



Young people and alcohol

Helpful
information
for parents
and carers

alcoholthinkagain

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Young people and alcohol

Helpful information for parents and carers

It is illegal for young people under 18 years to drink alcohol on licensed or regulated premises. Health experts recommend that the safest option for young people is to not drink alcohol at all.

This booklet provides information for parents on the harms caused by alcohol; it outlines the legal position; and provides advice on how you can influence your children's decisions about drinking alcohol. The booklet contains useful information and answers to some common dilemmas parents face when considering their teenagers and alcohol.

— Please note, throughout this booklet the term 'parent' includes guardians, carers and other supervising adults.

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Young people, alcohol and the drinking culture

Like adults, whether a young person drinks or not, or the way a young person drinks is influenced by the:

- context and environment in which they find themselves (e.g. with friends, alone, at home, at a party)
- culture of drinking (what's considered or accepted as normal behaviour)

Alcohol has been identified as the major drug of concern for the Western Australian community, yet getting drunk is often accepted as a normal part of the Australian drinking culture. Although alcohol-related problems are sometimes seen as a youth issue, the kind of drinking behaviour that leads to problems involving young people is often a reflection of what's already accepted as the norm in the community.

What is the role of parents?

Parents and other family members play an important role in the development of young people's values, attitudes and behaviours towards alcohol and in helping our community adopt a culture that has less alcohol-related problems.

While experimenting with alcohol has in the past been considered normal during adolescence, recent research shows that this attitude needs to change. Parents do NOT have to accept teenage drinking. It is important to tell your teenager why you don't want them to drink alcohol. Young people whose parents disapprove of teenage drinking tend to delay when they have their first drink of alcohol or drink less or drink less often.

Parental influences on teenage alcohol use

As a parent you may notice underage drinking occurring in your community. You can have a positive influence on this behaviour in your children from a very early age. You are in an excellent position to provide education about the benefits of not drinking alcohol as a teenager, the harms

associated with alcohol use, and to encourage the development of positive and responsible attitudes towards alcohol. You can also play an important role in minimising harms by monitoring your teenager's behaviour and by helping supervise activities, including teenage parties or gatherings.

Did you know?

The 2011 Australian School Student Alcohol and Drug Survey found that:

- 76.1 per cent of 12 to 17 year-old students surveyed have tried alcohol.
- 4.0 per cent of 12 year-olds and 38.7 per cent of 17 year-olds reported drinking alcohol in the week before the survey (i.e. were current drinkers).
- 12 to 17 year-old students surveyed who drank in the past week said parents were their most common supplier of alcohol.

Why do some young people drink?

Adolescence is a complex time when some young people and parents may face difficult situations and decisions. During this time, experimentation and risk taking are common, and this may include drinking alcohol.

During adolescence, young people often have exaggerated ideas about how much their friends drink.

There are lots of reasons why young people may drink alcohol. Some of these reasons include:

- imitating adult behaviour
- socialising and having fun
- experimenting and satisfying their curiosity
- enjoying the effects and/or taste of alcohol
- building confidence
- relaxing and forgetting problems
- because their friends and peers drink

Why shouldn't young people under 18 years drink alcohol?

The latest research shows that the risks of accidents, injuries, violence, self-harm, risky sexual behaviour, impaired learning ability and other physical health problems are high among drinkers aged under 18 years. Drinking alcohol contributes to the three leading causes of death among young people – unintentional injuries, homicide and suicide.

Australian Guidelines to Reduce Health Risks from Drinking Alcohol

For children and young people under 18 years of age, not drinking alcohol is the safest option.

- Children under 15 years of age are at the greatest risk of harm from drinking. Not drinking alcohol is especially important for this age group.
- For young people aged 15 to 17 years, the safest option is to delay the initiation of drinking for as long as possible.

The Australian Guidelines to Reduce Health Risks from Drinking Alcohol (2009) describe low risk drinking as a level of drinking at which there is likely to be little risk or harm occurring to the person. Low risk drinking does NOT mean SAFE drinking. In fact, there is no guaranteed level of SAFE drinking.

