Mission Statement

To promote and maximise the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities affected by Alcohol and Other Drug related harm.

To improve health, social and economic outcomes by reducing the harmful effects of licit and illicit drug use in the ACT and region.

Our Programs

- Resources
- Support Groups
- Primary Health Care
- Counselling Services
- Arcadia House Detox
- Althea Wellness Centre
- Treatment Support Service
- Needle and Syringe Program
- Outreach and Promotional Activities
- Community Education and Withdrawal Services

Standard Drink Guide

Note. Labels on alcoholic drink containers state the number of Standard Drinks in the container. Check the label to find out how many Standard Drinks are in the bottle or can.
Contacts and Acknowledgements

DIRECTIONS ACT wishes to acknowledge the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing for funding the Party Safe Project under the National Binge Drinking Strategy.

Reach Out!
A selection of content has been adapted with permission from Reachout: www.reachout.com.au

Reach Out! is a web based service that provides info, support and interactive features to improve young people’s mental health and wellbeing. There is an online forum open Monday & Thursday 6-10pm

Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mission Statement and Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Contents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – 6</td>
<td>Binge Drinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Party Safe Bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Date Rape Drugs and Drink Spiking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Water and why it is important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Bill of Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Peer Pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>How to say NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Safe Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Stimulants and Cannabis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Overdose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>First Aid for Overdose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>First Aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Body Piercing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Tattoos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Parent info — what’s important?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>What parents need to know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Contacts and acknowledgements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Standard Drinks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DIRECTIONS ACT has received Australian Government funding under the National Binge Drinking Strategy.”
Most young people don’t use drugs but many drink alcohol and sometimes take risks which may affect your health and well-being. This booklet provides basic information and ideas about making wiser choices for party goers who use alcohol and other drugs.

Every weekend across Australia, thousands of people attend nightclubs, dance parties and other entertainment venues. For some, this means taking drugs or binge drinking. Recently you may have seen the advertising on TV about binge drinking. The Party Safe Bus and this booklet are produced by funds from the same funding.

What are the risks of binge drinking?
- Drink spiking
- Unwanted sex (date rape), STIs or unintended pregnancy
- Violence, assault and robbery
- Drink driving
- Safety and health issues
- and most commonly, doing something that you may regret later.

Taking risks can be fun and give you an adrenaline rush but sometimes those risks may affect your well-being and cause you harm. It is worth considering alternative methods of getting a buzz without using drugs or alcohol to get your thrills.

DIRECTIONS ACT and St John Ambulance ACT is offering a Senior First Aid Certificate to a limited number of young people aged 15 to 25 to be conducted on weekends at a subsidised cost of $25.00. It will include a party safe component and is a great qualification to have when seeking a job.

Please contact DIRECTIONS ACT on 6122 8000 if you would like further information. Or visit the Party Safe Bus at a venue near you!

Enjoy partying and above all do it safely!
Talking about Drinking.....what do parents need to know

Almost every teenager will experiment with alcohol. Most will not develop a problem but some will drink to excess and put themselves in danger.

The Australian drug foundation (ADF) states that support and open dialogue reduces the likelihood of problems occurring and that “a parent’s most valuable asset is good, open communication within their family”.

Discussions about alcohol ideally begin before children reach the age of 10-11 years. Starting such discussions early encourages open conversations and gives parents practice in discussing issues before they become sensitive topics.

Teenagers are less likely than younger children to ask for information, so it is important for parents to take responsibility for this. Young people need to know what their parents expect and think about drinking.

Teenagers will also expect parents to be well informed and honest, especially about their own experiences, as this will assist them in forming their attitudes and decisions around alcohol use, including support if they choose not to drink.

listening and talking to teenagers’ about their opinions, helps them to feel comfortable about talking with you and shows that you value their opinions.

By being parents who are interested and know what’s going on in your children’s lives, will help them to feel valued and an important part of the family.

