

## Further information

If you or someone you know needs support and treatment to reduce your alcohol intake, you should contact:

- Your doctor
- Your local community health service
- An alcohol or other drug helpline in your State / Territory:
  - ACT (02) 6205 4545
  - NSW (02) 9361 8000 (Sydney)  
1800 422 599 (NSW country)
  - NT (08) 8922 8399 (Darwin)  
(08) 8951 7580 (Central Australia)  
1800 131 350 (Territory wide)
  - QLD 1800 177 833
  - SA 1300 131 340
  - TAS 1800 811 994
  - VIC 1800 888 236
  - WA (08) 9442 5000 (Perth)  
1800 198 024 (WA country)

The advice in this brochure does not replace advice from your health care provider.

For more information about the new Australian Guidelines to Reduce Health Risks from Drinking Alcohol go to [www.alcohol.gov.au](http://www.alcohol.gov.au)



Australian Government  
Department of Health and Ageing

# Alcohol and your kids

## A guide for parents and carers



New guidelines for  
**alcohol consumption**  
for young people

## Parents can't keep an eye on their teenagers all of the time, yet can encourage responsible use of alcohol.

There are many good reasons to encourage your teenager not to drink alcohol before turning 18. Early drinking is related to increased alcohol consumption in adolescence and young adulthood. These drinking patterns are also related to the possibility of **damage to the developing brain** and development of **alcohol-related harms** in adulthood.

### What do the guidelines recommend?

- › Children under 15 years of age are at the **greatest risk of harm from drinking**.
- › **Not drinking** in this age group – (under 15 years) – is especially important.
- › For young people aged 15 to 17 years, **the safest option is to delay drinking** for as long as possible.



The health risks that accumulate over a lifetime from alcohol increase progressively – this means that the more young people drink, the greater the risk.

As a parent, you can positively influence your teenager's drinking habits, even if they've already started drinking. Here are some useful tips:

- › Set a good example in your own consumption of alcohol.
- › Talk to your teenager about alcohol laws and the potential consequences for breaking them.
- › Reward good behaviour if they show a responsible attitude towards alcohol.
- › Talk to your teenager about how to deal with peer pressure about alcohol or binge drinking.

New national guidelines for alcohol consumption have been developed by the National Health and Medical Research Council to help you and your children to reduce the risk of harm from alcohol.

The guidelines are based on the most current and best available scientific research and evidence.

#### **The risks of accidents, injuries, violence and self-harm are high among drinkers aged under 18.**

Young people who drink are more prone to risky and antisocial behaviour than older drinkers.