

The background of the entire page is a photograph of people at a celebration. Two people's arms are raised with clenched fists in the upper half of the image. The left arm is wearing a white wristband. The right arm is wearing a black sleeve. The background is filled with a cloud of white confetti or smoke. The lighting is a mix of purple and blue, with a bright pink light source visible in the upper left.

alcoholthinkagain

Alcohol and Leavers Celebrations Community Kit

The background of the entire page is a photograph of three people jumping into the ocean. The scene is captured at sunset or sunrise, with a warm, golden light reflecting off the water. The person on the left is in mid-air, arms raised. The person in the center is also jumping, with arms outstretched. The person on the right is partially visible, also jumping. The water is dark blue, and the sky is a mix of orange and yellow.

About this toolkit

This toolkit provides information for professionals and community groups who want to increase the awareness of parents and the community to help reduce alcohol-related harm associated with Leavers' celebrations.

The Alcohol and Leavers celebrations messaging endeavors to increase awareness of the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Alcohol Guideline for young people and the secondary supply legislation. The guideline to reduce risk to those under 18 years of age recommends for young people aged 15 - 17 years, the safest option is to delay the initiation of drinking for as long as possible.

What is Leavers?

Leavers is the celebratory period of three to five days at the completion of Year 12 in WA, where students often travel to various locations (including Dunsborough, Busselton, Margaret River, Rottnest Island) to celebrate with their peers. Referred to as 'Schoolies' in other states, Leavers has become increasingly popular in WA over the past decade.

This year the official Leavers' celebration period in 2018 is from **Monday 19 November to Thursday 22 November 2018** and in 2019 it is from **Monday 18 November to Thursday 21 November 2019**.

As a community-based stakeholder you may wish to use one or all of the supplied materials and strategies. You are in the best position to determine which activities work best for your community and we are happy to offer assistance.

Contact your Community Support and Development Programs team member if you need help to implement any of the materials.
MHCCommunitySupportAndDevelopment@mhc.wa.gov.au

Young people’s alcohol consumption and Leavers week.

Why is leavers a concern?

01

Problems associated with drinking alcohol at Leavers that impact on the individual drinker and others can include:

- Blackouts
- Unprotected sex
- Vomiting
- Accident/injury
- Physical assault
- Sexual assault.

Every additional drink significantly increases the risk of injury and death for the person who drinks the alcohol and may place others at risk of harm, such as family, friends and members of the community.

02

Even though some of those who are attending Leavers will be 18 years old, around half will be under the age of 18. All official Leavers activities are alcohol-free.

03

Some parents believe that supplying alcohol to young people will control the amount they drink at Leavers. However, Western Australian research with Leavers suggests that this is not the case. For example, of the 25% of Leavers who said their parents provided them with alcohol at the celebrations:

- 89% drank at levels considered risky for adults by the National Health and Medical Research Council.
- 65% reported they had sources other than their parents providing them with alcohol. Provision of alcohol by parents is likely to be topping up this situation.

04

Alcohol use can lead to risk-taking behaviour, unsafe sex choices, sexual coercion, adverse behavioural patterns and alcohol overdose. Research conducted by the National Drug Research Institute (NDRI) showed that the majority of alcohol-related harms experienced by young people are caused by episodes of drinking to intoxication.

05

On average the daily consumption at Leaver’s week has been estimated at 18 standard drinks for males and 13 standard drinks for females in Western Australia.

Alcohol-related harm at Leavers celebrations.

Children who were supplied alcohol by their parents at Leavers reported drinking at more harmful levels than those who were not supplied alcohol by their parents.

Research of WA students celebrating at a popular Leavers’ destination has shown that children who were supplied alcohol by their parents for Leavers were more likely to drink at harmful levels.

Of the 25% of Leavers who said their parents provided them with alcohol at the celebrations:

- 89% drank at levels considered harmful for adults by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Guidelines.
- 65% reported they had sources other than their parents providing them with alcohol. Provision of alcohol by parents is likely to be topping up this situation.

During the celebrations, 87% of surveyed Leavers reported at least one negative consequence they said was due to alcohol or other drug use. For example, 58% reported a blackout, 67% a hangover, 45% an emotional outburst, 41% an accident or injury, 21% had sex they later regretted, and 14% had unprotected sex.