Teenagers will also expect parents to be well informed and honest, especially about their own experiences, as this will assist them in forming their attitudes and decisions around alcohol use, including support if they choose not to drink.

listening and talking to teenagers’ about their opinions, helps them to feel comfortable about talking with you and shows that you value their opinions.

By being parents who are interested and know what’s going on in your children’s lives, will help them to feel valued and an important part of the family.

Binge Drinking

Drinking Safely — before you start.....

- Have enough rest, food in your stomach and water before you start
- Plan how you will get home, a designated driver or someone to pick you up and the money for a taxi just in case
- Know the limits for yourself, and try to stick to them, pace yourself. Remember it’s only one drink an hour for women and 2 in the first hour and one each hour for males
- Start with a non-alcoholic drink and space your drinks with water in between each alcoholic drink and a big glass of water before bed.
- Some people also gain benefit from drinking a sweetened drink like cordial to replace blood sugar levels.
- Try alternatives, such as low alcohol or non-alcoholic wines, ginger beer
- Remember that ‘alcopops’ (sweet flavoured pre-mixed drinks) often mask the taste of alcohol, but they do not mask the effects
- Avoid mixing drinks and doing shots
- Have one drink at a time so you can keep track of your drinks – avoid ‘topping up’
- Avoid rounds or ‘shouts’, this can pressure you into drinking more than you want
- Avoid eating salty snacks that make you thirsty
- Avoid just sitting and drinking, go to venues where something is happening such as pool, music etc.

Remember: Mixing alcoholic drinks with other drugs can be dangerous
Binge Drinking

Is binge drinking harmful?

Binge drinking occurs when a person drinks heavily over a short period of time resulting in immediate and severe intoxication. Binge drinking is sometimes defined as ‘drinking to get drunk’.

Alcohol is a depressant drug that lowers people's inhibitions and affects concentration and coordination. It slows down the body’s reaction time to unexpected or dangerous situations.

Alcohol is used to celebrate, commiserate, relax and/or socialize and is considered an intrinsic part of socialising in Australian culture. Many people admit that there is pressure and an expectation to drink and that choosing not to drink can be confronting to those that do and make you seem like a dag or a whimp.

However the dangers and damaging effects of alcohol need to be more widely discussed in an attempt to minimize the significant harms that can result from drinking too much. Alcohol is the third most avoidable cause of death and disability in Australia (WHO).

Binge drinking can lead people to put themselves in dangerous situations and to take risks with their health and wellbeing. Common short term effects of binge drinking episodes are hangovers, headaches, nausea, shakiness, vomiting and memory loss.

The risks also include harms such as falls, assaults, car accidents, drowning, unwanted and unsafe sex and assault. A common effect is shame and embarrassment from behaviours as a result of being drunk.

Binge drinking is dangerous for your health and safety

For more info see the Party Safe Bus

Your Guide to Partying Safely

Tattoos—inking

Tattoos are a form of body modification designed to be permanent. The only way to remove a tattoo is via laser surgery. Most tattoo parlours will not tattoo you until you turn 18 and will not tattoo anyone under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

There are risks that you need to consider before you get a tattoo, so if you decide to get a tattoo, it is very important to find an accredited tattoo parlour.

Some of the risks include:

- Serious infectious diseases such as Hepatitis B, C, or HIV (which are passed on via infected blood or other body fluids), or tetanus.
- Skin infections
- Dermatitis
- Flare ups of existing eczema
- Allergic reactions
- Distress due to regret after the procedure – this has been identified as one of the main problems after getting a tattoo.

How you can decrease your risks:

Your risks are significantly reduced if you choose an accredited tattoo parlour.

- Make sure the tattoo parlour uses sterilized equipment for each new client.
- Make sure the tattoo parlour is clean, safe and professional and that your tattooist has credentials, a license and references.
- Make sure that your tattooist gives you complete aftercare procedures so that you know how to look after your tattoo properly.

Think before you ink!
Body Piercing

Piercing is a temporary form of body modification in the sense that when you want to remove it, it is as simple as taking the piercing out and letting the hole heal up. It takes about 15 minutes to get a piercing.

