

E-NEWSLETTER

YOUNG PEOPLE AND ALCOHOL SEMINAR

With funding support from the AERF and Healthway and with the assistance of the SW Population Health Unit, Investing In Our Youth (IIOY) recently hosted a seminar at Roelands Village titled 'Young People and Alcohol: a Solution Focused Seminar'. Guest speakers WA Police Commissioner Karl O'Callaghan; Bruce Clark from the Leigh Clark Foundation; Prof Mike Daube from the McCusker Foundation; and Rosemary White representing the Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation made the seminar an interesting and informative event.

WA Police Commissioner Karl O'Callaghan said that the culture of drinking had changed over the past 15-20 years through larger liquor outlets, cheaper alcohol and the way in which alcohol was presented and marketed to young people.



The Commissioner called for greater investment in young people. Young people needed more alcohol free activities that relieved boredom and provided positive leadership models. Community support was needed for organisations like the PCYC and sporting clubs and for youth activities that provided purpose and connection to the community.

OCTOBER

Other key messages from the seminar included a very heartfelt call from Bruce Clark for legislation on secondary supply – the unauthorised provision of alcohol to minors.

Professor Mike Daube from the McCusker Centre for Action on Alcohol and Youth compared progress on curbing alcohol harm to the journey over the last two decades with reduction in cigarette smoking. Much could be done, and should be done to reduce harmful alcohol use. He agreed that investment in alcohol free activities for young people was important, as was education for both parents and young people. Parents, peers and availability of alcohol were key factors in youth alcohol use.

Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation (AERF) spokesperson Rosemary Smith said that messages about standard drinks and how long alcohol stayed in the system were useful. It was important to note that not all young people drink alcohol. Rosemary cited a Victorian study that showed that heavy drinking was not the norm. Young people who do not drink should be recognised for their responsible behaviour.

Speakers agreed that there was no 'silver bullet' solution but that alcohol free activities, education for parents and youth, and legislation on regulation of alcohol all had a role in reducing alcohol harm.



Government of Western Australia
Department of Health
WA Country Health Service

2011

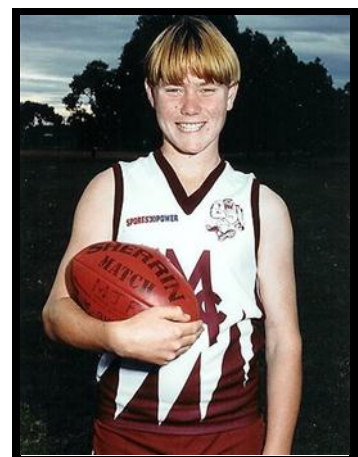
VISIT FROM BRUCE CLARK

Investing In Our Youth realised a long held aim recently when the organisation was able to host a visit to WA from Bruce Clark, secretary of the Leigh Clark Foundation and spokesman for VicHealth's secondary supply of alcohol campaign.

Bruce has been a leading campaigner in Victoria for change to legislation on the supply of alcohol to minors. From November 1, in line with New South Wales, Queensland and Tasmania, Victorian parents will be given legal backing to decide how, when and where their children have access to alcohol.

Getting to this point has not been easy said Bruce. "For more than 10 years, I and others have fought a hard battle to get Victorian law changed. Even in the darkest days of our advocacy, though, no opposition, no argument has been able to sway me from the central plank of my argument."

"In 1999, my son Leigh, aged 15, was supplied with a massive quantity of alcohol. It contributed directly to his death. Someone who should have known better took it upon themselves to buy booze for a party – a party attended by children as young as twelve."



“Leigh was given enough alcohol to render him unconscious. One estimate put his blood-alcohol concentration as high as 0.3. No one was charged with supplying this lethal dose of alcohol to my son. Under Victorian law in 1999, the person who supplied that alcohol could not be held accountable for his death. The law did nothing to protect our children.”

