



NCETA

National Centre for Education
and Training on Addiction

Using brand extensions from popular soft drinks can increase young people's intentions to drink alcohol

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FHMRI



Flinders
University

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NCETA project team

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Collaborators

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- Ms Julia Stafford, Cancer Council WA
- Ms Chanelle Wilson, Cancer Council WA (formerly)
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The George Institute
for Global Health

Background

- Hard Solo, launched in July 2023 - alcoholic lemon-flavoured beverage containing 4.5% ABV
- Media and policy maker concern about young people's exposure to marketing of an alcohol product that may hold inherent appeal for them
- Internationally a range of these products emerging



What we already know from prior research

- Sweet pre-mixed alcohol products hold particular appeal for young people
 - Taste like soft drinks
 - Mask taste of alcohol
- Brand extension literature tells us that that co-branded products can encourage uptake
- Young people are Australia's biggest consumers of soft drinks



Copeland J, Stevenson RJ, Gates P, Dillon P. Young Australians and alcohol: The acceptability of ready-to-drink (RTD) alcoholic beverages among 12-30-year-olds. *Addiction*. 2007;102(11):1740-6.

Jones S, Reis S. Not just the taste: Why adolescents drink alcopops. *Health Educ*. 2011;112:61-74.

Research questions

1. Do young people find alcoholic soft drinks that feature soft drinks appealing? If so, what is appealing about them?
2. How are brand attitudes toward and prior consumption of soft drink associated with young people's intention to consume alcoholic drinks from the same brand?



Methods

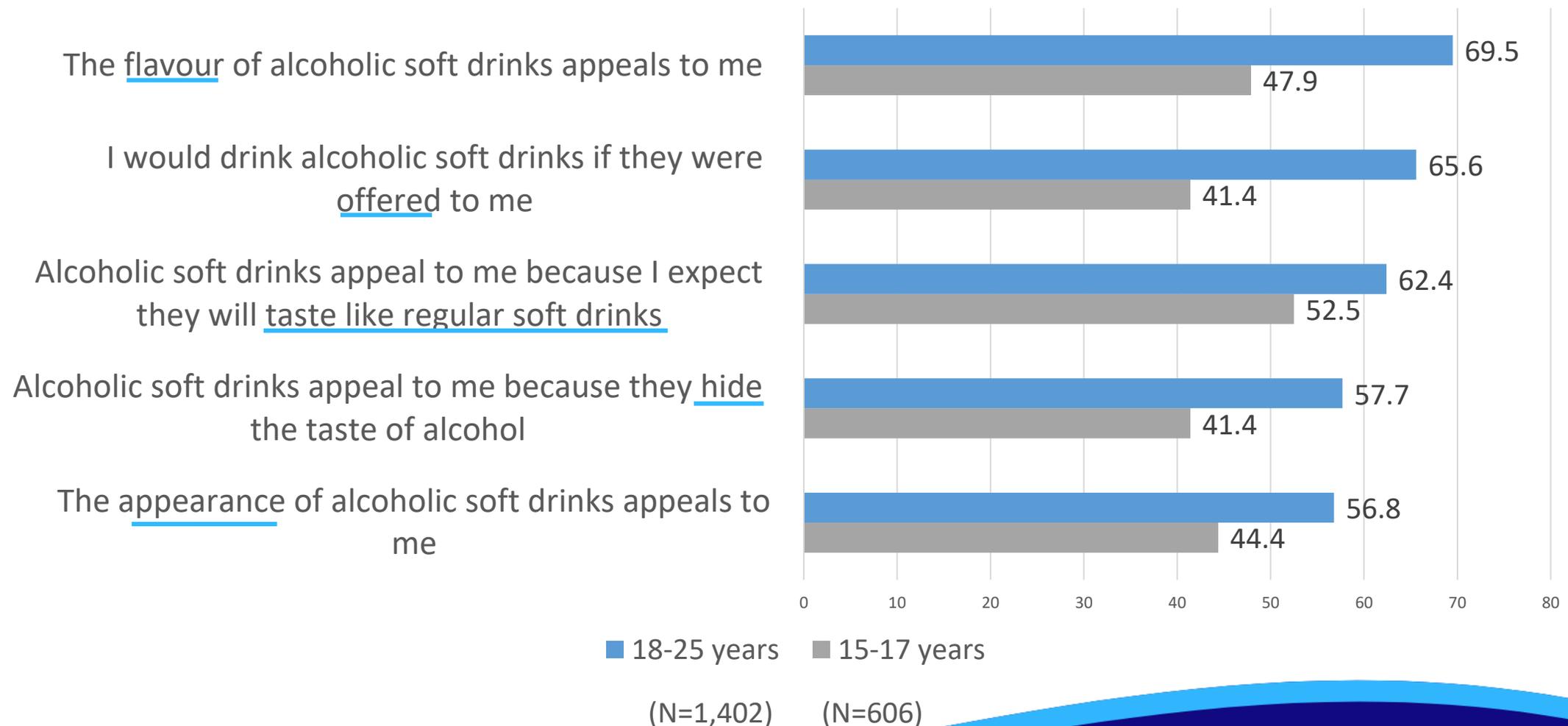
- 15 minute online cross-sectional survey
- N=2008 Australian young people
 - N=606 15-17 year olds
 - N=1402 18-25 year olds
- Recruited through panel provider
- Quotas for age band, gender, and residential location
- Open- and closed-ended questions about appeal