What are some of the risks to consider before getting a piercing?

- The body may reject the piercing and if this happens you may need antibiotics and removal of your piercing
- There is a risk of Hepatitis B or C or HIV (which are passed via blood or other body fluids)
- You can get an allergic reaction to the metal
- You could be permanently scarred
- Genital piercing increases the risk of sexually transmitted diseases because the jewelry can cause the condom to break and the piercing can be a point for infection to enter the body
- Mouth jewelry may damage teeth, especially when tongue jewelry taps the teeth.

How to decrease your risks:

- Choose a piercer you feel comfortable with
- There are no regulations for the training of body piercers, so do a lot of research before you get your piercing, ask your friends where they got theirs done and how they found the experience.
- Do not get your piercing done by a friend as without the proper training and equipment this can be dangerous. It is worth the wait to find a reputable piercer.
- Make sure your piercer uses sterile equipment for each new client.
- Make sure your piercer has adequate knowledge about the human anatomy and the location of the nerves under the skin that must be avoided during the piercing.
- Make sure the shop and the area where the piercing takes place is clean, and that your piercer is sober, knowledgeable, clean and helpful.

It is important to take the advice of your piercer about correct products for different parts of the body, only touch piercing with clean hands and if you develop pain or an infection seek the advice of a health professional.

Party Safe Bus

From early 2009, a purple ‘Party Safe Bus’ will be situated at a number of ‘hot spots’ around Canberra on Friday and Saturday nights and also at music festivals, Uni and College events. Experienced workers from DIRECTIONS ACT will provide information, referrals, advice and hand out free water, information, safe partying tips and condoms from the bus.

If you or a friend want information about anything to do with binge drinking or drugs, or would like access to free, confidential counselling and resources, just talk to the youth worker at the Party Bus. We provide referrals and support for any issues related to Alcohol or other Drugs, including detox and free medical services.

For more information about the Party Safe Bus locations or any other services contact DIRECTIONS ACT Ph: 6122 8000, between 9 – 5 Monday to Friday.
Or visit our website: www.directionsact.com

Call in to 1 Bradley Street, Woden (next to the Bus interchange)
We have a youth support worker available for you to see if you would like.

If you see any of the following, seek help immediately.

- The person is unconscious and can’t be awakened by pinching, prodding or shouting.
- The skin is cold, clammy, pale and bluish in colour, indicating that the person is not getting enough oxygen.
- The person is breathing very slowly; if there is more than 10 seconds between each breath – this is an emergency.
- The person is vomiting without waking up.
- Stay with the person — the ambulance officers will need information to help them

If person needs medical assistance, place them on their side in the recovery position and call and ambulance, mobile 112 or 000 landline.

Stay with the person, don’t leave.
Date Rape Drugs and Drink Spiking

Date Rape Drugs
The most common substance used for date rape is alcohol. Spirits can easily be added to spike the intended victims alcoholic drink without them knowing. Ketamine (Special K), GHB (Fantasy) and Rohypnol are also common date rape drugs as they have heavy tranquiliser effects.

Drink Spiking
Drink Spiking is not funny, it is illegal and has serious criminal and health consequences. The most common reasons are:
- Mates doing it to mates for a laugh
- Robbery or theft
- Sexual assault, both females & males

Reducing the risks
- Watch your drink when at a pub, club or party (even a friend’s house as you may not know everyone there)
- Avoid sharing drinks with anyone, even people you know well as many people have their drinks spiked by someone they know
- Buy your own drinks and do not drink anything that you have not seen opened or poured
- If you feel dizzy or ill stick with your friends or group, ask someone you trust to take you to a safe place
- If one of your friends is affected: Keep an eye on your friends and call an ambulance immediately if they collapse or are unconscious — Do not leave them alone, stay with them to assist the ambulance officers
- Report the incident to police

If your drink has been spiked by a sedative substance, the effect can be very rapid, you can pass out within 20 minutes. If you suspect that your drink may have been spiked don’t go anywhere on your own or with someone you have just recently met as they may have been responsible for spiking your drink. Seek medical assistance immediately.

