

And what do you think about these companies? So for [Insert company 1], do you...?

And [Insert company 2]?...

(Read out. Tick one for each column)

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Like it a lot						
Like it a little						
Dislike it						
Don't think about it						
Do NOT read: Don't know						

NOTE: if all 'Don't think about it' or 'Don't know' – Go to C5

C4

And can you tell me the reasons that you like/dislike these particular companies?

(Probe fully)

C5

Who is your favourite professional sports team, like the teams that play on TV?

NOTE: if 'Don't know' – Go to C11

C6

And can you think of any companies that sponsor this team?

(Do NOT read)

1	Yes
2	No (Go to C10)

C7

And who are they?
(PROBE FULLY – any others?)

1. _____
3. _____
5. _____

2. _____
4. _____
6. _____

C8

What do you think about **these** companies? So for [Insert company 1), do you...? And [Insert company 2]?...

(Read out. Tick one for each column)

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Like it a lot						
Like it a little						
Dislike it						
Don't think about it						
Do NOT read: Don't know						

NOTE: if all 'Don't think about it' or 'Don't know' – Go to C10

C9

And can you tell me the reasons that you like/dislike these particular companies?
(Probe fully)

C10

During a normal season, how many of this team's games would you watch?

(Read out. Tick one)

1	All
2	Most

3	Some
4	None
9	Do NOT read: Don't know

C11

SHOW CARD C

Thinking now just about **food and drink** companies that sponsor sport, including your own teams and professional sport, such as companies that make sports drinks or chocolate. Can you tell me if you agree or disagree with these sentences...?

[Note: applies to all sport not only their sports club]

(Read out. Tick one for each row)

		1. Strongly agree	2. Agree	3. Disagree	4. Strongly disagree	9. Do NOT read Don't know
A	I ask my parents to buy products from food and drink companies that sponsor my favourite sports					
B	When I'm in a shop, I think about if a food or drink company sponsors my favourite sports when I'm buying something to eat or drink					
C	I would always buy a food or drink product from a company who sponsored my favourite sports over one that didn't					
D	I think food and drink companies that sponsor sport are cool					
E	I think that food and drink companies sponsor sport to help out sports clubs					
F	I like to return the favour to food and drink companies that sponsor my favourite sports by buying their products					
G	I prefer to eat and drink products from companies who sponsor my favourite sports than those who don't					
H	I think that food and drink companies only sponsor sport as a way of advertising					
I	I think other children buy products because they sponsor their favourite sports					

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

C12

Again, thinking about **only** food and drink companies, such as fast food restaurants, have you ever been given a voucher to use at these places?

[Note: voucher can also have been received outside sport]

(Do NOT read)

1	Yes
2	No (Go to C15)

C13

And what did you think about getting this voucher? Did you...?

(Read out. Tick one)

1	Like it a lot
2	Like it a little
3	Dislike it
4	Didn't think about it
9	Do NOT read: Don't know

C14

Did you like the food or drink company more or less after they gave you this voucher?

(Read out. Tick one)

1	Liked them more
2	Like them less
3	Liked them the same
9	Do NOT read: Don't know

C15

And lastly, have you ever been given a certificate from a food or drink company, to reward good sport or school performance?

[Prompt if necessary: Such as a certificate with a McDonald's logo on it...]

(Do NOT read)

1	Yes
2	No (Go to C18)

C16

And what did you think about getting this certificate? Did you...?

(Read out. Tick one)

1	Like it a lot
---	---------------

2	Like it a little
3	Dislike it
4	Didn't think about it
9	Do NOT read: Don't know

C17

Did you like the food or drink company more or less after you got this certificate?

(Read out. Tick one)

1	Liked them more
2	Like them less
3	Liked them the same
9	Do NOT read: Don't know

C18

Finally, can you tell me which suburb you live in?

Close

Thank you so much for your time today.

Here is your [Insert incentive].

Do you have any questions about this survey? [If yes, attempt to answer]

Thanks again.

Interviewer record

Sport type:_____

Date of interview:_____

Interviewer initials:_____

Club name:_____