

Alcohol-caused harm is a problem for the whole community. Alcohol is not just a young people's problem. However, the drinking habits of young people are causing significant harm.

In Australia

- One in five Australians aged 14+ years drink at short-term risky/high-risk levels at least once a month. This equates to more than 42 million occasions of risky or high-risk drinking in Australia each year.¹
- Alcohol consumption causes over 5,000 deaths and 80,000 hospitalisations in Australia every year.²
- Up to 70 per cent of all police responses are alcohol-related.^{3,4}
- Alcohol affects people other than the drinker. Over 42% of adult Australians reported being either verbally or physically abused or put in fear in the previous year by someone under the influence of alcohol.⁵
- An estimated 46,957 Western Australian 12 to 17 year old school students consumed alcohol in the past week.⁶

'One of the main reasons I drink is to get drunk'
report 43.3% of 16-17 year old WA school students.⁶

'It is ok to get drunk occasionally'
report 66.3% of 16-17 year old WA school students.⁶

'Drinking is the best way of relaxing'
report 50.1% of 16-17 year old WA school students.⁶

Harmful drinking among young people

- More than a quarter of 14 to 19 year olds put themselves at risk of alcohol-related harm in the short term at least once a month.¹
- Over 70% of 14 to 19 year olds consumed alcohol in the previous year despite the fact that the minimum legal drinking age is 18.⁵
- 80% of alcohol consumed by people aged 14 to 24 years is consumed in ways that put the drinker's (and others') health at risk of acute harm e.g. falls, assault injuries, road crashes, burns.²
- 24.3% of WA 12 to 17 year old school students who had consumed alcohol in the last week reported drinking at levels considered to place adults 'at risk' of short term harm in 2008.⁶
- Levels of risky drinking in those aged 18 to 24 years have increased since 1995.⁷

Alcohol-caused harm among young people

- Rates of alcohol-related harm in young people have increased significantly over recent years, particularly those aged 16 to 24 years.⁸
- Over the last ten years, about 15% of *all* deaths among 15 to 24 year olds were due to risky or high risk drinking.⁹
- On average, five Australians under 25 die from injury and disease caused by hazardous drinking in a week.⁹
- Indigenous young people are more than twice as likely as their non-Indigenous counterparts to die from alcohol-attributable injury and disease.⁹

References available at www.mcaay.org.au