We are interested in knowing your thoughts about alcoholic products that feature soft drink brands on their packaging (e.g. Hard Solo, Lipton Hard Iced Tea). Some of these products are available in Australia and others are only available overseas. We will call these 'alcoholic soft drinks.'

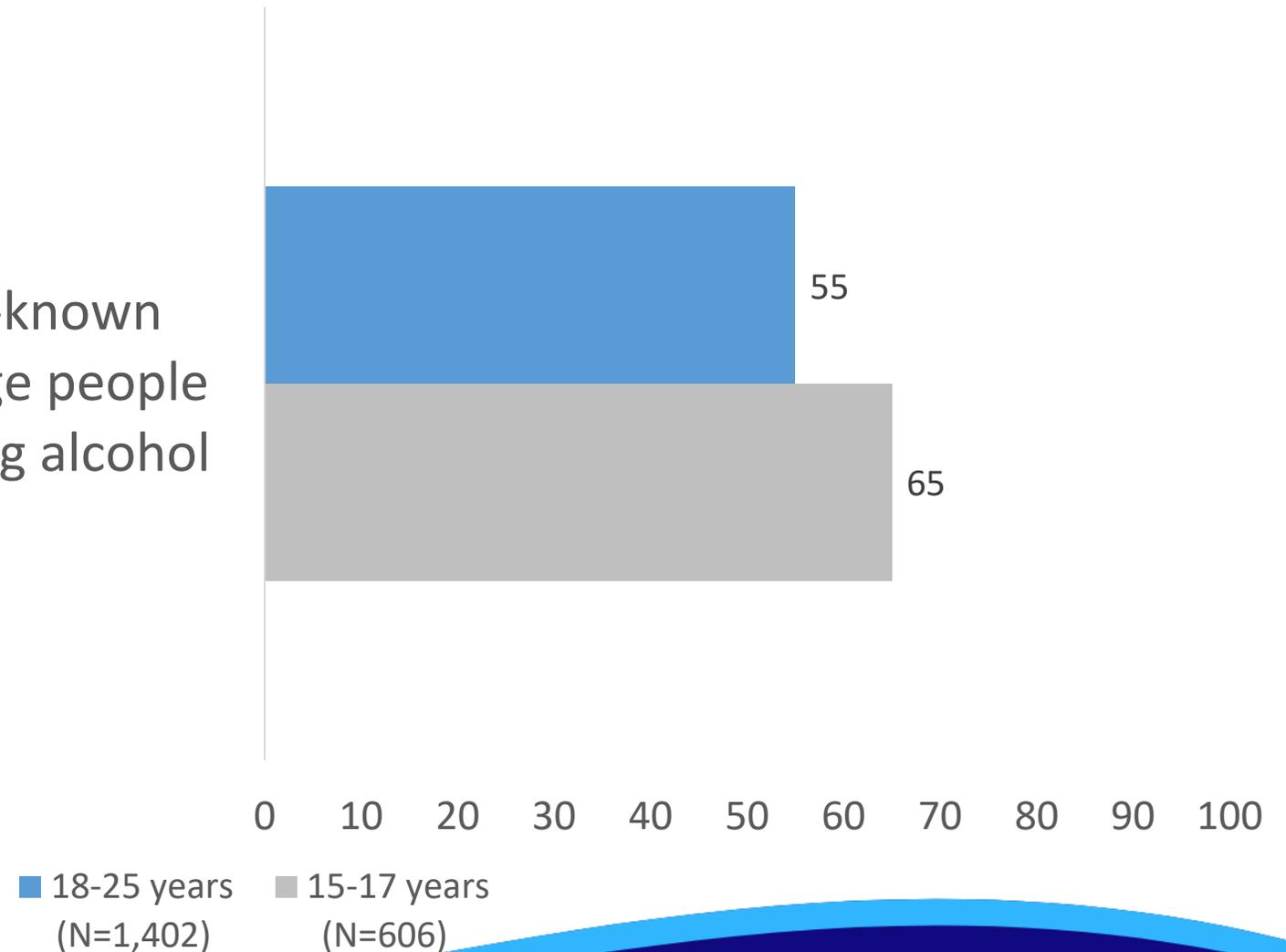
Research question 1: Do young people find alcoholic soft drinks that feature soft drinks appealing?