Overall, 90% of Leavers reported intending to drink during the festival, with expected average daily consumption being 7-9 standard drinks; reported daily consumption was 5-6 standard drinks. Of the 29% of Leavers who consumed alcohol around water during Leavers, 47% had done so while swimming.

One in five participants had experienced alcohol-related harm at schoolies week, including aggressive incidents, alcohol-related injury and engagement in unprotected sex.

Each alcoholic drink consumed increased the potential for involvement in aggressive incidents by 8% and alcohol-related accidents/injuries by 5%; illicit drug use was associated with six times the likelihood of engaging in unprotected sex with a non-partner.

Frequently asked questions.

Alcohol laws for teens under 18 years of age.

What are the laws in Western Australia about alcohol and young people?

The laws are different in each State or Territory regarding alcohol use by people under the age of 18. In WA:

- It is an offence for anyone under the age of 18 years to enter or remain on licensed premises without a legal guardian or responsible adult except under specific circumstances outlined in the *Liquor Control Act 1988*.
- It is against the law to sell or supply alcohol to anyone under the age of 18 years on licensed premises or regulated premises (such as a community hall holding an 18th birthday).
- It is an offence for anyone under the age of 18 years to consume alcohol or be in the possession of alcohol on licensed or regulated premises and it is

- an offence to allow that to occur.
- It is an offence for anyone under the age of 18 to purchase or obtain, or attempt to purchase or obtain alcohol from any other person on licensed or regulated premises.
- It is an offence for persons of any age to drink in public, such as on the street, park or beach. Opened liquor can be confiscated and destroyed by the Police.
- It is an offence for anyone under the age of 18 to be in possession of alcohol (open or un-open) in a public place. Police have powers to seize and dispose of the liquor under those circumstances.

My son, who is 17, was given alcohol by his 17 year old friend while visiting his house at Leavers. Does his friend need to get my permission before he can do that?

Yes. It is an offence for a person to supply alcohol to a juvenile irrespective of the age of the person supplying it. Juveniles who breach the secondary supply laws will be subject to the provisions of the *Young Offenders Act 1994*, and may be dealt with through alternative measures such as a caution or referred to a juvenile justice team.

I am having a small gathering at my home for end of school celebrations. A few of my daughter’s friends haven’t turned 18 yet; is it okay for me to serve them alcohol if their parents ring me and give their permission over the phone or provide permission by text?

Yes, provided you are satisfied that the person you have spoken to is the juvenile’s parent or guardian and that they are not drunk when they give their consent.

The law now requires that if you are supplying alcohol to an under 18 year old in your home you must observe responsible supervision practices at all times. This includes making sure these young people don’t get drunk (or you do not get drunk yourself) and that you are able to supervise their consumption of alcohol at all times.

Be aware that alcohol causes harm to young people. It

Are there laws about young people drinking alcohol at home?

On 20 November 2015, new laws came into effect regarding the secondary supply of alcohol. Under this law, it is an offence for anyone to supply under 18s with alcohol in a private setting without parental or guardian permission. This offence carries a penalty of up to \$10,000.

Parents not wanting their children to drink alcohol are now able to stand firm in their decision, as it is now illegal for other adults to provide alcohol to their children, at a private setting, without their permission.

Do other adults need verbal permission from me to give my child alcohol or do they need to have my permission in writing?

Permission can be in any format; however, it is preferable to be in writing.

When deciding whether or not to give someone permission to provide alcohol to your child, you may find it helpful to consider the harm alcohol causes to young people. It can increase their risk of injury, mental health problems and permanent damage to their developing brain. For these reasons, the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) for children and young people under 18 years of age recommend no alcohol is the safest choice and that is why no one should supply alcohol to under 18s.

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For these reasons, the NHMRC Guidelines for children and young people under 18 years of age recommend no alcohol is the safest choice and that is why no one should supply alcohol to under 18s.

Instead of Leavers, my daughter decided to have her end of year celebrations at my home. One of her 17 year old friends told me that her mother had given her permission to drink alcohol. Is it okay for me to give her a drink in my house?

No. You must obtain the permission from her parent or guardian, preferably in writing. Without their permission, you are liable for a penalty of up to \$10,000.

The law now requires that if you are supplying alcohol to an under 18 year old in your home you must observe responsible supervision practices at all times.

This includes making sure these young people don’t get drunk (or you do not get drunk yourself) and that you are able to supervise their consumption of alcohol at all times.