Did you know?

In Western Australia, alcohol is a major contributing cause of hospitalisation and death among young people.

- Of 12 to 17 year-olds, 2,484 were admitted to hospital for alcohol-related reasons between 2007 to 2011.
- 6,485 alcohol-related hospital bed days were utilised by 12 to 17 year-olds between 2007 to 2011.
- From 2007 to 2011, there were 25 alcohol-related deaths among 12 to 17 year-olds.

How can alcohol cause harm to young people?

It's important that both adults and young people understand the potential harms associated with drinking, and how these harms can be prevented.

Adolescence is a critical period in a young person's development towards adulthood. What they learn during their teenage years, and how they learn it, can set the young person's path for later life. Drinking in adolescence can be harmful to a young person's physical development, particularly brain development. Alcohol consumption during this time can bring about learning difficulties, memory problems, mental health issues and other problems later in life.

How does alcohol affect a young person's brain development?

Alcohol is a depressant that affects the body's central nervous system. Different parts of the brain develop at different rates as people grow, and depending on whether they are male or female. The pre-frontal cortex, which houses the part of the brain that controls rational thinking, does not begin to mature until about the age of 19 and only fully matures around the age of 21 in women and 28 in men. So damage to this part of the brain during its development can have lifelong consequences for memory, personality and behaviour.

How does alcohol affect learning, mental health and social development?

Learning difficulties caused by teenage drinking can result in poor school performance and an increased risk of social problems, depression, suicidal thoughts and violence. A hangover can be just as damaging to the brain as heavy drinking by reducing a person's ability to learn new information and recall memories.

Alcohol can affect a young person's social development if they start drinking at an early age. They may spend their time drinking instead of participating in recreational activities. They may turn to alcohol as a form of coping with problems and be more open to using other substances.

What are the harms associated with binge drinking?

Binge drinking (drinking at harmful levels on any single occasion) is common in Australia and among young people. It can increase the likelihood of risky behaviours, including driving under the influence, physical violence and unsafe sex. It's also associated with mental health issues such as negative self image, low self-esteem, depression and relationship difficulties.

The 2011 Australian School Student Alcohol and Drug Survey found that 36.2 per cent of 12 to 17 year-olds, who drank alcohol in the last week, drank at risk of single occasion alcohol-related harm.

As well as physical health problems, harmful alcohol use by young people can increase the risk of:

- violence, abuse and fights
- accidental injuries such as road crashes, pedestrian accidents and drowning
- depression, self harm and suicide
- unwanted or unsafe sexual activities
- illicit drug use
- sexually transmitted infections and unplanned pregnancy
- family or other relationship difficulties
- long-term physical damage, particularly to the liver, stomach and brain, caused by regular harmful drinking

Where do young people drink and get their alcohol from?

Understanding young people's current drinking behaviour is important if parents are interested in influencing their own children's drinking behaviour and the wider drinking culture. According to the recent Australian School Students Alcohol and Drug Survey, very few Western Australian students aged 12 to 17 years who had consumed alcohol in the week before being surveyed had actually bought their own drinks. Their most common source of alcohol was parents (28.2 per cent), followed by friends (26.4 per cent).

How, where and when alcohol is made available impacts on the way it is consumed. Earlier initiation of drinking is related to more frequent use and a greater amount of alcohol being consumed.

The amount young people drank was related to where it was consumed. Students reported the most likely venues for drinking alcohol were parties (33.2 per cent), at home (31.0 per cent), and, to a lesser extent, friends' homes (21.6 per cent). If the drinking was unsupervised, or alcohol was consumed at parties or friends' homes, students were more likely to drink at risk of single occasion harm.

Spirits (e.g. vodka, scotch) in either the premixed or non-premixed form, were the most common types of drinks consumed by current drinkers of all ages.

Parents play an important role in the development of their child's values, attitudes and behaviours. Parents can help to delay the initiation of drinking for their teenager.

