



# ANCD

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL ON DRUGS

# AOD Policies and Programs

## Information Sheet for Schools

Alcohol and other drugs (AOD) related risk and harm share common causal pathways with other health and social issues such as bullying, youth suicide, social dislocation, mental health and sexual health problems. Prevention and early intervention along these pathways can make a real difference for young people, and schools provide students with unique opportunities for learning and support.

This 'Information Sheet' is provided to support schools to embed AOD education within a comprehensive approach that engages students, teachers, parents and their community.

It outlines key considerations and identifies evidence based models to aid development and implementation of effective school based AOD education.

## Be informed

...of key policy frameworks and the evidence about what constitutes best practice in developing approaches to school drug and alcohol policies and programs.

[Principles for school drug education](#)

[ANCD research paper - Drug testing in schools: Evidence, impacts and alternatives](#)

[Australia's National Drug Strategy](#)

## Lead by example

...such as fundraising without using alcohol products.

[ANCD position paper on School fundraising and alcohol](#)

## Engage with students

...in implementing credible and meaningful classroom based activities/approaches that are student-centred and evidence-based. Some examples of these programs include:

- The [School Health and Alcohol Harm Reduction Project](#) developed by the National Drug Research Institute that has a strong evidence base and has been embraced by schools across Australia and overseas. It is a classroom based program that has been found to reduce alcohol related harms and risky consumption.
- The Victorian [Get Ready](#) drug and alcohol program for Years 7-9, was awarded the Excellence in Prevention and Community Education Award, in recognition of the gains it demonstrated in reducing consumption and harms associated with tobacco and alcohol use. Get Ready is a classroom based program developed to assist students to make healthy and safe choices, identify risky situations, and develop strategies to prepare them for challenging situations.

- The [Climate Schools](#) program was developed by researchers and practitioners from the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre and the National Health and Medical Research Council's Centre for Research Excellence in Mental Health and Substance Use at the University of New South Wales. It provides health education courses to empower students to gain knowledge about their health and wellbeing, and to assist them in making good choices. Students learn about ways to avoid harm and to optimise their physical and mental health.

## Professional development

...should supplement and up-skill educators and school staff to deliver engaging, appropriate and meaningful learning activities. The Australian Drug Foundation's [Educational Essentials Pack](#) is one such resource that could be utilised.

The Get Ready and School Health and Alcohol Harm Reduction Project, referred to above, provide comprehensive teaching resources to support teachers' delivery of these programs in schools.

## Engage with parent community

...in recognition that in partnership with schools, families and parents can prevent, delay or reduce the risks of harmful AOD use in their young people. The Australian Drug Foundation's [The Other Talk](#) website is one resource that provides parents with all the information they may need to talk about drugs and alcohol with their children.

## Engage with local community

...to ensure an integrated and broad approach as this will enhance students' sense of connectedness, while supporting access to relevant services.

The Australian National Council on Drugs (ANCD) is the principal advisory body to Government on drug policy and plays a critical role in ensuring the voice of the community is heard in relation to drug related policies and strategies.

Published by the Australian National Council on Drugs March 2014

PO Box 205, Civic Square ACT 2608  
Telephone: 02 6166 9600  
Fax: 02 6162 2611  
Email: [ancd@ancd.org.au](mailto:ancd@ancd.org.au)  
Website: [www.ancd.org.au](http://www.ancd.org.au)