

## alcohol feature

inside another jam-packed  
issue:

- \* Kirby & Miss K's stories
- \* We'll pay you to attend training!?!  
Quick! Only two spots left!!
- \* Alcohol and pregnancy
- \* **Youth Workers Survival Kit:**  
Working with young people with  
alcohol and other drug issues **with**  
**Peter Slattery**
- \* **Alcohol and Other Drugs Project**  
**Update**
- \* Drug Action Week
- \* **Changes to cannabis laws**
- \* 1999 Darwin Awards
- \* **How to drink less?**
- \* Tips and tricks to finding AOD  
information online #3
- \* **AOD Service Profile: Directions**
- \* Alcohol statistics
- \* **Health benefits of alcohol**
- \* Alcohol and the law in the ACT
- \* **Alcohol support services in the**  
**ACT**
- \* Youth Service Profile: Junction Youth  
Health Service
- \* **Minimising alcohol related harm**
- \* Alcohol: a profile

## drug action week 2004

# CLUB 03 ...

Hey hipsters! **CLUB 03** went off!

**CLUB 03** was kindly brought to us by Sam and Amanda. Sam and Amanda are two young women who were successful in receiving a YouthInterACT grant earlier this year. They decided they wanted to have an event by young people for young people, drug and alcohol free and something you could go to if you're underage.

Well **CLUB 03** was packed with stuff.... free BBQ... breakdancing workshops... DJ workshops... nice lighting... heaps of prizes... and



## Alcohol and pregnancy

### ALCOHOL: effects on unborn children

- ★ Alcohol crosses the placenta to the baby. It can accumulate in the amniotic fluid surrounding the baby before the birth.
- ★ Alcohol can cause problems in pregnancy such as bleeding, miscarriage, stillbirth and premature birth.
- ★ There is evidence to suggest that if a woman drinks two or more standard drinks each day the baby can be affected and grow slowly. If a woman drinks six or more standard drinks each day the baby may have slow physical growth, poor coordination and movement and intellectual disability.
- ★ Unfortunately it is not known whether or not there is any safe level of drinking alcohol during pregnancy. It is also uncertain whether any particular stage of the pregnancy is the most vulnerable to the effects of drinking.

★ THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION SUGGESTS THAT THERE IS REALLY NO SAFE LEVEL OF DRINKING ALCOHOL DURING PREGNANCY AND THAT **NO ALCOHOL AT ALL IS THE SAFEST APPROACH**

### THE EFFECTS OF DRINKING ALCOHOL BEFORE PREGNANCY ARE KNOWN

- ★ Around half of all pregnancies are not planned and women may not know they are pregnant until about the 6th week of the pregnancy or later.
- ★ Babies are more vulnerable to alcohol in the early weeks of pregnancy, with the highest risk being between 2 and 8 weeks.
- ★ In most cases having a few drinks in the early weeks does not cause obvious harm, but heavy drinking during that time can cause problems for the baby, especially if other drugs are also used.
- ★ Unless a woman is abusing alcohol, exposure to alcohol is usually not thought to be a reason for terminating a pregnancy.

Alcohol drunk by mothers during pregnancy can seriously affect the health and development of their unborn children. Some of these babies will have Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and have signs of harm when they are born including weighing less than expected at birth and having unusual facial features. These babies go on to have a delay in their development and learning and behaviour problems. Other babies affected by alcohol can also have serious lifelong disabilities without all the features of FAS. These babies are said to have Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE). The World Health Organisation has stated that FAE is the commonest cause of congenital developmental delay.

### WHAT IS FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME (FAS)?

- ★ FAS is a developmental problem that is caused before birth when a baby is exposed to alcohol.
- ★ Some of these babies are harmed by a relatively small amount of alcohol if the mother drinks during the time that the brain is developing (between the 2nd and 8th weeks of the pregnancy) but most are born to mothers who abuse alcohol during the pregnancy.
- ★ Babies affected by FAS are smaller than expected at birth and have unusual facial features including small eye-openings, small faces and jaws and thin upper lips.
- ★ Some will also have heart defects, minor joint and limb abnormalities (which can cause some restriction of movements).
- ★ These children will usually go on to have significant developmental delay and behaviour problems.
- ★ Not all babies of women who abuse alcohol will have FAS. How these babies are protected is not yet known.

