

DrinkWise lauds AIHW alcohol findings - showing significant improvement in Australia's drinking culture

Findings released today from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW)'s 2016 National Drug Strategy Household Survey¹ continue to indicate that Australians are drinking more responsibly and more moderately than ever. Importantly the survey results show that the vast majority of Australians are drinking within the recommended Government guidelines and underage drinking rates are plummeting with:

- 82% of 12-17 year olds abstaining from drinking - a significant increase from 56% in 2007; and
- The average age at which underage people have their first alcoholic drink has increased to 16.1 years compared to 15.0 years in 2007.

DrinkWise CEO John Scott believes these ongoing positive trends validate much of the positive work undertaken over the past 11 years with DrinkWise's generational approach to creating a safer and healthier drinking culture evident in the results:

"DrinkWise has been at the forefront of providing parents with information and tips to assist them through our parents' campaigns since 2007. The effect of our award winning Kids Absorb Your Drinking and Kids and Alcohol Don't Mix campaigns are certainly at play in the dramatic decrease in underage drinking rates."

Young adults are also significantly reducing episodes of risky drinking. The results confirm that fewer young adults aged 18-24 are exceeding the lifetime risk guidelines (down from 31% in 2010 to 18.5% in 2016).

"The launch of our ongoing How to Drink Properly campaign in 2014 to substantially change single occasion risky drinking (5+ standard drinks in a session) among 18-24 year olds is taking effect. This result validates that talking to young adults in a meaningful way and at the right time can have significant influence in changing a binge culture"

"It's great to see that most Australians recognise the importance of drinking responsibly - however we are cognisant that there is still work to do to improve drinking habits amongst some Australians."

See: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/alcohol-and-other-drugs/data-sources/ndshs-2016/alcohol/>

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DrinkWise Australia is an evidence-based social change organisation dedicated to changing the Australian drinking culture to one that is safer and healthier. We do this through national information and education campaigns, partnerships with community leaders and organisations, and the development of practical strategies and resources that better support the community in relation to the responsible use of alcohol. DrinkWise Australia is funded through voluntary industry contributions across the alcohol sector, and has previously been in receipt of funding from both Coalition and Labor governments.

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¹ The National Drug Strategy Household Survey is conducted every 2-3 years. The 2013 survey collected data from nearly 24,000 people across Australia from June to Nov 2016.