Numbers for the Ambulance — mobile 112 or landline 000

First Aid

Be ready for an unexpected move by the casualty and avoid putting yourself and others at risk.

Look around carefully for a syringe, needle or other sharp object that might penetrate the skin and avoid it as you give first aid, or place it somewhere out of the way.

If you do injure yourself with a needle:
- Encourage the wound to bleed
- Wash with warm soapy water
- Apply an antiseptic and dressing
- Seek medical advice within 24 hours

Conscious casualty
- If the casualty is conscious, reassure in a quiet and calm manner. Ask the casualty what drug has been taken to assist medical staff when treatment arrives.
- Maintain casualty’s body heat with a coat or cover if they are getting cold.
- Some drugs create serious overheating, remove unnecessary clothing to assist with cooling.
- Keep talking to the Casualty to monitor level of consciousness.

Semi Conscious casualty
- Assess the casualty – If person is not fully alert, but breathing, turn the person onto their side into the recovery position.
- Call 000 or mobile 112 for an ambulance.

Unconscious casualty
- If the person is unconscious, frequently check that the airway is clear and they are breathing
- Administer first aid as required – remember DRABC
- Call the Ambulance 000 or mobile 112

Remember: Stay with the person — the ambulance officers will need information from you to help them.
First Aid for Overdose

Symptoms of overdose are;
- Drowsiness, loss of coordination and collapse
- Rapid and weak pulse
- Confusion and hallucinations
- Altered breathing pattern or breathing difficulty
- Mood changes including excitability, aggression or depression
- Pale, cold and clammy skin
- Nausea or vomiting
- Seizures
- Abdominal pain

If someone overdoses and is unconscious remember DRABC

D – Check for danger. Never put yourself in any danger
R – Check for a response (pinch earlobe, shout name)
If no response call an ambulance 000 or mobile 112
A – Make sure nothing is blocking the person’s airway
B – Check for breathing. If not breathing start CPR
   If breathing, put in recovery position
C – Check for a pulse (circulation)

Be aware of danger:
If possible avoid contact with any of the casualty’s body fluids including blood, saliva, vomit or urine. Wear gloves if available. If there is any contact with body fluids, wash contaminated surfaces thoroughly with soap and water. Contact your doctor or nearest emergency department for further advice about protection from any infectious diseases.

Your Guide to Partying Safely

Why is Water important for Partying Safely?

It is recommended to regularly sip water when drinking alcohol or partying. If dancing, then drink around 500ml an hour and if inactive then 250ml an hour.

Warning signs of overheating and dehydrating:
- Starting to feel very hot, unwell and confused
- Not being able to talk properly
- Headache
- Vomiting
- Not being able to urinate or noticing that urine is thick and dark
- Not sweating even when dancing
- Heart rate or pulse not slowing down even when resting
- Fainting, collapsing or convulsing (having fits)

If these symptoms start then:
- Stop dancing
- Tell a friend and ask them to stay until you are feeling better
- Ask your friend to get some cold water and sip it slowly
- Go to a bathroom and splash cold water
- Go rest in the chill out room or a quiet, cool area
- Fan your body or get your friend to do it.

If symptoms persist and your body can’t cool down, go to the First Aid area of a venue or get to a hospital immediately. If you have called an ambulance for a friend, stay with them, the ambulance officers need your help to know what has happened.

Drink lots of water if you are partying

For more info see the Party Safe Bus
Your Bill of Rights

You have the right to:
- Express your opinion
- Say ‘no’
- Make mistakes
- Change your mind
- Disagree with others
- Ask for what you want
- Be treated with respect
- Not take responsibilities for other people’s problems
- Remember other people have these rights too

Your Choice—it’s Your Future

If you are taking a risk or else are already taking risks, changing your behaviour can be tough, particularly if you have been doing it for a while, feel pressure to do it or it means changing your lifestyle, or moving away from people you’ve always hung around with.