Source: <http://www.adf.org.au/adp/alcohol.html>

## Alcohol and pregnancy continued...



### Breast Feeding

- ★ While the effects of drinking alcohol on breast feeding are unclear, it is known that alcohol is excreted into breast milk- It may be that having one drink occasionally is safe, but in general it is better to avoid using alcohol as much as possible.
- ★ During the first twelve months of the baby's life the brain is still developing and may be damaged by alcohol.
- ★ Alcohol use can reduce the milk supply.

### Some tips for saying no to alcohol when you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant

- ★ No thanks, I'm being kind to my baby!
- ★ No thanks, when I drink alcohol so does my baby!
- ★ No thanks, my baby's too young to drink alcohol!
- ★ No thanks, I'm celebrating being pregnant!
- ★ I'd rather have a water or a juice, thanks.

Source: National Organisation for Foetal Alcohol Syndrome and Related Disorders – *Alcohol and Pregnancy* brochure 2001.

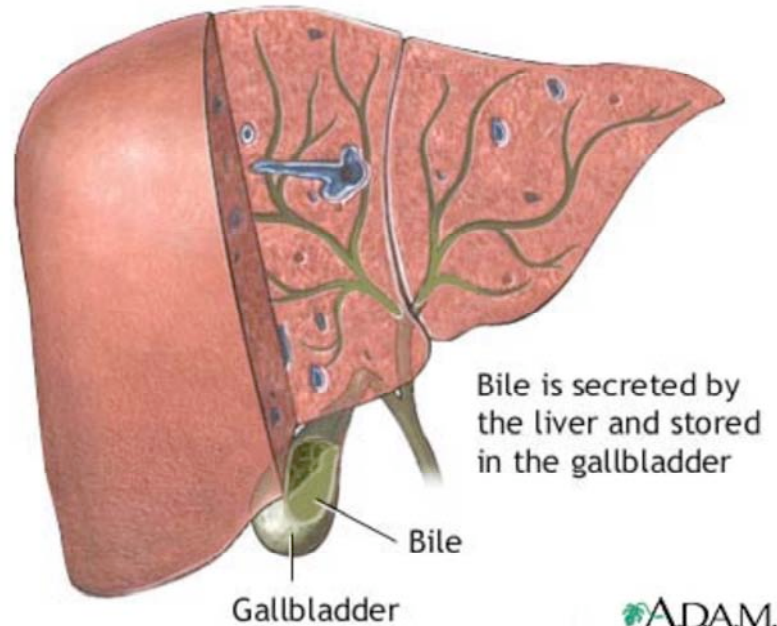


## ♥ your liver

### What does the liver do?

- ♥ Metabolises nutrients from food
- ♥ Stores and produces substances the body needs
- ♥ Removes waste products
- ♥ Detoxifies harmful substances such as alcohol
- ♥ It stores glucose, the body's energy source

It stores important vitamins and minerals such as vitamin A, B, D and iron



Source: <http://health.allrefer.com/pictures-images/bile-produced-in-the-liver.html>

### How does alcohol effect the liver?

Alcohol is a toxin to the body and the liver needs to process alcohol so that it can be excreted from the body. Once in the bloodstream alcohol goes through to the liver, where it is estimated to take an hour to eliminate one drink – so if more alcohol is absorbed in the liver than what it can handle, excess alcohol will travel to all different parts of the body, circulating until the liver is finally able to process it. This will cause hangovers and leave you feeling tired and groggy.

Source:  
[http://www.drugs.vic.gov.au/adults\\_effects.htm](http://www.drugs.vic.gov.au/adults_effects.htm)

### What kinds of liver diseases does too much alcohol cause?

Alcoholic hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver that lasts one to two weeks. Symptoms include loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and tenderness, fever, jaundice, and sometimes mental confusion. It is believed to lead to alcoholic cirrhosis over a period of years. Cirrhosis involves permanent damage to the liver cells. "Fatty liver" is the earliest stage of alcoholic liver disease. If the patient stops drinking at this point, the liver can heal itself.

