

# “It’s very much about you as a role model, and your responsibilities as a parent”

## Parents’ perspectives on adolescent alcohol provision messaging

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### Background

- Parental supply of alcohol to minors is often perceived as protective [1], despite evidence linking it with adverse alcohol-related harms [2].
- In Australia, parents are the most common reported source of alcohol for underage drinkers [3].
- Less is known about what messages deter parental alcohol supply to adolescents.

### Study Aims

To inform future message development, we aimed to generate in-depth insights on parent-targeted messaging approaches.

### Methods

#### Focus groups

Six online focus groups conducted with N=35 parents of adolescents from Queensland and Victoria in November 2022. Groups segmented by parent gender, current parental alcohol provision, and adolescent age.

#### Data generation

Using established message testing protocols, we investigated parents’ responses to four advertisements focused on parental alcohol provision.

#### Data analysis

Reflexive thematic analysis guided by the Theory of Planned Behaviour’s key constructs: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control.

### Advertisements Tested



**‘Don’t kid yourself’**  
Queensland Government,  
Brisbane - from 2008



**‘I see’**  
*Alcohol. Think Again,*  
WA Mental Health Commission - from 2014



**‘I need you to say no’**  
*Alcohol. Think Again,*  
WA Mental Health Commission - from 2018



**‘Youth and alcohol don’t mix’**  
Department for National Drug Control,  
Bermuda - from 2014

### Findings

#### Factual information:

- As many participants believed they already provided/intended to provide quantities of alcohol that they perceived to be low risk, they did not relate messaging depicting graphic consequences of youth binge drinking to their own provisioning behaviours.
- In contrast, messaging that provided compelling factual information (i.e., statistics specific to adolescent age) were more likely to influence attitudes toward provision.

#### Challenging norms:

- Participants more strongly endorsed messaging that challenged subjective norms, including beliefs that other parents supplied alcohol to their adolescents.

#### Emotive tone:

- Emotive messaging that highlighted parental responsibility to implement boundaries reminded parents of their influential role and was a compelling reason not to provide alcohol.

### Conclusions

- The identified themes provide insights into existing beliefs that may need to be overcome among parents.
- The identified themes suggest messaging that has the potential to impact provision behaviours and intentions.

### Implications

- Messaging is needed to highlight the harms of parental supply and challenge parents’ pre-existing belief that alcohol provision is normative.

**References:** [1] Jones SC. *Health Promot Int* 2016;31:562-571. [2] Sharmin S, et al. *Int J Environ Res Public Health* 2017;14:287. [3] AIHW. *National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2019*. Canberra: AIHW; 2020.