Selected findings



Findings

Alcoholic soft drinks from well-known soft drink brands could encourage people aged under 18 years to start using alcohol



Findings

When asked what, if anything, appeals (N=2,008):

- 52% of all respondents nominated the taste

It looks a lot like the soft drinks I already like to drink and makes me think it will taste like them too (15-17 year old, male)

Findings

Other key themes (among all respondents, N=2008):

- Masks the taste of alcohol (10%)
- Packaging or colours appeal (11%)
- Brand reputation (7%)
- Pre-mixed (6%)
- Nothing (15%)

They usually hide the taste of alcohol well (18-25 year old, female)

I think it's cool they have paired with top brand name soft drink companies (15-17 year old, male)

Convenience of not having to mix drinks yourself, as well as the consistency of the alcohol content (18-25 year old, female)

Research question 2: How are brand attitudes toward and prior consumption of soft drink, associated with young people's intention to consume alcoholic drinks from the same brand?



Results

- On average, respondents held a **positive brand attitude** toward Solo (M=5.4, SD= 1.25)
- The majority (86%) had previously drunk **non-alcoholic Solo**
- 44% had drunk **alcoholic Solo**

Results

Linear regression model (dependent variable: intention to consume alcoholic Solo)

Independent variables	β	95% CI		p
		<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>	
Intercept	0.19	-0.14	0.51	.256
Brand attitude toward Solo	0.27	0.24	0.31	<.001
Prior consumption of <u>non-alcoholic Solo</u>	0.24	0.12	0.36	<.001
Prior consumption of <u>alcoholic Solo</u>	0.90	0.80	1.00	<.001
Gender (ref: male)	-0.05	-0.14	0.04	.310
Age group (ref: 15-17 years)	0.43	0.33	0.55	<.001
Relative disadvantage (ref: most disadvantaged)	0.12	0.02	0.21	.016

B = unstandardised regression coefficient; CI = confidence interval; LL = lower limit; UL = upper limit.
Test of overall model: $F(6,1968)=143.1, p<.001, R^2=.30$.

Discussion

Alcoholic soft drinks hold **considerable appeal for young people**, including **minors**

- Sweet, soft-drink-like taste
- Familiar brands
- Mask taste of alcohol

Need to consider regulation of this product category, including potential to prevent product launch



Thank you