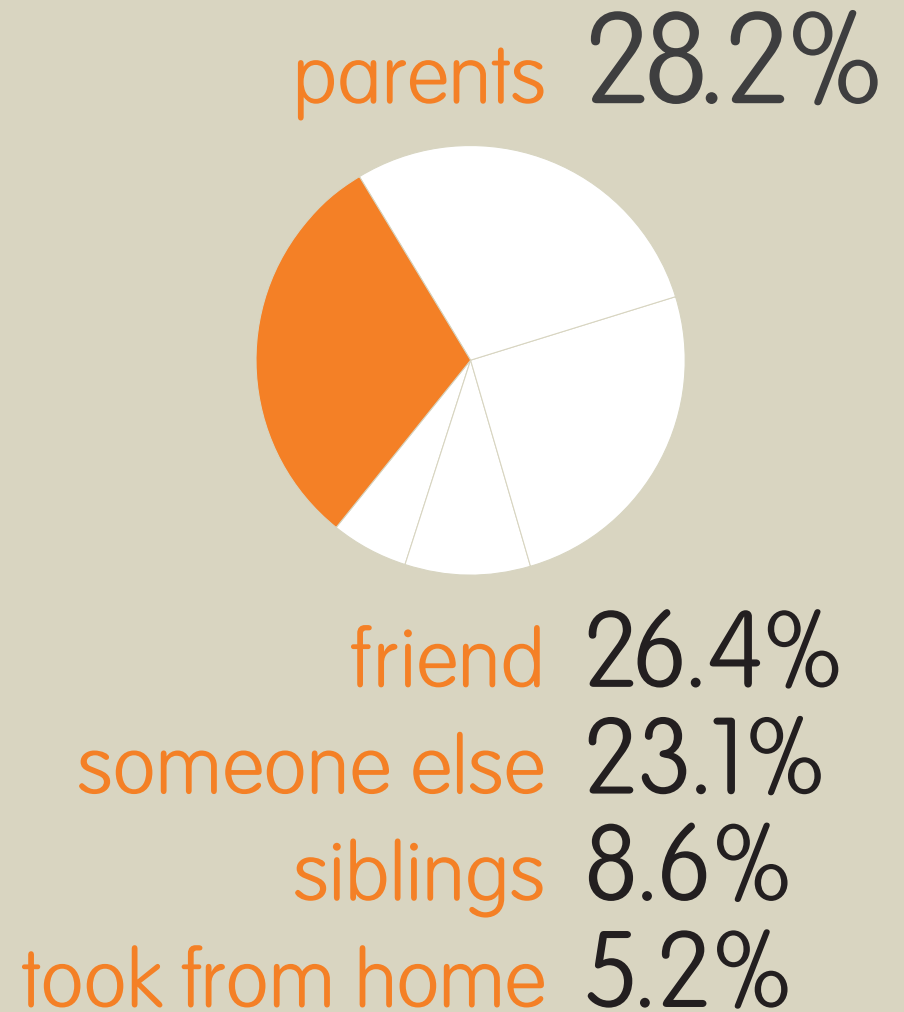


Figure 1 — Source of the last alcoholic drink for school students aged 12-17 years who drank in the last week, Western Australia, 2011.

Alcohol and the law

Liquor licensing laws in Western Australia prohibit access to alcohol and opportunities to drink for people under the age of 18 years on licensed and regulated premises. As a parent, you are in the best position to talk to your teenager about potential harms of drinking alcohol. If you give your teenager permission to go out and you think alcohol may be involved, talk to them about the laws in Western Australia.

Are there laws in Western Australia about alcohol and young people?

The *Liquor Control Act 1988* outlines how alcohol is sold, supplied and consumed in Western Australia. The Act states that these laws generally only apply to what are known as 'licensed' and 'regulated' premises.

Being familiar with examples of these premises will help you to know when and where liquor laws apply.