The following steps may help you decide whether you want to continue or change your behaviour;

Identify: Sometimes you may not be aware that a behaviour is unhelpful or unhealthy. Identify the risks and benefits of your behaviour and how it affects others and yourself (e.g. health, study, work, family etc).

Contemplation: Think about the pros and cons of changing your behaviour. This might include thinking about how you can reduce the risks associated with the behaviour.

Decision: If you do decide a change in behaviour is needed, start by making a plan to change. This might include action plans and setting small, gradual goals. Sometimes it is helpful to create a visual plan. On a piece of cardboard, you could paste pictures cut from magazines, draw or write what you would like your future to look like, for example: a job, holiday, house, hobby anything that you want. Place it where you can see it everyday, like your mirror.

Overdose

When someone overdoses it may be because the quantity or the quality of the active drug was more than their body could cope with or that they were taking more than one drug—poly drug use. It may be because the drug was particularly pure, or they may have underestimated the effect and ingested or injected more than their body was able to cope with.

In many cases the person who has overdosed will fall to the ground and stop breathing. If the person administering first aid is able to breathe for them – giving mouth to mouth resuscitation — this will give the person the best chance to survive.

When the ambulance is called to an overdose situation, it is important to remember that the ambulance officers are not obliged to inform the police, however if there is a perceived danger to the ambulance officers, the police may be called.

It helps to know the drug that was taken so the person can get the best possible care

Stay with the person until help arrives.

- Most overdoses occur when mixing drugs, so mixing increases the chance of the person to become unconscious and stop breathing.
- 2 in 3 overdoses both fatal/non fatal occur in the home.
- In high doses, Ecstasy can cause seizures and vomiting. The symptoms to an Ecstasy overdose include a fast rise in body temperature and blood pressure, dizziness, cramps, heart palpitations and vomiting.
- Deaths that have occurred on Ecstasy are usually the result of excessive use, high alcohol consumption, or mixed with something like GHB (fantasy), or it is actually PMA and not Ecstasy.

Knowing what to do could save a friend’s life!
Stimulants and Cannabis

Most people don't use drugs — but if you do, you need to make sure you are as safe as possible

**Stimulants**

These include MDMA (Ecstasy), Amphetamines (Speed, and Cocaine) and Crystal Methamphetamine (ICE).

Amphetamines belong to a group of drugs called Psycho-Stimulants. They directly affect the central nervous system by speeding up the activity of certain chemicals in the brain, dopamine and serotonin "The Pleasure Chemicals".

People may use stimulant drugs to enable them to feel more in touch with the music, giving them the energy and confidence to dance all night and stay awake. Other short term effects can include feelings of well-being, lack of inhibition, increased closeness with others and sexual arousal.

Unpleasant and / or short term effects include nausea, vomiting, sweating, jaw clenching, teeth grinding, anxiety, loss of appetite, hallucinations, confusion, seizure, coma and in extreme cases, death. It is also common to experience depression, anxiety and paranoia during the 'come down' from stimulants due to serotonin depletion as the brain struggles to adjust.

The risks of harm are greatly increased when greater amounts of drugs are taken or when drugs are mixed, especially with alcohol. Mixing drugs increases the chances of problems occurring. Substance use can trigger or make mental health and emotional problems including stress, anxiety and depression worse.

**Cannabis (Marijuana):**

Cannabis is the most widely used illicit drug in Australia.

The chemicals in marijuana will change a person's mood, feelings and how they would generally respond to things. The most common negative effects include; anxiety and panic, paranoia, visual or auditory hallucinations and impaired coordination. Smoking Cannabis 3 or more times a week before the age of 15 is associated with up to 6 times the risk of schizophrenia and can substantially increase the risk of mental health problems.

In most cases people smoke it through a water pipe (bong), rolled in a joint or cook it in food (cookies/cake). Smoking through a bong can cause small fragments of water to get into the lungs, this can cause a persistent cough and chronic bronchitis.

