



Current research

Alcohol is second only to tobacco as the largest contributor to drug related health harms in Australia. The main causes of alcohol related deaths are cancer, cirrhosis of the liver and road trauma. Among people aged 15 to 34 years, alcohol is responsible for the majority of drug related deaths and hospitalisations. Alcohol misuse also contributes to numerous social issues including homelessness, domestic violence, child neglect and abuse, crime, including assault, and anti-social behaviour.

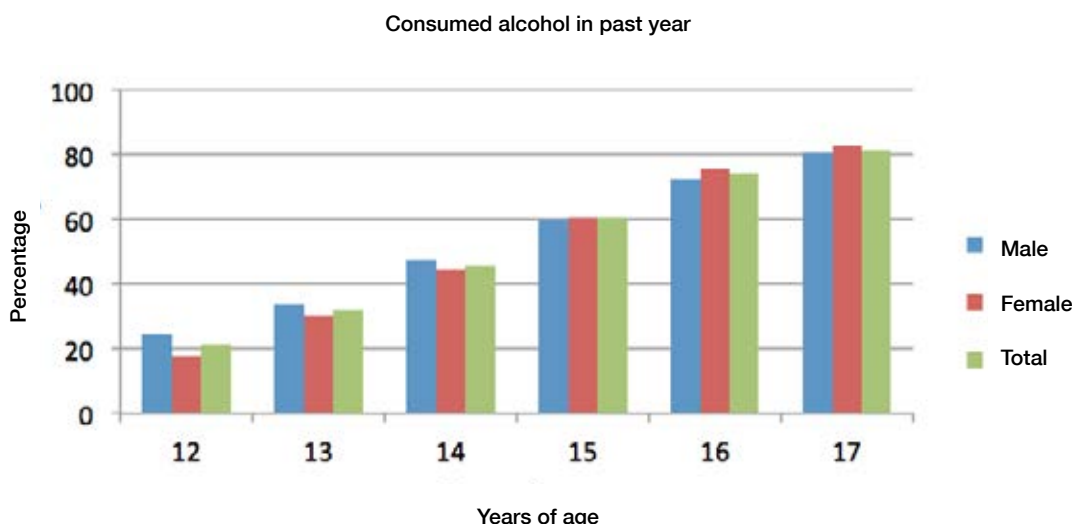
Alcohol consumption fell steadily in Australia from the mid 1970s through to the mid 1990s, a situation consistent with trends in developed countries worldwide (Higgins et al, 2000; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2003; World Health Organization, 2001). In 2001, Australia ranked twenty-third in the world in terms of per capita consumption of pure alcohol, with 4 litres consumed per person (World Drink Trends 2003, as cited in National Expert Advisory Committee on Alcohol, 2001b).

Australian secondary school students' use of alcohol in 2011 report How many young people drink alcohol?

Three out of every four Australian secondary school students aged between 12 and 17 years had tried alcohol at some time in their lives and 51% had consumed alcohol in the 12 months preceding the 2011 survey. The proportion of students drinking in the seven days before the survey was 17%. Involvement with alcohol increased with age, with the proportion of students drinking in the seven days before the survey increasing from 8% of 13-year-olds to 37% of 17-year-olds. In the week before the survey 19% of all 17-year-old students had consumed more than four drinks on on at least one of the seven days.

days before the survey was around 23%. Involvement with alcohol increased with age, with the proportion of students drinking in the seven days before the survey increasing from 11% of 13-year-olds to 41% of 17-year-olds. In the week before the survey just under 20% of all 17-year-old students had consumed alcohol at risky levels (7 or more drinks a day for males, 5 or more drinks a day for females).

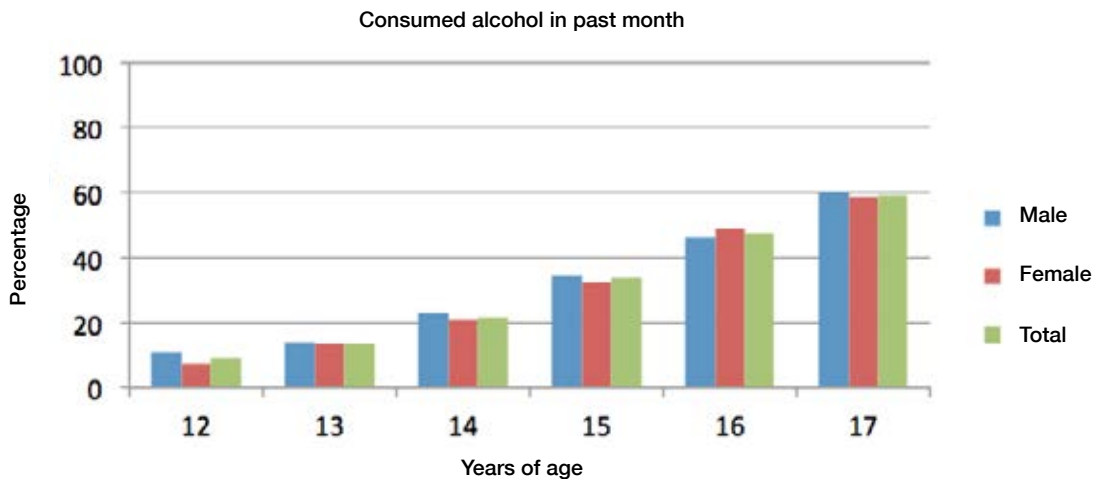
Figure 1. Percentage of students according to age and sex who had consumed alcohol in the past year.