Be aware that alcohol causes harm to young people. It can increase their risk of injury, mental health problems and permanent damage to their developing brain. For these reasons, the NHMRC for children and young people under 18 years of age recommend no alcohol is the safest choice and that is why no one should supply alcohol to under 18s.

Is it okay for other people to give my child sips of alcohol without my permission, even if it’s in a private home?

No, it is an offence for anyone to supply your child with alcohol, even a sip, if they are under 18 years of age, without your permission. This offence carries a penalty of up to \$10,000.

Research shows that children of parents who give permission to drink alcohol at home and provide alcohol are associated with greater levels of adolescent alcohol use, heavy use, drunkenness, and intentions to drink. Children who have had sips of alcohol by age 10 (compared to those who have not sipped) are more likely to start drinking by the age of 14.

Tips for parents to discuss with their children if they are attending official Leavers events.

01

Discuss with your child your expectations about alcohol and the reasons why.

Studies have shown the harmful health and social consequences of teenage drinking, including risky sexual behaviours, public disturbance and aggression, hospitalisation, interruptions to family life, education and work accidents and injuries.

You could negotiate an agreement with them about not drinking alcohol at Leavers celebrations and discuss what will happen if they break their agreement.

02

Encourage your child to participate in alcohol-free activities.

They can do this by looking at the Leavers website to see the different types of activities that are being run at their chosen destination.

All Leavers activities are alcohol-free.

03

Suggest good responses for your child to use to refuse alcohol when it is offered to them. Having prepared responses can make it easier for them to refuse alcohol when the time comes. Some responses could be:

“I’m not into that”
“If my parents find out I will be in trouble”
“I hate the taste”
“I don’t know how you can drink that stuff”
“I don’t really feel like being hungover tomorrow”
“I made a bet with my mum/dad I wouldn’t drink at Leavers”
“I am on antibiotics so I can’t drink”
“I don’t want what happened to me/my friend to happen again”.

04

People are usually less concerned with what your child will be drinking so suggest alternatives that they can put in their cup such as juices, soft drink and sparkling water. Having something to hold will make them feel less awkward.

05

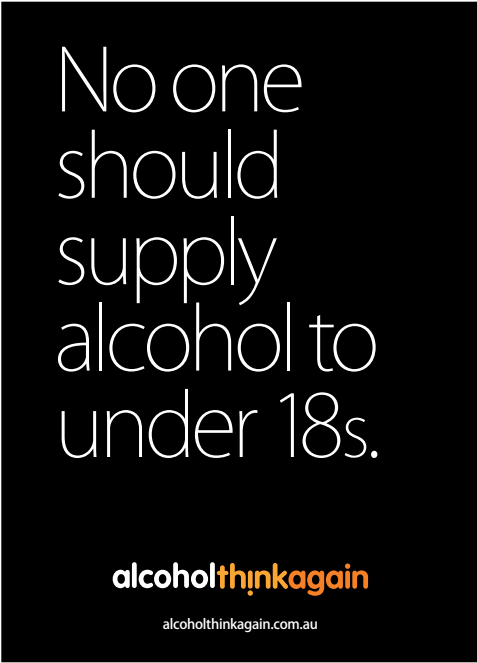
Discuss where to get help for themselves or their friends should the need arise and if they experience any problems they should contact you, WA police or any of the support services.