Source:  
<http://www.gutdoc.com/alcohol.html>

### Loving your liver: how can you protect your liver?

- ♥ Have at least two alcohol free days a week
- ♥ Drink lots of water – about 2L each day
- ♥ Reduce intake of fatty high sugar foods such as fried foods, takeaways, sugar, chocolate, lollies, cakes, biscuits, pastry, butter, hot chips, pies etc
- ♥ Eat foods high in antioxidants such as red and orange fruits and vegetables (rockmelon, oranges, capsicum, sweet potatoes, tomatoes) and leafy green vegies (spinach, parsley) – try to eat some of these foods every day
- ♥ Eat vegies like broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, and cauliflower – try to eat some of these at least 4 times a week
- ♥ Eat nuts, seeds and wholegrain cereals regularly. Try oats (porridge), sunflower seeds, almonds, pumpkin seeds, beans (such as baked beans, bean nachos) and lentils
- ♥ Limit the amount of coffee, tea and soft drinks (high in caffeine) and replace with water, juices and herb teas
- ♥ Eat lots of garlic, ginger and onions

## **MY SIDE OF THE STORY:** young people tell their stories

I started drinking at Waterloo in Woden with a couple of mates. Just started to get the taste and then I had a bit of problems at home with Mum. Then that's when it started... me going out on Friday nights and everyone around me was drinking so I would start drinking slowly. And then me mum found out that I was only going down to Woden to go and drink with my mates. And a couple of weeks later I started getting really heavy on drinking. I would go to Woden with some of my mates and start drinking by 9 in the morning and it didn't look very good because I am just a 16 year old girl walking around Woden really drunk and also my nationality me being Aboriginal

Kirby Martin

A couple of times I would have a cone here and there with my mates and then I would start buying a 10er from my dealer and then one day my dealer was dried out so I went to one of my friends down a bit from someone's backyard and he said it was some good stuff so I got some off him and it was laced with speed. And I started going really psycho. So I slowly gave it up. It was really hard with all my friends around me smoking around me. So I would sit there just saying to myself that "do I want to be healthy or to be cool around my friends?" So I picked my health.

MISS K

Are you a young person who wants to tell workers their story? Are you a worker who knows a young person who may want to tell their story? Then give the Youth Coalition's Alcohol and Other Drugs Project a call. We can support the young person to tell their story and we can reimburse them for sharing their expertise. Contact Carrie or Bianca on 6247 3540

## Alcohol support services in the ACT

### Giving up – Living without alcohol – 12 Steps program

**Run by:** Alcoholics Anonymous  
**Cost:** Free  
**Length:** Ongoing  
**Starts:** Ongoing  
**Overview:**

- Variety of meetings to support people who want to stop drinking
  - open speaker meetings – sharing stories
  - open discussion meetings
  - closed discussion meetings for alcoholics or prospective AA members
  - step meetings – discuss one of the 12 steps to recovery

**Day:** Meetings are held every day  
**Time:** Various  
**Age:** All ages welcome  
**Venue:** Various – meetings occur all over the ACT and Queanbeyan  
**Phone:** 6287 3020  
**Visit:** Grant Cameron Community Centre, 27 Mulley St, Holder ACT  
[www.aa.org.au/index.php](http://www.aa.org.au/index.php)

### Self help group for young people

**Run by:** Alateen  
**Overview:** Self help group for young people whose lives are, or have been affected by problem drinkers. **Not** for young people experiencing AOD issues themselves.  
**Age:** Up to 18 years  
**Phone:** 6251 7726  
**Visit:** Belconnen Churches Centre, Level 2, Benjamin Way, Belconnen  
Opening hours Monday – Friday 10:30am-12:30pm

### Relapse prevention

**Run by:** Alcohol and Drug Program, ACT Health  
**Cost:** Free  
**Length:** 5 week program, need to ring and book a place  
**Starts:** 26<sup>th</sup> August 2004  
**Overview:** Maintenance of whatever the level you've chosen to take yourself to. Provides tools to support you eg looking at high risk areas and triggers looking at cravings  
**Day:** Thursday  
**Time:** 1:30pm – 3:30pm  
**Age:** 18 years and over  
**Venue:** To be confirmed  
**Phone:** 6207 9977 (24 hour information line)  
**Visit:** Cnr Marcus Clarke and Rudd Sts, Canberra

