
Alcohol and other drug education programs

Summary

- Alcohol and other drug education programs aim to delay or prevent people from starting to use alcohol and other drugs.
 - For people who are already using alcohol and other drugs, education programs aim to provide factual information about the harms of alcohol and other drugs and help participants to use them in less risky ways.
 - Alcohol and other drug education programs for school children aim to help them to make good decisions for themselves, while recognising the realities and challenges of young people's lives.
 - The Department of Education and Training has developed alcohol and other drug education programs for children in primary and secondary school.
 - Adult alcohol and other drug education programs promote responsible drinking behaviour and teach people about the risks of certain drugs.
 - Education programs can also be tailored to specific population groups, places or communities.
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Alcohol and other drug education programs aim to inform people about the risks of alcohol and other drug use and give them practical skills to make decisions that minimise harm.

Depending on its aim, a program may seek to delay or reduce the use of alcohol and other drugs, or dissuade someone from using at all.

Alcohol and other drug education programs for school-aged children

In school-aged children, alcohol and other drug education programs are usually focussed on developing resilience and good decision-making skills. Some strategies also target parents to role model responsible drinking behaviours, and guide parents on how to talk to their children about the dangers of alcohol and drugs.

The Victorian Department of Education and Training has developed age-appropriate programs (such as the **Get Ready program**) for children in primary and secondary school.

The Department of Health's **Positive Choices website** is an online portal that helps school communities access accurate, up-to-date drug education resources and prevention programs.

Alcohol and other drug education programs for adults

Once people are of legal drinking age, alcohol education programs focus on:

- responsible drinking behaviour
- promoting healthier cultural approaches to alcohol.

They may also encourage people to reduce the amount of alcohol they consume on a regular basis to reduce the chance of alcohol dependence and longer-term health problems.

For information and resources to help you make decisions about your drinking, visit the **VicHealth website**.

When it comes to illicit drugs or the non-medical use of pharmaceutical medications, education programs aim to increase people's awareness of the risks associated with specific drugs. This can include short-term risks such as overdose or longer-term issues associated with dependence. It may also include risks associated with particular ways of using drugs, such as injecting.

Some alcohol and other drug education programs are targeted at specific population groups or settings where risky drinking can occur, such as:

- **Good Sports** (Alcohol and Drug Foundation) which aims to improve the way alcohol is managed at sporting
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clubs

- **DanceWize** (Harm Reduction Victoria), which aims to reduce drug- and alcohol-related harm at Victorian dance parties, festivals and nightclubs through peer education
- **RedFrogs Australia** which aims to educate and support young people in alcohol-fuelled environments, such as school-leavers during schoolies week
- **Drug Overdose Prevention Education (DOPE)** (Harm Reduction Victoria) which delivers peer-based overdose education to users of illicit drugs
- **Community Overdose Prevention and Education (COPE)** (Penington Institute), which provides overdose first aid training. COPE providers also arrange access to naloxone, a medicine that reverses the effects of opioids, for people who may be at risk of or witness an opioid overdose
- **Responsible Service of Alcohol** provides training for licensees and staff selling or serving alcohol, in order to ensure licensed premises provide a safe and pleasant environment.

Where to get help

- Your GP (doctor)
- **DirectLine** Tel. **1800 888 236** (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

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Alcohol and Drug Foundation

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