Examples of licensed premises include:

- pubs
- night clubs
- some sporting clubs
- liquor stores
- some restaurants
- other venues or areas covered by a special licence (e.g. occasional or special facility licences)

Examples of regulated premises include:

- premises used for entertainment purposes (e.g. fun parks and amusement arcades)
- BYO restaurants and cafes
- any area adjacent to a licensed premise including the car park

- a building or covered enclosure hired out to the public (e.g. local halls)
- premises occupied by a club where a licence is not held
- parks
- footpaths
- reserves adjoining the road
- a vehicle on or adjacent to the road
- any premises used for financial gain, including rental holiday accommodation

Are Western Australian liquor laws different from those in other parts of Australia?

Yes. The laws regarding the sale and supply of alcohol to people under the age of 18 years are different in each State and Territory.

Are underage people allowed on licensed premises without their parent or legal guardian?

Generally, no. A person under the age of 18 years is not allowed to buy, supply or drink alcohol on a licensed or regulated premises, even if they're with their parents or legal guardian.

Who do the liquor laws in Western Australia apply to?

In Western Australia, the *Liquor Control Act 1988* states:

- any person who sells, supplies, or permits the sale or supply of alcohol to a person under the age of 18 years on a licensed or regulated premises, commits an offence
- it's an offence for a licensee and any other person by whom liquor is sold or supplied, to permit a person under the age of 18 years to buy or consume alcohol on licensed premises
- any person under the age of 18 years who consumes liquor on licensed or regulated premises commits an offence.

How does the law apply to drinking in my home?

While you may not be in breach of the *Liquor Control Act 1988* if you allow the consumption of alcohol or supply alcohol to another person's child in your home, you could be held accountable if any problems or harms occur.

At present in Western Australia, there are no specific offences relating to the supply of alcohol in private premises to people under the age of 18 years.

What is duty of care?

Duty of care is a duty to take reasonable care to:

- ✓ identify possible causes of harm
- ✓ prevent harm from occurring

You can exercise duty of care by encouraging young people not to drink. If they are, or have been drinking, encourage them to stay at home.

Your private residence is not considered to be a licensed or regulated premise under the *Liquor Control Act 1988*. However, you may be considered partially responsible for any outcomes resulting from young people drinking in your home or at your party.

If anything goes wrong and you have not taken adequate care to prevent problems, you may unexpectedly find yourself in a civil court facing severe penalties resulting from anti-social behaviour, property damage or personal injury. Depending on the facts, in extreme cases, where a child's life, health or safety has been endangered or where a child suffers bodily harm or dies as a result of being allowed to consume alcohol, the adults who permitted this behaviour may be held criminally liable.

If you supply alcohol at a party or elsewhere and charge people for entry to cover things such as catering or entertainment, even though you may not be specifically charging for the alcohol, you could be unlawfully dealing in liquor. This means you may be liable for prosecution where substantial penalties occur.

Are there laws that apply to drinking in public?

In Western Australia, laws prohibit anyone, regardless of age, from drinking in public places. The *Liquor Control Act 1988* outlines specific offences for drinking in public places.

- A person who drinks on any road in the metropolitan area or in any town commits an offence. This means that drinking in a parked car or a moving vehicle is also considered to be street drinking.
- It's also an offence to drink alcohol in any public reserve or park without permission from the authority or person who has control of the place.
- It is an offence for anyone under the age of 18 to be in possession of alcohol (open or un-open) in a public place. Police have powers to seize and dispose of the liquor under those circumstances.

What harms exist for young people under the influence of alcohol in public?

Young people under the influence of alcohol in public are at greater risk of harm. Potential alcohol-related harms include:

- X trouble with police including fines, being arrested, or both
- X injuries from accidents, assaults and road trauma
- X increased potential exposure to other drug use
- X increased risk of harm from others
- X increased risk of involvement in anti-social behaviour such as fights, property damage, disruption to community safety and harming others.

What are the consequences of drinking or being drunk in public?

As public settings can be unpredictable, there are a range of potential harms that young people can experience if under the influence of alcohol in public. Similarly, if other people are under the influence of alcohol in public, they may pose a threat to the safety of your teenage children who are in the same environment.