## Alcohol and Young People

### What research into Australian drinking patterns of young people 14-25 years has shown:

- Between 1/4 and 1/3 of them drink in a high risk manner, more than any other section of the Australian community.
- Young people 18-25 years are the group most likely to be current drinkers of alcohol (89%). Among this age group:
  - Nearly half (46%) the males and females (44%) drank at least once a month at levels that placed them at risk of short-term harm
  - 17% (1 in 6) of males and 19% (1 in 5) females were drinking at levels that placed them at risk of long-term harm
- Among young people 14-17 years surveyed in 2001:
  - 64% males and 69% females were current drinkers
- 21% males and 25% females drank at least once a month that placed them at risk of short-term harm

#### Sources:

- National Alcohol Strategy – Alcohol and Your Health – Fact sheets 9 & 10 – *Alcohol and Young People; Alcohol and Young Adults*.
- [http://www.adca.org.au/publications/Drug%20Policy%202000/93\\_alcohol\\_relatedviolence.htm](http://www.adca.org.au/publications/Drug%20Policy%202000/93_alcohol_relatedviolence.htm)
- [http://www.curtin.edu.au/curtin/centre/ndri/news/media/20020428naip\\_bull\\_5.htm](http://www.curtin.edu.au/curtin/centre/ndri/news/media/20020428naip_bull_5.htm)
- [www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi/ti171.pdf](http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi/ti171.pdf)

### The types of alcohol related harm most likely to be suffered by young people:

- Injuries caused by accidents or violence;
- Between 1990 and 1997, more than half (52%) of all serious alcohol-related road injuries were sustained by young people aged 15-24 years;
- Young people aged 15-24 years account for approximately 1 in 3 alcohol-related hospital admissions for violence;
- Unprotected sexual activity that places young people at risk of STI's and unplanned pregnancy;
- Date rape;
- Memory loss and black outs;
- Peer criticism and broken friendships;
- The three leading causes of death among young people – unintentional injuries, homicide and suicide – are all linked with alcohol<sup>1</sup>
- 1 in 3 young people aged 14-19 years and 3 in 5 (60%) young people aged 20-24 years suffer some form of alcohol related personal abuse<sup>1</sup>
- Three quarters (75%) of all alcohol related violence is committed by young people aged 14-24 years<sup>1</sup>
- In 1998 among young people aged 14-19 years, 34.9% experienced verbal abuse, 9.5% experienced physical abuse and 23.8% were put in fear all as a result of drug and alcohol related violence.<sup>1</sup>
- People under 24 years state their reason for drinking as “to fit in on social occasions”. More women than men drink to fit in on social occasions and more men than women drink “to relax”.
- Binge drinking for both young males and females is significant with 35 percent of teenage males admitting to drinking in one day during the last month between 11 and 30 alcoholic drinks and 22 percent of teenage females drinking between 9 and 30 drinks.

## ALCOHOL: a profile

Alcohol is widely used in Australia and is accepted and even embraced to some degree in our society. People drink alcohol to relax, to celebrate or to just have fun. Some people drink to make themselves feel better, for something to do, to forget about something for a while or to make themselves feel more comfortable in social situations.

Alcohol is a natural substance that is produced through the process of fermentation, which is the action of yeast on substances that contain sugar and starches. In its pure form it is colourless, like water, and has no taste. It is absorbed into the bloodstream through the stomach and small intestine.

After a few drinks people begin to feel more relaxed, more confident, and less inhibited. When people get drunk, or intoxicated, they lose coordination, slur their speech, and their moods become intense - sometimes happy, sometimes sad and sometimes angry. Drinking too much can make people feel sick and vomit, and can cause coma and even death.

If taken moderately alcohol can benefit health, primarily by reducing the risk of some types of cardiovascular disease. However, in larger amounts, alcohol is damaging to our bodies. It can affect major organs such as the brain, the liver and the heart, and increases the risk of developing cancer.

In the Australia alcohol use amongst young people is common and is usually a group activity. It is normal for young people to experiment with alcohol and it doesn't necessarily mean there is or will be a problem. However it can be dangerous or lead to dangerous situations.

Binge drinking is most common for young people, this is where a lot of alcohol is consumed over a short period of time, or high levels of alcohol being consumed daily over a few days, even a week or so. Drinking in this way is most harmful as people get quite drunk, quite quickly and this not only puts peoples health at risk but also increases the chances of people putting themselves in dangerous situations. In getting drunk people are more likely to injure themselves, become involved in violence and get in to trouble with the law. It also increases the chances of sexual coercion. The use of alcohol can lead to dependence; this can be physical or psychological and increases the chance of health complications and social and psychological problems.