> Remember….No drug is safe

**Your Choice—It’s Your Future (cont)**

**Action:** As you start carrying out your action plan, make sure you reward yourself for reaching each goal to provide positive reinforcement. Identifying barriers to change, coping skills and social supports are also important.

**Maintenance:** Develop strategies for sustaining the changes. This may be through your social supports and by reminding yourself why you changed your behaviour.

**Relapse:** You might find yourself reverting back to unhelpful behaviour. It’s important not to blame yourself or feel guilty. Changing behaviour can be hard and relapse is not uncommon. If you do relapse, go back to the Decision and Action steps.

**Peer Pressure**

Peer pressure may be a positive influence and help challenge or motivate us to do our best. Peer pressure may also result in you doing stuff that may not fit with your sense of what is right and wrong.

It is common to want to be a part of the group and feel like we belong in the community. You may experience peer pressure if you live up to an individual’s or group’s expectations, or follow a particular fashion or trend.

Peer pressure may not always be obvious to you. It may be that when you are with a certain group of people you do things that you would not do with other friends.

Sometimes pressure comes from you. Feeling different from the group may be hard. To avoid this, sometimes we do things to make sure we feel like the rest of the group. Moving away from the group may be scary. Often it means having to make new friends and fit into a new environment. When we are feeling unsure about ourselves we may be more likely to feel the effects of peer pressure.

**Partying Safely is Your Choice**
Peer Pressure—What to do about it?

Part of being an individual involves making decisions based on what is best for you. It can mean we take ownership and responsibility for what we do and how we think. Being an individual can still mean that you are a valued part of a group. It may be hard to resist peer pressure and stay an individual.

What can you do about it?

Hanging out with people who like doing similar stuff may help avoid a situation where you feel pressure to do things you don’t want to do and hanging out with the ‘cool’ crowd may not be as much fun as it looks.

Try not to judge others, respecting other people’s choices may help them to respect yours.

How to say NO!

Your experiences are what shape you and your actions can have either negative or positive consequences on your life and that of others. The keys to having good relationships are trust, good communication, understanding and honesty.

You always have the right to say ‘no’ and you always have the right to change your mind at any time regardless of your past experiences with other people or the person you are with. Below are some things you can say or do if you want to stop:

- Say ‘No’
- Say ‘I want to stop’
- Say ‘I need to go to the toilet’ or go somewhere to get some space away from the person
- In a situation where the other person isn’t listening to you and you feel unsafe, you could always pretend you are going to vomit or feel sick (it’s amazing how quickly someone moves away from you if they think you are sick)

Safe Sex

Sex should be a positive experience not something to feel bad or guilty about.

Going out with someone or being in a relationship can make you feel many different things – happiness, nervousness, excitement, love.

Sometimes it can be confusing, especially when it comes to intimacy and sex. Intimacy is when two people become physically, sexually and/or emotionally close.

Safer sex means protecting your emotional and physical health. Info and free condoms & lube are available from the Party Safe Bus.

Safer sex means:

- Feeling good about yourself and your relationship.
- Preventing sexually transmitted infections (STIs) like genital herpes, genital warts, Chlamydia, gonorrhea, hepatitis B, syphilis, and HIV (the virus that leads to AIDS).
- Avoiding unintended pregnancy
- The age of consent to have sex, for men and women, in the ACT, is 16 years.

Reduce your risks:

- Drinking alcohol or using other drugs may affect your ability to make safe decisions.
- Be sure you have access to safe and effective methods of preventing STIs and unintended pregnancy.
- Forcing someone to have sex is a crime called rape or sexual assault. Remember NO MEANS NO.
- Use a condom EVERYTIME you have sex.

* Emergency contraception is available to women who are at risk of unintended pregnancy after sexual intercourse. You can get a morning after pill at a chemist within 72 hours of intercourse or Contact SHFPACT on 6247 3077 for any advice or assistance about any issue affecting your sexual well-being.