Young people in possession of alcohol in public may attract the attention of police. Police are there to protect the community and to uphold the law. They have the power to apprehend young people who are drinking in public.

Police can issue on-the-spot fines to young people who break the laws stated in the *Liquor Control Act 1988*.

REMEMBER, it's illegal to:

- | | |
|--|---|
| X purchase alcohol for underage people
Penalties of up to \$2,000 | X be in possession of alcohol (open or unopen) in any place or premise to which the public is permitted if under 18 years. Police have the powers to seize and dispose of the liquor under those circumstances
Penalties of up to \$2,000 |
| X sell or supply alcohol to anyone under 18 years in licensed or regulated premises
Penalties of up to \$10,000 | X consume alcohol in public places
Penalties of up to \$2,000 |
| X consume or be in possession of alcohol on regulated premises for anyone under 18 years
Penalties of up to \$2,000 for the juvenile | X drive as a P-plate driver with a blood alcohol reading over zero and for other drivers to drive with a reading over 0.05 |
| X provide false ID
Penalties of up to \$2,000 | |

As a parent what can I do?

Now that you know the legal, health and safety concerns relating to young people drinking alcohol, what is it that you can do? Initiation to alcohol in early adolescence has been shown to increase the likelihood of alcohol-related problems later in life. It's normal to be concerned if your teenager is intending to drink or is already drinking. As a parent it's up to you to make decisions about your family including when you start talking to your children about alcohol.

How does the way I drink influence my children's attitudes and beliefs about alcohol?

Children learn about alcohol through many sources including the media, peers, school, role models and watching the drinking and non-drinking behaviours of friends and family members both at home and at social events. These experiences shape their attitudes, expectations and behaviours towards alcohol.

By sharing your values and attitudes, you can help shape their beliefs and expectations about alcohol. Talk with them about making decisions and what they would do in alcohol-related situations. This may help them reduce the risk of harm from their own or others' drinking.

Young people are good at identifying double standards. Be aware of your own drinking behaviour before you discuss alcohol use with them. If you choose to discuss your own alcohol use with your children, it's important that you don't glorify your behaviour or sound hypocritical.

Parents as role models

If you drink alcohol, how and when you do so gives your children ideas about drinking practices, what they can realistically expect to happen, and it can influence their own alcohol use. Role modelling no and low risk alcohol use may encourage your son or daughter not to drink at all, or to use alcohol responsibly when they get older.

Parental monitoring and teenage alcohol use

Parental monitoring refers to your awareness of what your children are doing when they're not under your direct supervision.

It refers to your efforts as a parent to influence their behaviour at these times by:

- communicating effectively with them about the activities they are involved in when away from you
- establishing an agreement for appropriate behaviour
- discussing the risks of drinking

If your teenagers are going out, make sure:

- ✓ you know where they are, especially if they have been drinking or there may be alcohol involved
- ✓ you have agreed boundaries about what is ok
- ✓ you get the contact number and address of where they will be
- ✓ they have money or a mobile phone to contact you if their plans change
- ✓ you have made an agreed plan together for getting home safely
- ✓ they know that they can call you at any time no matter what
- ✓ you are clear about your expectations
- ✓ you both agree on consequences for breaking the agreement

Research shows that teenagers who are poorly monitored begin drinking at an earlier age, tend to drink more, and are more likely to develop risky or high risk drinking patterns.

What do other parents do?

In a society where teenage drinking is relatively common, it's not surprising that parents feel unsure about how to address alcohol issues with their children. It's normal to be anxious about doing the right thing and to have serious concerns about the personal safety, health and well-being of your children.

Research shows that although they might not feel comfortable about it, most parents want to discuss the dangers of alcohol consumption with their children and support a cautious approach to the introduction of alcohol. By the time teenagers were 17 years of age, those parents surveyed presented a more accepting response to them drinking, but were not supportive of them, even occasionally, getting drunk.