### **Myth: Alcohol isn't really a drug'**

A drug can be defined as any substance which alters normal brain functioning, so alcohol is definitely a drug.

### **Myth: 'People with alcohol problems are derelicts'**

Most people with alcohol problems are part of mainstream society. They live with their family, have friends and hold a steady job.



## YOUTH SERVICE PROFILE: **The Junction**

Address	1 Alinga Street, Canberra City
Phone	6247 5567
Type of service	Free medical service for young people
Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Medical and clinical services</li><li>• Counselling</li><li>• Alcohol and Drug support</li><li>• Ante-Natal check-ups and support</li><li>• Referrals</li></ul>
Referral process	Self referral, drop-in
Support for young people with AOD issues	Yes. They have professionals who will work directly with a young person who has an AOD issue. They won't generally prescribe any drugs of addiction so if this is required for a particular case The Junction will refer the young person to a service that offers this kind of assistance.
Can a young person access the service under the influence of AOD?	A person who is under the influence of any AOD can access this service unless they are displaying violent behaviour
Contact person	Jo Price
Age group	12-25 inclusive
Support	Counselling, doctors, nurses. AOD issues are approached on a case by case basis, often with the focus on harm minimisation.

## Supporting young people to minimise alcohol related harm

- Young people should be assisted to develop understanding, attitudes and behaviour that enable them to minimise and avoid harmful consequences associated with excessive alcohol use.
- Assisting young people to learn about drinking and the effects of alcohol within a safe and supportive environment can help them manage their drinking in ways to minimise risk to themselves and others
- If young people choose not to drink they should be supported in this choice
- Encourage young people not to drink at all in the hours preceding potentially risky activities such as driving, swimming, abseiling, boating
- Encourage young people to avoid drinking to become intoxicated

Source: National Alcohol Strategy – Alcohol and Your Health – Fact sheets 9 & 10 – *Alcohol and Young People; Alcohol and Young Adults.*

## ALCOHOL and the LAW in the ACT

It is illegal for an under 18 year old to possess or consume alcohol in a public place, unless they have a reasonable excuse or are under the supervision of a responsible adult. Police can demand identification and seize the alcohol. (Summary Offences Act)

It is illegal for a person to:

obtain alcohol from licensed premises on behalf of an under 18

sell or supply alcohol to an under 18 year old

though there are exceptions if the under 18 year old is your own child, or the child's parent or guardian has authorised you to

(1) A person under the age of 18 years shall not:

(a) consume liquor:

- on licensed premises or

- on the premises of an unlicensed restaurant (except in the company of and with the authority of his or her parent or guardian),

(b) obtain, or attempt to obtain, liquor for consumption on licensed premises, or

(c) carry liquor away, or attempt to carry liquor away, from licensed premises.

(Liquor Act 1982)

While it's unlawful for under 18s to possess or consume alcohol in a public place without adult supervision, and in licensed premises, it's not unlawful to possess or consume it in other places, eg. in their own home.

**Want more info in town?** Contact First Stop Legal and Referral Service for Young People. Ph 6262 7077. Visit AusAid Building, Mort Street (opposite City Bus Interchange) 62 Northbourne Ave. – across from Greater Union.

**Remember: This is not legal advice!**

Source: [www.lawstuff.org.au](http://www.lawstuff.org.au)

## Why do young people drink alcohol?

### *Experimental*

Young people try alcohol for many reasons. They might be curious, want to be one of the group, or perhaps it's daring to try it. Some young people have told us they drink because "it makes me feel older" and "it gives me an image among peers" and simply "to try it out".

### *Recreational*

Some people drink when they go to parties and nightclubs to enjoy themselves more. The alcohol might make them feel happier and more relaxed.

### *Situational use*

The young person might want to get something out of drinking like being able to sleep or to forget things.

### *Dependent*

Some people need to drink every day just to get through the day because they are addicted to alcohol.

