



REDUCE RISK - INCREASE STUDENT KNOWLEDGE  
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## Fact Sheet 1

### Young People and Risk Taking

Risk-taking in adolescence is not only normal, it is an essential part of learning and personal development. Every healthy adolescent takes risks as he or she grows towards independence. Most researchers agree that if there is no risk there is no growth. A common problem for some young people is their inability to evaluate the potential risks and consequences of everyday behaviour. Thrill seeking, speeding, the desire to impress one's friends, feelings of invincibility and the search for new experiences are all motivating forces that drive many teenagers. As a result they are over represented in every category of risk taking resulting in injury and trauma.

The RRISK Program aims to reduce risk-taking behaviour associated with alcohol and drug use, driving and partying amongst year 11 students in the North Coast of NSW. RRISK is relevant to the social life, developmental stage and concerns of adolescents. It extends the school based drug education and road safety curriculum by providing opportunities for senior high school students to develop knowledge, attitudes and skills to reduce risk taking and develop safer celebrating strategies.

This year over 4000 students from 50 high schools from Tweed Heads to Port Macquarie will attend one of 8 RRISK Seminars to be held in:

<b>Tweed Heads:</b>	Tweed Heads Civic Centre on 10 and 11 November
<b>Lismore:</b>	Southern Cross University on 15, 17 and 18 November
<b>Port Macquarie:</b>	Panthers Auditorium on 22 November
<b>Coffs Harbour:</b>	Southern Cross University on 24 and 25 November

### Research shows that RRISK is effective in reducing young driver crashes by 44%

The largest study ever undertaken into young driver behaviour was conducted by the George Institute of International Health and published in 2009. RRISK was identified as the first and only program to have resulted in a 44% reduction in road crashes for participants. An earlier comprehensive evaluation conducted between 2002-2005 found an increase in protective behaviour and a decrease in risk taking for those students who attended the seminars.

Look for information about the RRISK Program including all the evaluation reports at our website [www.rrisk.com.au](http://www.rrisk.com.au) and in this newsletter over the coming weeks.