Parents reported they would not feel comfortable providing alcohol:

- to younger teenagers or children
- in unsupervised situations

The dilemma

If you have concerns about your teenager, discuss them with other parents and seek support. You can also discuss with your teenager how you feel about providing them with alcohol when they are still underage. To speak to a trained parent volunteer for more information or support, contact the Parent Drug Information Service on (08) 9442 5050 or 1800 653 203 (country callers).

What if I am concerned about my teenager drinking at a party?

If you have teenagers who are going to a party or a friend's house and you're concerned they might have access to alcohol, it's a good idea to communicate with them about your expectations and agreed boundaries. Contact other parents including the host about your concerns. Agree on what's ok, what's not, who's supervising and what to do if things get out of hand. If arrangements are not suitable, consider not allowing your teenage children to attend.

What about supplying alcohol to other teenagers?

You should not provide alcohol to, or allow BYO consumption by, young people in your care. This will help you to protect them from harm and to avoid civil or criminal action should things go wrong.

Talk to your teenagers about your expectations and the alcohol laws and consequences for breaking them.

If you are having a party for young people under the age of 18 years, there are important factors to consider.

Creating and maintaining safer environments for young people at parties and social events

- ✓ Make contact with other parents/guardians before the party
- ✓ No written invitation - no party
- ✓ Check people off a list at the door to help avoid gatecrashers
- ✓ Ensure that the party is not listed on social networking sites or the internet
- ✓ Ensure there will be adequate adult supervision and everyone has agreed on what's ok
- ✓ Consider what security has been arranged to prevent or manage potential gatecrashers. You may want to register your party with your local police
- ✓ Don't supply alcohol
- ✓ Don't allow BYO alcohol
- ✓ Provide adequate food and non-alcoholic drinks such as water and soft drinks
- ✓ Be prepared to intervene if anyone appears to be intoxicated
- ✓ Be prepared to look after anyone who appears unwell
- ✓ Be prepared to contact parents and ask them to come and get their teenager if they appear unwell or intoxicated
- ✓ If someone needs to go home have an adult available to drive them or call a taxi

What if someone else is providing alcohol to my children or allowing BYO?

It's not ok for anyone else to provide alcohol to your teenager. If you think this may be happening, talk to your teenager and, if possible, the person supplying the alcohol to discuss your concerns about the potential harms that could occur.

If you are concerned someone is providing alcohol to your teenager:

- ✓ if you can, talk to your teenagers
- ✓ if you can, talk to the people you think might be providing them alcohol
- ✓ set clear ground rules with everyone
- ✓ talk to other parents who may have experienced this
- ✓ contact the **Parent Drug Information Service** on (08) 9442 5050 or 1800 653 203 (country callers) for information and support

Talking with young people about drinking

Good communication is vital and provides opportunities to work through issues including the role of alcohol in socialising and becoming an adult. Even if during adolescence it seems as though your relationship with them has changed, your teenagers will still seek your guidance, stability and support as they enter new situations and social experiences. Be aware that the transition from primary to secondary school is a period when young people are at increased risk of alcohol-related harm.

In Western Australia, School Drug Education and Road Aware supports schools in introducing alcohol education from middle childhood (Year 6). This has been identified as a period in a student's behavioural development when alcohol education is likely to be most effective. At this age many students will have had some exposure to alcohol, through the media and adults around them, if not direct experience. School-based drug education assists students to build resilience and develop skills to make informed decisions about what to do in difficult situations.

How can I communicate with my teenager about the consequences of drinking?

Encouraging trust and respect in your family can ease communication through the teenage years. As a parent, you can assist with reducing alcohol-related harms in the community through regular discussion with your children.

If you feel unsure about talking with them about alcohol use, don't be afraid to seek professional support and guidance. There's a list of alcohol and other drug services available at the back of this booklet.