Source: National Alcohol Strategy – Alcohol and Your Health – Fact sheets 9 & 10 – *Alcohol and Young People; Alcohol and Young Adults.*

## Statistics

- ★ Around 3,300 deaths per year in Australia are attributed to alcohol use
- ★ One third of all driver and pedestrian deaths are alcohol related.
- ★ 12 percent of suicides, 16 percent of child abuse cases, 44 percent of fire injuries, 34 percent of falls and drowning, are associated with alcohol consumption.
- ★ Between 41 and 70 percent of violent crimes are committed under the influence of alcohol; in NSW alcohol was estimated to be prevalent in 42 percent of homicide incidents
- ★ About 5-10 percent of the population drink amounts that are considered harmful or hazardous.
- ★ Women are more vulnerable to both the acute and chronic effects of alcohol misuse.
- ★ People under 24 years state their reason for drinking as “to fit in on social occasions”. More women than men drink to fit in on social occasions and more men than women drink “to relax”.
- ★ Binge drinking for both young males and females is significant with 35 percent of teenage males admitting to drinking in one day during the last month between 11 and 30 alcoholic drinks and 22 percent of teenage females drinking between 9 and 30 drinks.

Reference: (NSW alcohol summit)

## Health benefits of alcohol:

A number of health benefits are now being linked with drinking alcohol at low risk levels.

Most important of these is the protection that alcohol can provide against heart disease in people from middle age onwards:

- ★ Maximum benefit in helping to prevent heart disease comes from a regular pattern of drinking relatively small amounts of alcohol:
  - ☆ less than 1 standard drink a day for women aged from about 45-40 years and over, and
  - ☆ 1 to 2 standard drinks per day for men aged from about 40-50 years and over.
- ★ However, people who choose not to drink can get similar benefits from strategies such as regular exercise, giving up smoking, and a healthy diet.
- ★ It is also important to note that:
  - ☆ A similar benefit has not been found for younger age groups.
  - ☆ More variable drinking patterns, especially involving large amounts of alcohol, may actually increase the risk of illness and death from heart disease.

Regarding other illnesses:

- ★ There is strong evidence that low risk drinking may similarly provide some protection against ischaemic stroke, and that consumption of alcohol may provide some protection against gallstones.
- ★ While more research is needed, there is some early evidence that low risk drinking may provide some protection against Type 2 diabetes.

Source: [www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/publicat/document/alcfs15.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/publicat/document/alcfs15.pdf)

## AOD SERVICE PROFILE: **Directions ACT**

Address	First Floor, 35 East Row, Canberra City
Phone	6248 7677
Type of service	Offer a range of health interventions designed to reduce and limit harms and to improve personal and public health
Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Youth specific programs<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- “Late Night Directions”: run at Youth In the City 5-9 Fri and Sat nights. This program assists young people to obtain information and support for issues they may be facing;</li><li>- <a href="#">Directions@College</a>: drop-in service that occurs at all ACT government colleges. This services provides young people with information and support about AOD issues.</li><li>- “Effective Weed Control”: program aimed at supporting young people to quit or cut down on their cannabis usage</li></ul></li><li>• ACT Needle and syringe program</li><li>• Arcadia House Withdrawal Centre</li></ul>
Opening hours	M-F 9am – 5pm. Needle and syringe program M-F 8:30am-6pm Sat 9-5
AOD approach	Harm minimisation
Referral process	Self referral or a youth worker can refer
Support for young people with AOD issues	Yes
Can a young person access the service under the influence of AOD?	Yes
Contact person	Tina Dowse
Age group	All ages
Support	Counselling, information, harm minimisation and prevention programs, referral

### **1999 Darwin Awards**

**The Darwin Awards are named in honor of Charles Darwin, the father of evolution, Darwin Awards commemorate those who improve our gene pool by removing themselves from it. The following is a story of a nominee for the Darwin Awards in 1999.**

Drinking oneself to death need not be a long lingering process. Allan, a 33-year-old computer technician, showed his competitive spirit by dying of competitive spirits. A Sydney, Australia hotel bar held a drinking competition, known as Feral Friday, with a 100-minute time limit and a sliding point scale ranging from 1 point for beer to 8 points for hard liquor. Allan stood and cheered his winning total of 236, (winners never quit!) which had also netted him the literally staggering blood alcohol level of .353 grams of alcohol per 100 ml of blood, 7 times greater than Australia's legal driving limit of 0.05%. After several trips to the usual temple of overindulgence, the bathroom, Allan was helped back to his workplace to sleep it off, a condition that became permanent.

A forensic pharmacologist estimated that after downing 34 beers, 4 bourbons, and 17 shots of tequila within 1 hour and 40 minutes, his blood alcohol level would have been 0.41 to 0.43%, but Allan had vomited several times after the drinking stopped. The cost paid by Allan was much higher than that of the hotel, which was fined the equivalent of \$13,100 US dollars for not intervening.