Adapted from White, V. and Bariola, E. (2012) Australian secondary school students' use of tobacco, alcohol, and over-the-counter and illicit substances in 2011 report, The Cancer Council Victoria.

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Figure 2. Percentage of students according to age and sex who had consumed alcohol in the past month

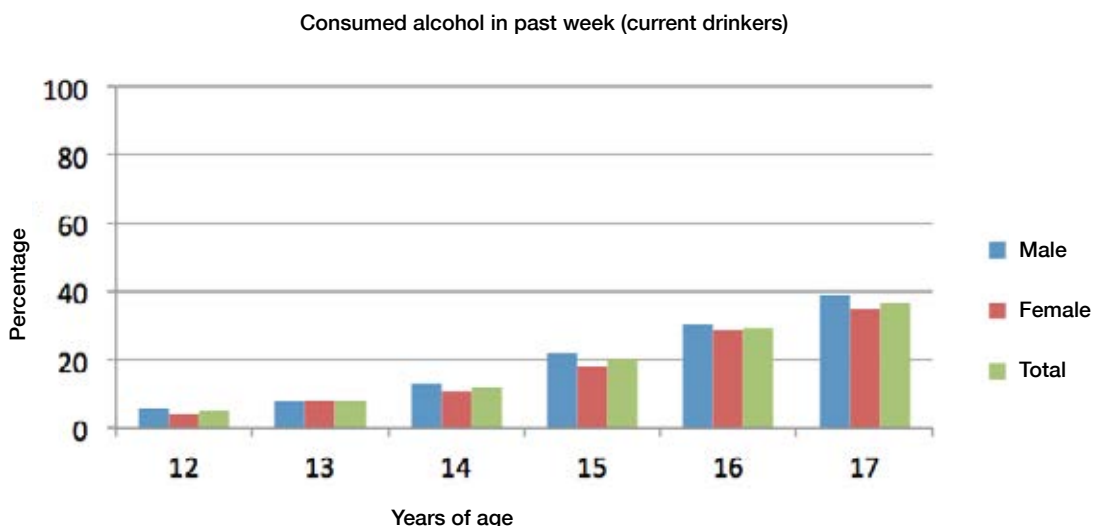


Adapted from White, V. and Bariola, E. (2012) Australian secondary school students' use of tobacco, alcohol, and over-the-counter and illicit substances in 2011 report, The Cancer Council Victoria.

The proportion of students aged between 12 and 17 years drinking in 2011 was lower than levels found in 2008 and 2005. The proportion of 12-to 15-year-olds drinking in the week before the survey decreased significantly between 2005 (22%) and 2011 (11%), and between 2008 (17%) and 2011. The proportion of 16- and 17-year-olds drinking in the week before the survey in 2011 (33%) was significantly lower than the

proportion found in 2005 (47%) and 2008 (38%). The proportion of 12- to 15- year olds drinking at risky levels the week before the survey was lower in 2011 than 2008 and 2005. However among all older students, the proportion of students drinking at risky levels in the previous week in 2011 was significantly lower than the proportion found in 2005 but not different from the proportion found in 2008.

Figure 3. Percentage of students according to age and sex who had consumed alcohol in the past week prior to the survey.



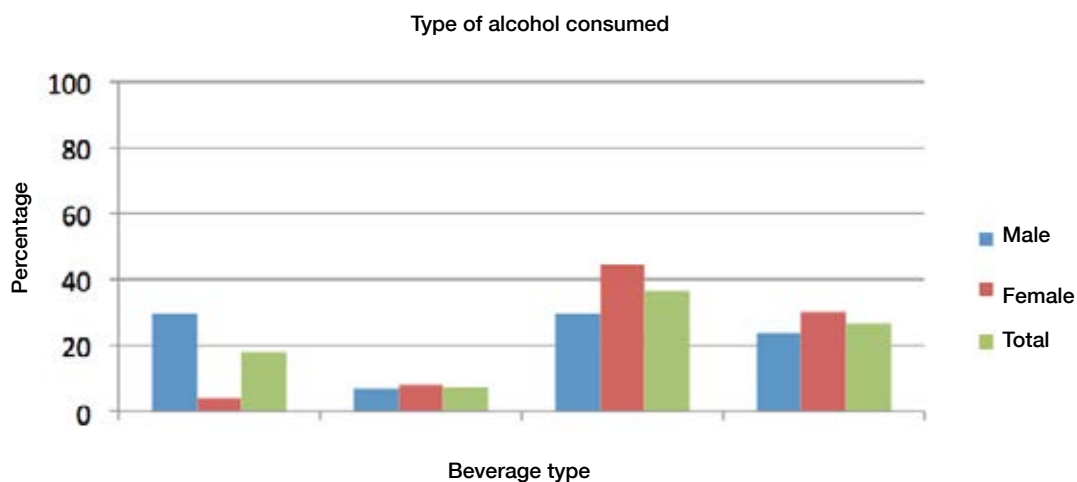
Adapted from White, V. and Bariola, E. (2012) Australian secondary school students' use of tobacco, alcohol, and over-the-counter and illicit substances in 2011 report, The Cancer Council Victoria.