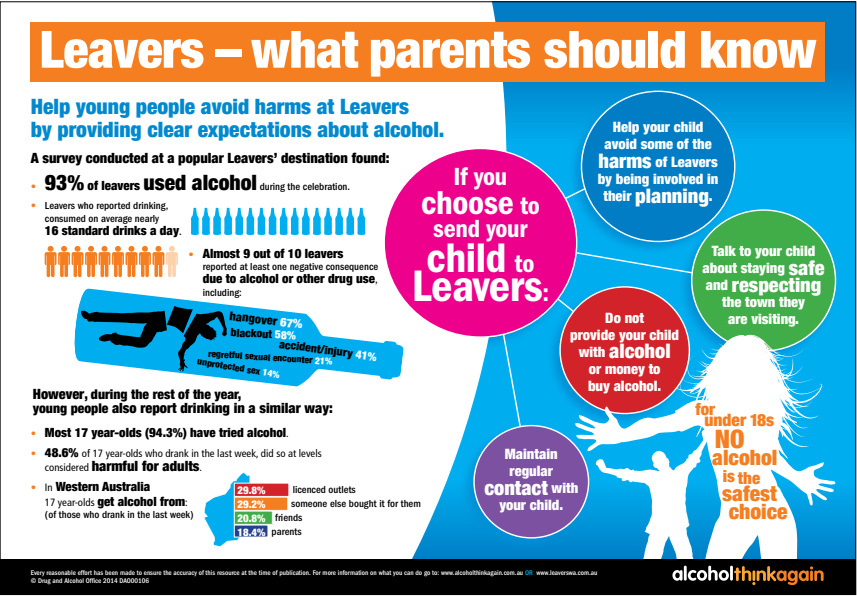
Resources

These resources can be placed on local notice boards or in newsletters, placed on your organisations Facebook page or website to help promote the Leavers message. Click on the images below to download a PDF direct to your computer.

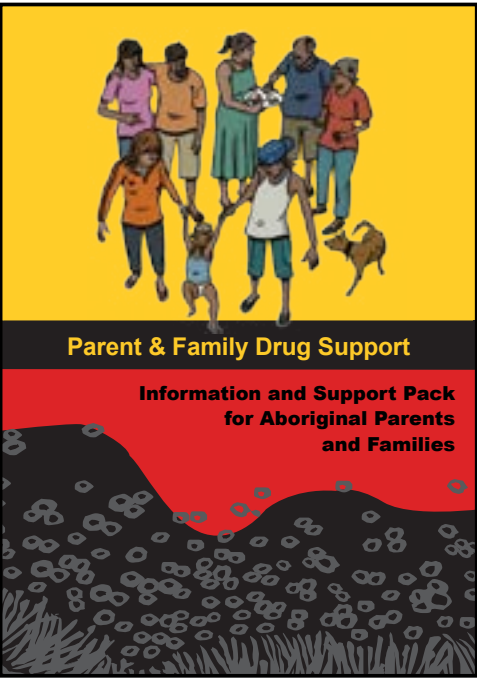
A3 posters



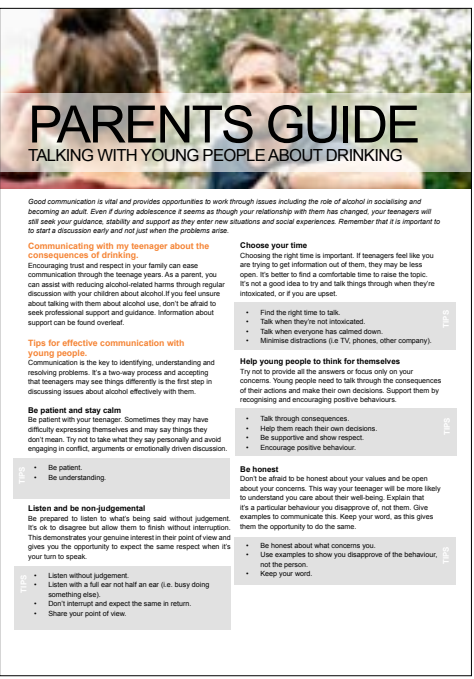
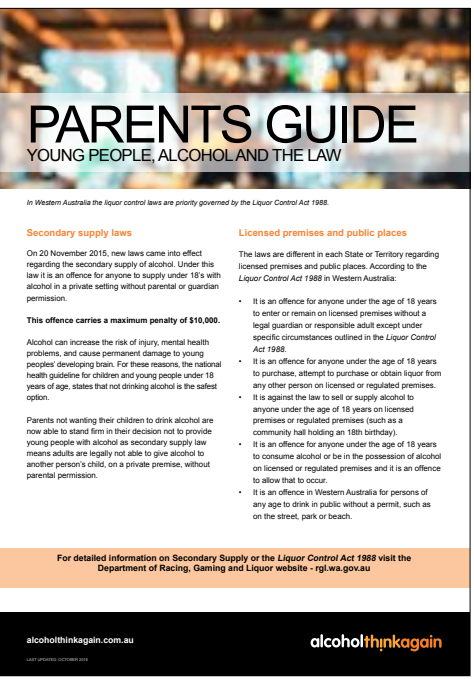
Infographic



Brochure



Factsheets



Email Signatures.

Adding an image to the bottom of an email signature is an easy way to continually remind people and organisations of the key messages.
[Click here](#) to access the below email signatures.