It is not known whether Allan required any further embalming.

Source: [www.darwinawards.com](http://www.darwinawards.com)

## How to drink less?

- ★ **Start with a soft drink or water:** You will drink much faster if you are thirsty, so have a non-alcoholic drink (especially water) to quench your thirst before you start drinking alcohol.
- ★ **Use standard drinks:** Monitor how much alcohol you drink. By converting what you drink into standard drinks, it is easier to keep track.
- ★ **Drink slowly:** Take sips and not gulps. Put your glass down between sips.
- ★ **Eat before or while you are drinking:** Eating slows your drinking pace and fills you up. If you have a full stomach, alcohol will be absorbed more slowly.
- ★ **Avoid salty snacks:** Salty food like chips or nuts make you thirsty, so you drink more.
- ★ **Avoid 'shouts':** Don't get involved in 'shouts', or rounds. Drink at your own pace- not someone else's. If you do get stuck in a shout, buy a non-alcoholic drink for yourself when it's your turn.
- ★ **One drink at a time:** Don't let people top up your drinks. It is hard to keep track of how much alcohol is drunk.
- ★ **Pace yourself:** Try having a 'spacer', a non-alcoholic drink (especially water) every second or third drink.
- ★ **Stay busy:** If you have something to do, you tend to drink less. Play pool or dance-don't just sit and drink.
- ★ **Try the low-alcohol alternative:** A wide range of light beers are available. Low-alcohol or non-alcoholic wines are also becoming more available. Most places that serve cocktails also serve non-alcoholic versions.
- ★ **Have alcohol-free days:** Have at least two days a week when you don't drink at all.
- ★ **Keep a diary:** Write down how much you drink each day. This can make you more aware of exactly how much you drink.
- ★ **Be assertive:** Don't be pressured into drinking more than you want or intend to. Tell your friends 'thanks, but no thanks'.
- ★ Alcohol can be an enjoyable part of life, but like all drugs, alcohol can cause problems when consumption is not controlled.

Source: [www.druginfo.adf.org.au](http://www.druginfo.adf.org.au)

### **Myth: If I have food in my stomach I won't get drunk**

Having food in your stomach will slow down the rate at which alcohol is absorbed into your blood but will not stop intoxication or drunkenness.

## Since last time we met **CANNABIS LAWS HAVE CHANGED.** Check out this excerpt of the Chief Minister's press release...

ACT Government's Ministerial Media Release Service

24 June 2004

### ACT CANNABIS LAWS OVERHAULED

The ACT Government will introduce laws to reduce the number of cannabis plants that constitute a 'simple cannabis offence', introduce new drug offences, and increase maximum penalties for serious drug offences, Chief Minister and Attorney General, Jon Stanhope, said today.

... The main amendments covered by the Criminal Code (Serious Drug Offences) Amendment Bill are to:

- \* reduce the number of cannabis plants from five to two under the simple cannabis offence notice scheme' (SCONS);
- \* exclude hydroponically grown cannabis plants from the SCONS; and
- \* cover illicit drug trafficking activities such as preparing and packaging; transporting; guarding; and concealing.

... Maximum penalties will also increase:

- \* Where manufacturing is done with commercial intent the maximum penalty will increase from 10 years to life for a large commercial quantity, 25 years for a commercial quantity and 15 years for any quantity. For trafficking in or cultivating less than a trafficable quantity of a controlled drug or plant other than cannabis the maximum penalty will increase from five years to 10 years.
- \* For cultivating cannabis (with commercial intent) the maximum penalty increases from 10 to 25 years for a commercial quantity, five to 10 years for a trafficable quantity and two to three years for any quantity.

... The Bill will also introduce new offences such as:

- \* receiving money or property derived from a drug offence;
- \* concealing, transferring, converting or removing money or property from the ACT that has been derived from a drug offence;
- \* possessing equipment, substances and instructions with the intention of manufacturing or cultivating controlled drugs or plants;
- \* supplying others with such equipment and instructions etc so that they may manufacture or cultivate controlled drugs and plants;
- \* procuring a child to traffic in drugs (25 years imprisonment);
- \* supplying drugs to a child for the child to sell (25 years imprisonment); and
- \* a range of offences to deal with those who manufacture, sell or possess controlled precursors (ingredients) to manufacture controlled drugs.

