



MEDIA RELEASE

Kids and Alcohol Don't Mix - Parents are making the switch

A survey released today shows Australians are making the switch to a healthier and safer attitude towards drinking. The 'Kids and Alcohol Don't Mix' campaign is resonating with parents.

Parents are the major source of supply of alcohol to their children (between 34-40%) However the DrinkWise approach is to positively change people's attitudes and behaviours over time by providing evidence-based information and advice.

The Survey, undertaken by Quantum Market Research, is based on their tracking of the DrinkWise 'Kids and Alcohol Don't Mix' Campaign. 500 parents in metropolitan Australia were surveyed to assess attitudes and behaviour in regard to delaying the introduction of alcohol to their children.

- 84% of parents now agree that it is not okay to provide alcohol to their under 18 year old child
- 70% of parents agree drinking alcohol affects the development of a teenagers' brain (up 6 points from 2009 benchmark)
- 62% of parents have spoken about and agreed on a strategy for dealing with their child's request to commence drinking, and
- 52% disagree strongly that it is OK to give your child under 18 years of age an occasional glass of alcohol (up 7 points from 2009 benchmark)

'This is a pleasing result and tells us we are on the right track. But we have a long way to go to make sure we are empowering parents with information and tools that will allow them to delay the introduction of alcohol to their kids and positively influence how their kids might drink in the future' said the Hon Trish Worth, Chair of the DrinkWise Australia Board.

These latest results build on the success of the 2008-09 'Kids Absorb Your Drinking' campaign which aimed to hold a mirror to parents' drinking occasions and to allow them to reflect on (and possibly moderate) their own drinking – realising that their kids look up to them and ultimately normalise their drinking behaviours. Quantum Market Research found that:

- Three quarters (76%) of parents surveyed said the campaign made them think about how they drank and how their attitude to alcohol will influence the way their children may drink in the future
- 57% said it made them think about how they currently drink in front of their kids
- Almost a third (30%) report being more aware of how they drink in front of their kids
- Almost two in ten (17%) reported having changed their drinking patterns, and
- 28% claim to have reduced drinking in front of their kids.

'If we are going to be more effective, we need a whole-of community approach in tackling complex and entrenched cultural and behavioural issues like alcohol misuse. DrinkWise is calling for the health bodies, academics, governments, industry and communities to work together in achieving a healthy attitude toward alcohol', Ms Worth said.

The recent appointment of Ms Worth to the new Advisory Council for the National Preventive Health Agency is just another indication of the high level of government recognition of the DrinkWise campaign and of the need to take a collaborative approach to tackling these issues.

Let this be a message to those public health critics that consider the DrinkWise approach as PR. Our strategy is proving effective – the results speak for themselves. Raising awareness of alcohol issues and engaging the community in challenging social norms is essential to changing our drinking culture. And it is an important part of a broader strategy that must involve government, industry and the health community working together.

'Petty criticism is easy. Doing something positive is much harder. Responsibility for tackling alcohol misuse cannot entirely reside with government as some critics would suggest' Ms Worth said.

DrinkWise will continue to call for a collaborative approach to change our drinking culture so that consuming alcohol too young or to excess is considered undesirable. It's a long-term commitment.

Ends.

Further information or interview please contact:

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Available for Comment: The Hon Trish Worth, Chair of the DrinkWise Australia Board

Details of the Survey are available on request.

About DrinkWise Australia

DrinkWise Australia was established in 2005 by the alcohol industry. The Federal Government also provided \$5 million in funding in 2005 over four years but today DrinkWise Australia is entirely supported through voluntary contributions from alcohol producers and retailers. Drinkwise Australia's members represent around 80% (by volume) of the alcohol sold in Australia.

DrinkWise Australia aims to play a key role in challenging the Australian drinking culture and tackling alcohol misuse. We create awareness in order to positively affect generational change and encourage new social norms that sustain a healthier and safer drinking culture. DrinkWise does this through the development and implementation of national information and education campaigns, with supporting practical resources that inform and support the community about alcohol use.

As an evidence based organisation, DrinkWise Australia relies on key independent research and clinical advice. The information supporting its campaigns and contained on its website (www.drinkwise.org.au) has been gathered from authoritative studies and knowledge gained through consultation with experts in the fields of public health, neuroscience, epidemiology, and child and adolescent psychology.