

## THE DRINKING MOTIVES OF AUSTRALIAN PARENTS

### Presenting Authors:

ASHLEA BARTRAM<sup>1</sup>, NATHAN J. HARRISON<sup>1</sup>, CAROLINE MILLER<sup>2,3</sup>, KIMBERLEY MARTIN<sup>2</sup>, ROBIN ROOM<sup>4,5</sup>, JACQUELINE BOWDEN<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction, Flinders Health and Medical Research Institute, Flinders University, Adelaide, South Australia, Australia, <sup>2</sup>School of Public Health, The University of Adelaide, Adelaide, South Australia, Australia, <sup>3</sup>Health Policy Centre, South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute, Adelaide, South Australia, Australia, <sup>4</sup>Centre for Alcohol Policy Research, School of Psychology & Public Health, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria, Australia, <sup>5</sup>Centre for Social Research on Alcohol and Drugs, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden

Presenter's email: [ashlea.bartram@flinders.edu.au](mailto:ashlea.bartram@flinders.edu.au)

**Introduction and Aims:** Parents' alcohol-related behaviours have been shown to influence children's future drinking motives and behaviours. However, little is known about parents' own drinking motives, specifically, how they compare to non-parents, and whether they relate to alcohol consumption in front of children.

**Design and Methods:** We collected data in 2017 from an online sample of Australian adults who consumed alcohol ( $n=803$ ); 67% were parents of a child <18 years. We examined associations between parental status and drinking motives using hierarchical linear regression. Among the parent subsample, we used logistic regression to explore drinking motives associated with regular (at least weekly) drinking, and drunkenness, in front of children.

**Results:** Parents reported significantly lower enhancement and coping motives for drinking than non-parents. Mothers reported significantly lower social motives than fathers but did not differ from non-parents. Conforming motives were not associated with parental status. Enhancement, social, and coping motives (but not conforming motives) were each significantly associated with increased odds of parents drinking in front of children; enhancement, coping, and conforming motives (but not social motives) were associated with increased odds of visible drunkenness.

**Discussion and Conclusions:** Overall, parents endorsed drinking motives to a similar or lesser extent than non-parents, consistent with findings that parents are less likely to exceed alcohol consumption guidelines. Nonetheless, those parents who more strongly endorsed some drinking motives were more likely to drink, or get drunk, in front of their children, suggesting that parental drinking motives may be a relevant target for parent-focused interventions.

**Implications for Practice or Policy:** The study findings may be harnessed to maximise the relevance of parent-focused interventions. It highlights individual drinking motives that might be targeted (e.g., by promoting alternative behaviours to address these motives) to help reduce drinking in front of children.

**Discussion Section:** The interactive discussion will draw on existing approaches that have been implemented at the state level (e.g., the *Alcohol. Think Again* mass media campaigns targeting adolescent alcohol consumption in Western Australia), and emerging evidence of jurisdictional differences in adolescent alcohol outcomes to identify priority steps forward. Key findings from across the four presentations, as well as other evidence-based recommendations for parents, will also be summarised in this section. Attendees will be invited to share experiences from their diverse settings (e.g., as parent consumers, AOD practitioners, researchers, and policymakers) to identify potential responses that build on study findings to address parental supply of alcohol and reduce children's exposure to alcohol. Feedback from attendees will be sought to identify unique local considerations for potential responses, and inform how these can be best implemented in different jurisdictions.