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Children consider gambling ads a 'normal' part of sport, study by Deakin University researchers find

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By Tom Nightingale
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Watching gambling ads is becoming a normal part of watching football for Australian children, a study has found.

Deakin University researchers said children as young as eight are recalling brand names and even promotional offers.

"Children are very easily able to tell you that if you bet on a certain outcome of a game, if your team kicks the first goal but then go on to lose, that they now expect to get money back on those offers," study co-author Associate Professor Samantha Thomas said.

"What does it suggest to kids that you can't lose from gambling."

The academic paper found that last year, the gambling industry spent \$145 million on promotion, making it the fourth biggest spender in Australian advertising.

A 14-year-old boy told the researchers because it was "everywhere, the ads make you want to bet".

A 10-year-old said: "Every time there is sport on, I'm like, I'm going to bet \$5 for the Socceroos to win."

"Children have a very high appeal to advertising, which includes things like humour, and we know that there are certain companies that use humour prolifically within their advertising," Associate Professor Thomas said.

[...]

"That is influencing the way in which they see betting as being a normal part of sport but also is influencing, I guess, the education that they have about these products and how they may use them when they're older," she said. [...]

The ABC contacted three major gambling companies but none have yet responded. [...]

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