What type of alcoholic drinks do young people consume?

Premixed spirits were the most preferred beverage among female current drinkers, while premixed spirits and beer were the most preferred beverages for male current drinkers.

Figure 4. Drink types most commonly consumed by those who drank alcohol in past week prior to the survey, Australia.



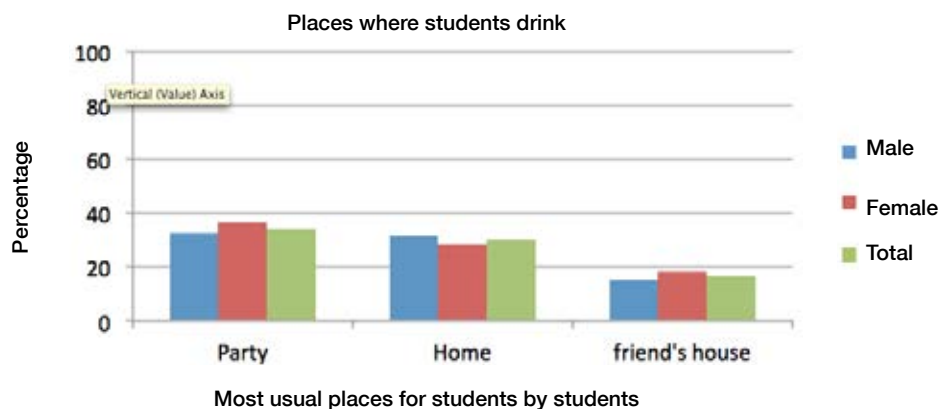
Adapted from White, V. and Bariola, E. (2012) Australian secondary school students' use of tobacco, alcohol, and over-the-counter and illicit substances in 2011 report, The Cancer Council Victoria..

Where do young people prefer to drink?

The most common places for drinking alcohol for 12 to 17 year old males and females who drank in the previous week were:

- at a party (34.4%)
- at home (30.1%)
- at a friend's house (16.7%)

Figure 5. Most usual places for drinking by students who had consumed alcohol in past week prior to the survey, Australia.



Adapted from White, V. and Bariola, E. (2012) Australian secondary school students' use of tobacco, alcohol, and over-the-counter and illicit substances in 2011 report, The Cancer Council Victoria.



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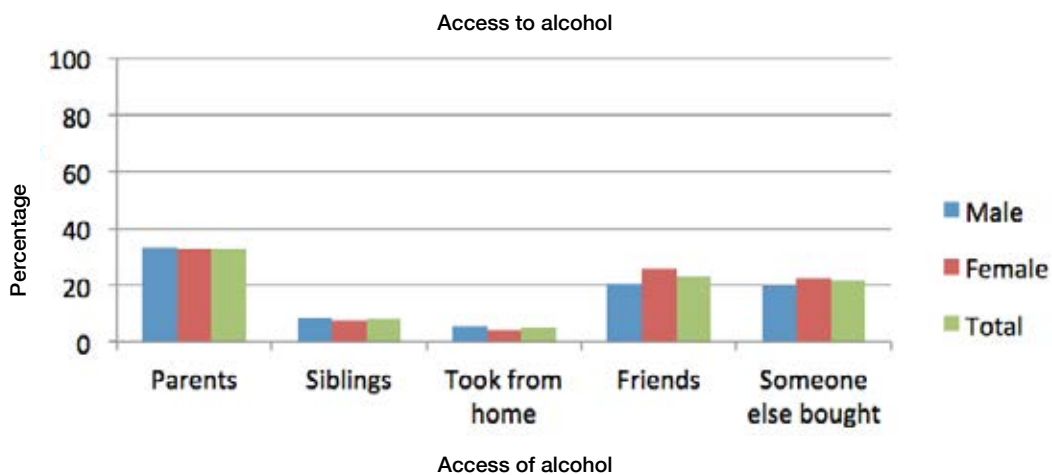
Where do young people get access to alcohol?

Students aged 12 to 17 indicated that the source of their last alcoholic drink was:

- parents (32.9%)
- siblings (8%)
- took from home (4.9%)
- friends (22.8%)
- someone else bought (21.3%).



Figure 6. Most common sources of alcohol for those who drank alcohol in the past week prior to the survey, Australia, 2011.



Adapted from White, V. and Bariola, E. (2012) Australian secondary school students' use of tobacco, alcohol, and over-the-counter and illicit substances in 2011 report, The Cancer Council Victoria.