While thankful that the law is about to change in Victoria, Bruce warns that parents must not assume that kids will suddenly stop getting drunk at parties. “There will be no ‘under-age drinking squad’ raiding private parties”, he said.

“I want parents to discuss alcohol and parties with their children, and with other parents. Parents must be prepared to be clear with their children that they do not give them permission to drink. Parents must be clear with other adults that they will not give permission for alcohol to be served to their children.”

At least now, in Bruce’s home State of Victoria, they can do that knowing that the law is on their side.

BE ALCOHOL AWARE COMPETITION

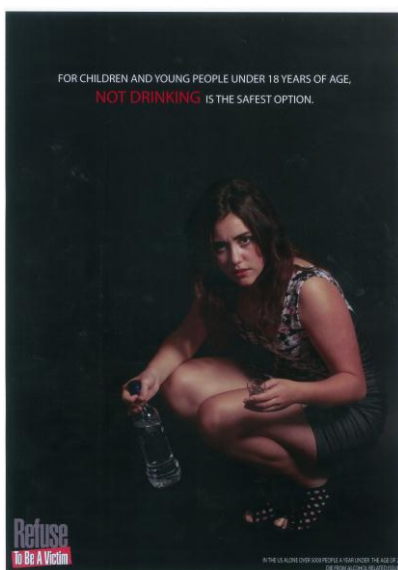
Young people aged 12-17 were recently invited by Investing In Our Youth to use their artistic skills to enter a competition to design a poster or video clip promoting approved alcohol guidelines and alcohol awareness messages.

The prize pool for the competition was supplied by The Apprentice and Traineeship Company and the South West Community Drug Service Team.

The skills of local young people are extraordinary. Fifteen year old Jessica O’Donovan produced a fantastic video clip that can be viewed at the following u-tube link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aqjf8cm5xwI>

The following sample posters give some indication of the amazing skills of local young people.



SUPPORT FOR IIOY

Investing In Our Youth are currently promoting a raffle to help generate funds to support our work. We need some champions to help us. This is a good opportunity for agencies and businesses to invest in a better future for young people locally. Tickets are \$100 each with a first prize of \$3,000, second prize \$1,500, and third prize \$500. Only 200 tickets will be sold. Ticket purchasers will be acknowledged in an ‘honour roll’ in the next IIOY Annual Report. Formations of a group or syndicate of people to purchase a ticket is a great idea. Please contact Carmen on iioy@iinet.net.au or T 9721 6951 for more information.

Our thanks to A&L printers for getting us off to a great start by printing our raffle tickets free of charge!

INVESTING IN OUR YOUTH AGM

IIOY recently celebrated another successful year at their 2011 AGM. Chair Rhonda Oliver welcomed new Board members Amanda Taylor, Gemma Coote and Steven Denton and thanked retiring members Mike Farren, Marcus Turner and Rosalie Carmichael. The IIOY Board will be deliberating soon on key directions and future targets for the coming year.

BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

Investing In Our Youth could not operate without the support of committed Board members such as Kingston School Principal, Alan Kidd.



Tell us about your background...

I have spent 28 years in the public education system teaching from Kununurra in the north to Frankland in the South. I have been in the SW for the past 16 years as a Principal in Collie, Bunbury and Australind. I have been married to Esme for 25 years and my three daughters, Emma, 22, Rebecca, 20 and Melanie 17 have all grown up in rural areas. They were born in Geraldton, Albany and Mt Barker. I am a life member of Camp Quality and have supported children with cancer and their families over many years. I am currently the Principal of Kingston Primary School.

Why do you support IIOY?

I support IIOY because there is such a need for advocacy. We have so many agencies that have overlapping and often duplicating roles and I see IIOY as an independent advocate that can bring some clarity of purpose and organisational direction to the many complex issues that affect the youth of today.

What would you like IIOY to achieve in the future?

I am keen to see IIOY continue to pursue the early years' agenda, focusing on the early development of the child, giving them every chance of success when they enter the schooling system.

What are some of your other interests?

