

Why hold a parent information meeting?

Parents can be a strong positive influence on their children. Parents' attitudes and behaviours around drug use, including medications, cannabis, tobacco and alcohol, have an influence on the decisions students make about drugs. Parents and schools can work together to provide students with the knowledge and skills to help them adopt a healthy lifestyle free of the harms associated with drug misuse.

There is evidence that programs which involve parents and students together appear to be more effective than those that do not. Parent and community awareness and support for the school's approach to teaching drug education is an important component and should be encouraged.

Parent involvement can lead to wider community support for school based programs, including drug education. Partnerships between schools and parents can foster awareness of parent responsibilities as role models for their students.

Some parents may have concerns about providing information about alcohol to school students. Alcohol education at school ensures students:

- receive accurate information
- practise skills to help them keep themselves and others safe in the community where alcohol may be consumed.

Parents may be more inclined to discuss alcohol issues with their students if they have an understanding of the context of the lessons provided at school. Communication between parents and their students on drug related issues may complement the classroom lessons. A parent information meeting can enable parents to become more aware of the effects and potential harms of alcohol. Latest statistics on adolescent alcohol use can provide a basis for explaining the need for alcohol education in secondary school.

Discussions with parents/carers regarding the purpose of the lessons may help to identify particular sensitivities and assist in addressing them. In relation to issues concerning language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, teachers may seek assistance from community liaison officers or Aboriginal community liaison officers (ACLOs) when implementing this resource in the school.

As a parent, you can positively influence your teenager's drinking habits. 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.

There are many outcomes of the parent information meeting

At the end of the session parents will:

- have a better understanding of alcohol and the reasons for alcohol education
- be aware of what their students will learn in the alcohol education lessons
- have participated in samples of lessons from the program
- be aware of places where further information about alcohol can be located.