Having a positive influence

Research suggests that parents who present a permissive approach to alcohol, one without clear limits, can encourage and increase the likelihood of harmful drinking by young people. If you think your teenagers are intending to drink, using positive messages such as trust and responsibility has been shown to have a positive influence on their potential drinking behaviour. Discussing their expectations, ideas and the drinking behaviour of their friends can help identify potential harms, discussion points, and opportunities to refuse alcohol and reduce harms associated with alcohol use.

Tips for effective communication with young people

Communication is the key to identifying, understanding and resolving problems. It's a two-way process and accepting that teenagers may see things differently is the first step in discussing issues effectively with them.

Be patient and stay calm

Be patient with your teenager. Sometimes they may have difficulty expressing themselves and may say things they don't mean. Try not to take what they say personally and avoid engaging in conflict, arguments or emotionally driven discussion.

- Be patient
- Be understanding
- Try not to get overly emotional

Listen and be non-judgemental

Be prepared to listen to what's being said without judgement. It's ok to disagree but allow them to finish without interruption. This demonstrates your genuine interest in their point of view and gives you the opportunity to expect the same respect when it's your turn to speak.

- Listen without judgement
- Listen with a full ear not half an ear (i.e. busy doing something else)
- Don't interrupt and expect the same in return
- Share your point of view

Choose your time

Choosing the right time is important. If teenagers feel like you are trying to get information out of them, they may be less open. It's better to find a comfortable time to raise the topic. It's not a good idea to try and talk things through when they're intoxicated, or if you are upset.

- Find the right time to talk
- Talk when they're not intoxicated
- Talk when everyone has calmed down
- Minimise distractions (i.e TV, phones, other company)

Help young people to think for themselves

Try not to provide all the answers or focus only on your concerns. Young people need to talk through the consequences of their actions and make their own decisions. Support them by recognising and encouraging positive behaviours.

- Talk through consequences
- Help them reach their own decisions
- Be supportive and show respect
- Encourage positive behaviour

Be honest

Don't be afraid to be honest about your values and be open about your concerns. This way your teenager will be more likely to understand you care about their well-being. Explain that it's a particular behaviour you disapprove of, not them. Give examples to communicate this. Keep your word, as this gives them the opportunity to do the same.

- Be honest about what concerns you
- Use examples to show you disapprove of the behaviour, not the person
- Keep your word

Lead by example

It's important that you are sober when talking about responsible alcohol use so that you don't give a mixed message or lower your credibility. Young people want you to understand what they're experiencing, so allow them to be open with you. While their experience may be different to when you were young, your experience and opinions are important to them. Talk about problems that can occur when drinking, including what can happen if they drink too much or drink rapidly. If you have been in any difficult situations yourself, you can use these to help them consider how they would respond in a similar situation. Let them know that they should always call for help in an emergency situation, even if they worry about getting into trouble.

- Be sober when discussing alcohol
- Be open and honest about your values and experiences
- Talk about the problems that can occur
- Develop strategies with your teenager to help them deal with difficult situations
- Talk about what to do in an emergency situation

Make decisions together

Establishing ground rules and setting boundaries is easier to achieve with your teenager when they're given the opportunity to contribute. If you negotiate with everyone's needs in mind, it will give you the opportunity to discuss your values and reasons for setting rules and allow them to take responsibility when it comes to following them. It's important to agree on consequences if rules are broken and make sure you follow through with action.

- Negotiate an agreement
- Discuss your values and reasons for setting limits
- Allow them to take responsibility for agreements
- Agree on realistic consequences you can manage and follow through on

Keep talking

After you've begun discussing alcohol use with them don't be afraid to talk about it again. Keep the lines of communication open. Talk through the issues when things are going fine and let them know you're always approachable if they want to talk.

- Keep the lines of communication open
- Don't be afraid to talk about things more than once or when things are fine
- Show you're approachable when they need to talk

Some ways parents block communication

Discussing alcohol use with young people can be difficult. There are a range of styles that block effective communication. Consider how a discussion could go or how someone might respond if you use any of the following communication styles.