I love my sport and am still an active hockey player. I have played and coached for over 40 years. I love anything outdoors and enjoy boating and fishing.

DEVELOPMENTS AND TRENDS

RIPPA FEST

Great news! City of Bunbury has committed to fund RIPPA Fest for a second year.

The aim of RIPPA Fest is to celebrate people with a disability and their participation in the wider community. This aim is captured in the acronym RIPPA: Respect, Include, Participate, Promote health, Achieve. The event will be held on December 2, at Paisley Square in the Bunbury CBD. RIPPA Fest 2011 will follow the successful format of last year with market stalls, food, fun, entertainment and information. The event is coordinated by representatives from a range of local agencies. For more information, contact Gerald O'Sullivan on 9722 3022.



NATIONAL YOUTH WEEK

The SW has been chosen as the site for the WA launch of National Youth Week in April 2012. Youth Development Officer for the South West Region Amanda Taylor said that this was a huge coup for the SW and that young people were already planning to celebrate the event with a one day festival jam packed full of youth inspired events and activities. "The Breakaway Youth Centre in Eaton and the Eaton foreshore will provide a perfect venue for the event" she said. Regular planning meetings

are already taking place at the Breakaway Youth Centre, and anyone wishing to either volunteer their time or contribute sponsorship support should contact Amanda by email Amanda.Taylor@communities.wa.gov.au or Tel 9792 2000. The theme for National Youth Week is imagine, create, inspire.



MENTAL HEALTH 2020

Minister for Mental Health Helen Morton visited Bunbury last week to launch 'Mental Health 2020' strategic directions for the next decade.

The launch coincided with a visit to the SW by the Mental Health Advisory Council.

Investing In Our Youth was privileged to be one of six agencies that were invited to give a brief presentation on SW issues to the Mental Health Advisory Council. The Council is charged with providing high-level, independent advice to Mental Health Commissioner, Eddie Bartnik, on major issues affecting mental health care. The Council is interested in establishing effective consultation processes and wish to hear from the wider community, consumers, carers and family members. Information presented by Investing In Our Youth can be found on our home page at www.investinginouryouth.com.au.

UPDATE ON WA LEGISLATION

Excerpts from the Private Members Bill introduced to Parliament last month by Dr Janet Woollard provide a compelling case for changes to legislation regarding supply of alcohol to minors in WA. Investing In Our Youth has written to Ministers asking for their support to enact this legislation and intend to continue to link to the Leigh Clark Foundation and other parties interested in lobbying for change in WA.

The *Liquor Control Act 1988* deems it an offence for juveniles to be sold or supplied liquor or to consume liquor on licensed or regulated premises. The Act makes it an offence for a

person to send a juvenile to obtain liquor.

The Bills amendment introduces provisions to prevent a juvenile being supplied with alcohol, by friends or adults often in risky situations, without their parents' consent.

This amendment provides legislative backing to parents who do not wish their children to drink or to drink outside their supervision. It enables greater parental influence on where or in what context children can drink alcohol. The influence of family and parents in assisting to reduce juvenile drinking, particularly binge drinking must be recognised and supported.

New Section 119AA(1) will make it an offence for anyone other than a parent or guardian of a juvenile to supply liquor to that juvenile on unlicensed premises.

Section 119AA(2) provides a defense to this charge where an adult can prove they were authorised by the parent or guardian to supply liquor to the juvenile. The penalty associated with this offence is a fine of \$4000.

The earlier children start drinking alcohol, the greater the risk of a range of adverse outcomes, including risky binge drinking and the more the likelihood they will become alcohol dependent.

Children who start drinking alcohol before they turn 15 are five times more likely to be alcohol dependent as adults than those who don't drink as juveniles or who begin drinking after the age of 21.

Children who start drinking alcohol before the age of 16 years have the highest risk of heavy drinking in adulthood. Delaying initiation of drinking as late as possible in adolescence is therefore an important goal for prevention efforts.

Investing In Our Youth is supported by the South West Development Commission and Cristal Global.