"These changes are important for the ACT to participate in a national approach to introducing uniform serious drug laws," Mr Stanhope said.

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If you would like the full media release contact Penny Farnsworth, Media Contact on 6205 0434 or 0417 481 407 or [penny.farnsworth@act.gov.au](mailto:penny.farnsworth@act.gov.au) or contact the Alcohol and Other Drugs Project [carrie@youthcoalition.net](mailto:carrie@youthcoalition.net) or [bianca@youthcoalition.net](mailto:bianca@youthcoalition.net) or call 6247 3540

## Tips and tricks to finding AOD information online #3

### How do I refine my search?

Say we want to look-up alcohol factsheets on the web. Go to Google (arguably the best search engine out there) [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

If we search for:

The search comes back with sites from all over the world. Most search engines assume we mean **AND** between any two words, and some will also go on to look for **OR** between the two words. So the above search will report a huge number of sites.

Most search engines will list all of the pages that have both words first, then all of the pages that contain either one of the words. This makes for a very big list.

One way to narrow the search would be to put quotation marks on either side of the phrase "alcohol factsheets". That way we'll only get the pages which contain that EXACT phrase, instead of pages that contain one or other of the words as well. But we'll still get sites from the entire world. What we really want is alcohol factsheet information in Australia.

Ok, let's narrow the search down to Australia. The easiest way to do this is to include **click**  pages from Australia.

Search:  the web      ● pages from Australia

Ok, now we've narrowed the search down to just Australia. Now say we wanted to find information about alcohol factsheets and pregnancy. The next step is to tell the search engine to include all the files containing the word pregnancy.

Search:  the web      ● pages from Australia

#### SEARCH TIP:

Try spelling alcohol factsheet a few different ways, sometimes this increases the hit rate or you may find things you would not have otherwise :

- ★ "alcohol factsheet"
- ★ alcohol factsheet
- ★ alcohol fact sheet

#### SEARCH TIP:

Keep trying and try your search a few times. Be patient – finding quality information online takes time!

## Alcohol and Other Drugs Project an update

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The Youth Coalition of the ACT's Alcohol and Other Drugs Project (AODP) aims to build the capacity of the youth sector to better work with young people with AOD issues and to strengthen links with the alcohol and other drugs sector. The focus areas of the AODP are training, information and resources, networking and linkages and organizational.

So is the AODP doing?

- ★ **WE CAN PAY YOU TO ATTEND TRAINING!! 7 week project management training series starts end of July!**
- ★ **DRUG ACTION WEEK**  
Hooray to all the youth and AOD services who hosted events! Photos and the **DRUG ACTION MAGAZINE** are available at [www.youthcoalition.net](http://www.youthcoalition.net)
- ★ **FREE In-house training**  
We are facilitating violence in-house training with resource kits.
- ★ **FREE AOD Information and Resource Library**
- ★ **THE RACK** - At last a list of networks in the ACT!  
Available in PDF or hardcopy
- ★ **AODP Advisory Group** meets monthly new participants are welcome to attend – help shape the project that is working with you!
- ★ **AODP Consultation and research findings**  
*Building our capacity: young people, youth work and alcohol and other drugs*
  - Includes a literature review, a scoping study and a needs assessment
  - Copies of the report summary with recommendations (20 pg) and the full report including appendices (157 pgs) now available!
- ★ **And then there is what you are reading now...**  
**FRANK** is for youth sector workers in the ACT.  
We are calling for feedback, articles, submissions, photos, stories. We have some capacity to reimburse young people to contribute.
- ★ The July issue of **FRANK** focuses on party drugs.

## YOUTH WORKERS SURVIVAL KIT:

Working with  
young people  
with alcohol and  
other drug  
issues

FACILITATOR:  
Peter Slattery

The training will bring together theoretical and practical approaches for working with young people with AOD issues. The framework will draw on therapy, theatre and education, as well as other sources, which will facilitate the skills of engaging young people and developing strategies for working with young people dealing with AOD issues.

two one-day training  
opportunities

**When:** 26<sup>th</sup> or 27<sup>th</sup> of July  
**Time:** 9.30 – 4.30  
**Where:** TBC  
**Cost:** \$84 (lunch, morning tea and resource kit will be provided – this is cost recovery only)

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