



Staying off the booze: Correlates and motives for alcohol cessation among a sample of young people

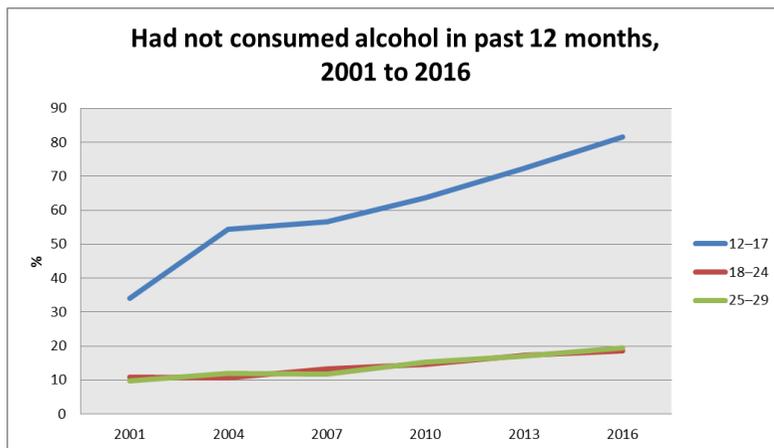
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Background

- Fewer young people are drinking...

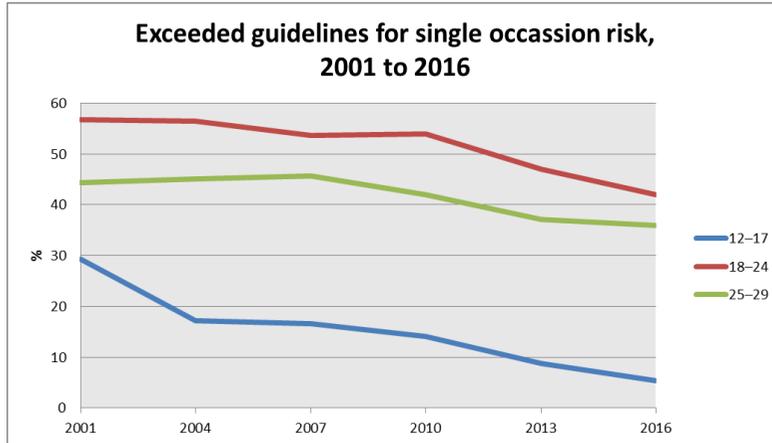


Source: NDSHS 2016



Background

- And for those that do drink, fewer drink at risky levels



Source: NDSHS 2016

Background – What is driving these recent trends?

- Parents?
- Government policies and health promotion interventions?
- Are young people more aware of the harms of alcohol?
- Social media and internet?

Pennay A, Livingston M, MacLean S: Young people are drinking less: It is time to find out why. *Drug and Alcohol Review*. 2015, 34(2):115-118.

Rationale

- Young people are drinking less but it is unclear what is driving these trends
- Understanding factors driving reduced alcohol consumption can inform policy and health promotion initiatives

Research questions

- 1) What are the motives for reducing or stopping alcohol consumption?
- 2) What factors are associated with reducing or stopping alcohol consumption?



Methods

- Sex, Drugs and Rock'n'Roll study
- Cross-sectional online survey in March, 2017
- Participants (N=1,271)
 - aged 15-29 years
 - living in Victoria, Australia
- Recruitment via social media, advertisements on Facebook targeted to young people



Methods

- Outcome: Stopped/reduced drinking in past 12 months
- Predictors:
 - Demographic characteristics eg, born overseas
 - Age of first drink
 - AUDIT-C
 - Experienced alcohol-related harms
 - Used illicit drugs
 - Follow health/fitness on social media
- Motives:
 - List of reasons for stopping/reducing drinking
 - Select all that apply

Results – Sample Characteristics

- TOTAL = 1,271 participants 
- Mean age: 22.1 years
- Country of birth 
 - Australia: 87%
- Male 27.6% 
- Female: 69.8%
- Non-binary: 1.1%
- Currently studying at high school: 9%
- Currently studying at uni: 63%
- Completed uni education: 17%
- Drank alcohol in last 12 months: 96% 
- Age first drink: 15.5 years
- 6+ drinks on a single occasion at least monthly: 25.8%

Results – Stopped or reduced drinking in past 12 months

- Of the participants who drank alcohol in the last 12 months (n=1,162)

	Tried to...	Actual change...
Stop drinking	5.4% (n=63)	3.8% (n=44)
Reduce amount I drink	27.2% (n=316)	32.1% (n=371)

- 82.1% (n=279) who tried to stop or reduce actually did

Results – Reasons for reduced drinking

1	I want to avoid hangovers/feeling terrible the next day	50.4%
2	Fitness reasons	46.2%
3	Weight loss	38.5%
4	The price of alcohol was too high	36.3%
5	I felt I was drinking too much	31.9%
6	I'm worried about its effects on my health	29.4%
7	I feel more in control when I don't drink	28.4%
8	Didn't enjoy it anymore	26.1%
9	I don't see the point in drinking	21.6%
10	I don't like the way that I behave when I drink	20.6%

*Among those who tried or did reduce/stop drinking (n=476)

- 10.9% (n=52) said they 'Prefer to use other drugs instead'

Results – Correlates of stopping or reducing drinking

	aOR*	95% CI	p-value
Country of birth other than Australia	1.51	1.05, 2.18	0.028
Religious group	0.45	0.25, 0.81	0.008
No post-highschool education	0.73	0.48, 1.10	0.130
Currently studying	0.90	0.68, 1.19	0.461
Age at first drink	0.90	0.85, 0.96	0.001
Hazardous drinker (AUDIT)	1.65	1.22, 2.22	0.001
Experienced harm	1.91	1.46, 2.5	<0.001
Ever used illicit drugs	1.53	1.19, 1.98	0.001
Health/fitness on social media	1.23	0.96, 1.58	0.106

*adjusted for age and gender



Results – Correlates of stopping or reducing drinking

- **Age**
aOR 1.06 (95% CI 1.02, 1.10; p=0.005)
- **Country of birth other than Australia**
aOR 1.64 (95%CI 1.12, 2.40; p=0.011)
- **Religious group**
aOR 0.49 (95% CI 0.26, 0.92; p=0.026)
- **Experienced harm**
aOR 1.53 (95%CI 1.11, 2.11; p=0.009)



Conclusions

- Young people are drinking less and starting later but we don't know why
- Recent reduction in alcohol consumption was common among our sample of young people
- Health factors were the most frequent motivation for reducing alcohol consumption
- Longitudinal and more in-depth research needed



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