HOW TO INSERT IMAGE INTO A MICROSOFT OUTLOOK EMAIL SIGNATURE
If you do not use Microsoft Outlook as your email provider, please contact your IT department/staff for assistance.

- 1. Open a new message.
- 2. Select 'Signatures' under the 'Message' tab (in the 'Include' area on the toolbar).
- 3. From the drop down menu select 'Signatures'.
- 4. Click on the image then 'COPY' and 'PASTE' it into the desired section of your signature.
- 5. Click OK.



Facebook posts.

A free method to easily distribute the messaging online and allow people to quickly find more information on the Alcohol.Think Again website.
[Click here](#) to access the images below.

Do you have a child that is in Year 12 this year? Just a reminder that the official Leavers' celebration period this year is from Monday 19 to Thursday 22 November. Popular locations include Dunsborough, Busselton, Margaret River and Rottnest Island. For more information visit the Leavers WA website.



CLICK THROUGH URL:
www.leaverswa.com.au

Alcohol consumption among young people at Leavers can result in a series of negative alcohol-related effects including injury, violence, crime, unwanted sexual encounters, and embarrassing behaviour put up on social media. Click here for more information about your child and Leavers, and learn why for under 18s no alcohol is the safest choice.



CLICK THROUGH URL
www.alcoholthinkagain.com.au/Parents-Young-People/Leavers-Week-and-Alcohol

Parents are key influencers on whether their child does or doesn't drink alcohol. Children who were supplied alcohol by their parents for Leavers' celebrations were more likely to drink at harmful levels. It is important for parents to support their child's plan for Leavers' to avoid possible harms.



CLICK THROUGH URL
www.alcoholthinkagain.com.au/Parents-Young-People/Leavers-Week-and-Alcohol

Leavers is approaching and it is important for parents to talk about the risks associated with alcohol consumption (blackouts, intoxication, being unable to control their actions, violence, the risk of unwanted sexual encounters etc.). For tips on what parents can do click here.



CLICK THROUGH URL
www.alcoholthinkagain.com.au/Parents-Young-People/Leavers-Week-and-Alcohol

No alcohol is the safest choice for under 18s. For more information about Secondary Supply and other alcohol laws that relate to minors click here.



CLICK THROUGH URL
www.alcoholthinkagain.com.au/Parents-Young-People/Young-People-and-Alcohol-Laws

Did you know that all Leavers activities are alcohol-free. Remember that you don't need to drink alcohol to have fun.



CLICK THROUGH URL
www.leaverswa.com.au

Is your child heading to Leavers? Check out the Alcohol.Think Again website for some ideas on what to discuss with your child before they leave.



CLICK THROUGH URL
www.alcoholthinkagain.com.au/Parents-Young-People/Leavers-Week-and-Alcohol

Before your child heads to Leavers it is important that you remind them that they can contact you at any time while they are away if they have a problem or need to come home.



CLICK THROUGH URL
www.alcoholthinkagain.com.au/Parents-Young-People/Leavers-Week-and-Alcohol

As a teenager, there will be expectations of what Leavers will be like from school mates and other friends. As a parent you can discuss and explain how drinking alcohol can impact on their Leavers experience. Find out more here:



CLICK THROUGH URL
www.alcoholthinkagain.com.au/Parents-Young-People/Leavers-Week-and-Alcohol

Leavers week is a time for year 12 students from 2018 to celebrate the end of their schooling with their friends. Whilst it can be an exciting time for teenagers it can also put them into situations they may not have been in before. For more information on how to support your child through leavers visit:



CLICK THROUGH URL
www.alcoholthinkagain.com.au/Parents-Young-People/Leavers-Week-and-Alcohol

Using Alcohol.Think Again campaign materials in your region.

Creating local campaign resources

If you develop any new materials such as posters or newspaper advertising, that uses the Alcohol.Think Again logo or messaging it must be approved by the Mental Health Commission.

To increase the speed of approval please provide this information:

1. The purpose of the publication.
2. The target audience.
3. What the key message is that you are hoping the publication will communicate.
4. Where the publication will be used - sporting club etc
5. How long will it be used for.
6. When you need approval by.

Please email your Community Support and Development Programs team member a PDF of the layout for approval.



Ordering resources

You can order printed resources from our order form via the button below.

[CLICK TO DOWNLOAD THE
RESOURCE ORDER FORM](#)