



REDUCE RISK - INCREASE STUDENT KNOWLEDGE
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Fact Sheet 5

Australian Alcohol Guideline for Children and young people under 18

Not drinking alcohol is the safest option.

For children under 15

Parents and carers should be advised that children under 15 years of age are at the greatest risk of harm from drinking and that for this age group, not drinking is especially important

For Young people aged 15-18 years

The safest option is to delay the initiation of drinking for as long as possible

Adolescent brain development and alcohol

The brain is not fully developed until about 25 years of age. Excessive drinking can affect decision making, problem solving, memory, reasoning and concentration.

Permanent brain damage can result in greater risk taking, lack of judgment such as failure to think before acting, impaired visual and spatial skills, learning difficulties and poorer academic outcomes.

Mental health

Drinking at a young age increases the risk of mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, attention deficit disorder and increased risk of self harm including suicide, delinquent behavior and alcohol dependency in later life.

Australian Alcohol Guidelines to reduce health risks from drinking alcohol. National Health and Medical Research Council, 2009 can be found at

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/file/publications/synopses/ds10-alcohol.pdf>

Look for information about the RRISK Program and risk taking at our website

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