- Advising – "Why don't you..." or "It would be best if..."
- Ridiculing – "Ok you might think you do but you don't know it all..."
- Sympathising – "Don't worry you will feel better soon..."
- Ordering – "You must..." or "you have to..."
- Warning – "You'd better do it, if you don't..."
- Diagnosing – "I can tell you what's wrong with you..."
- Undermining – "You are nothing but..."
- Lecturing – "Do you realise what the facts are..."
- Moralising – "You should do what's right..."
- Interrogating – "Why?" "who?" "how?"
- Judging – "You're in the wrong and acting stupidly..."

Some ways parents can encourage communication.

- Inquiring – "What do you think?" "What do your friends think?"
- Respecting – "I have confidence in your ability to make good choices..."
- Empathising – "I have felt that too..."
- Negotiating – "Maybe we can agree to..."
- Exploring – "What happens when you..."
- Understanding – "I know it might be difficult for you..."
- Reinforcing – "You have the strength of character to..."
- Informing – "There is some information about..."
- Ethical exploration – "What do you think would be the right thing to do? Why?"
- Sharing – "What happened to me once..."
- Hypothesising – "What might happen if..."

Information and support

If you're having difficulties dealing with any of the topics outlined in this booklet you don't have to go it alone. There are alcohol and other drug services in your community that can provide professional assistance and information. The listings below provide current information, support and referrals to services available in your area.

Alcohol and Drug Information Service (08) 9442 5000 or 1800 198 024 (country callers)

A free 24-hour, state-wide, confidential telephone information and support service for parents and families concerned about alcohol and other drug use. Callers can speak with a professional counsellor or be put in touch with local Community Drug Service Teams in your area who can provide counselling, education and support.

Parent Drug Information Service (08) 9442 5050 or 1800 653 203 (country callers)

A free 24-hour, state-wide, confidential telephone information and support service for parents and families concerned about alcohol and other drug use. Callers can speak to either a professional counsellor or to a trained parent volunteer who has experience with a child using alcohol and other drugs.

Department of Racing, Gaming and Liquor (08) 9245 1888 or 1800 634 541 (country callers)

For information on liquor licensing matters and Occasional Licence applications.

Other useful contacts

Police Assistance	131 444 (state-wide)
Emergency/Ambulance	000
Crisis Care	(08) 9223 1111 or 1800 199 008 (country callers)

Useful websites

www.alcoholthinkagain.com.au - *Alcohol. Think Again* is the Drug and Alcohol Office's Statewide program which aims to reduce the impact that harmful alcohol use has on our community. The website can help you take action to reduce or prevent alcohol-related harm in your community and provide you with links to further information.

www.adf.org.au - The Victorian-based Australian Drug Foundation seeks to minimise drug-related harm in the community through its programs, research and services. The website has extensive information and useful education resources.

www.alcohol.gov.au - The Australian Government's information site for alcohol has information about alcohol-related health risks including the *Australian Guidelines to Reduce Health Risks from Drinking Alcohol*. This site also contains the Commonwealth resource *Alcohol and Your Kids: A Guide for Parents and Carers*.

www.youth.wa.gov.au - The Department for Communities' Office for Youth is the State Government agency responsible for developing policy and programs that meet the needs of Western Australia's young people.

www.drinkingnightmare.gov.au - The Australian Government's alcohol campaign site has information about the harms associated with drinking to intoxication. The site contains helpful information for parents and young people as well as details about the campaign.

www.localdrugaction.com.au - Local Drug Action Group Inc. has a role in helping prevent alcohol and other drug-related harm in the local community. Western Australian Local Drug Action Groups can connect you with a vast network of individuals and communities who have all made a commitment to making a difference.

www.ndri.curtin.edu.au - The National Drug Research Institute (Curtin University) website provides access to research on the reduction of alcohol and other drug-related harm in Australia.

www.sdera.wa.edu.au - School Drug Education & Road Aware assists with the implementation of effective school drug and road safety education within Western Australian schools through the provision of curriculum materials, teacher training and school support. You may want to find out if your school is involved.

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