



Foundation for Alcohol
Research & Education

Media Release

AUSTRALIAN ALCOHOL POLL: WHAT GEN Y ARE DRINKING AND THINKING

18 April 2013: A new poll has found Aussie Gen Y's hung over, hazy and full of regret.

Almost two thirds (63%) of Gen Y drink alcohol to get drunk, over a third (39%) are unable to remember what happened the night before and almost half (47%) have regretted some form of phone or online communication while drunk.

Now in its fourth year, the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education's (FARE) *Annual Alcohol Poll: Attitudes and Behaviours*, once again reveals how and what Australians drink, provides an insight into their own drinking behaviour and the drinking of others, and measures support for various alcohol policies.

Almost half (45%) of Gen Y believe it is okay to get drunk once a month or more, while over a third (35%) have been unable to stop drinking once they'd started.

Conducted by Galaxy Research, Australia's most comprehensive alcohol Poll has expanded in 2013 to include questions which examine Australians social media interaction, the rate of preloading, and further explore harmful drinking practices.

The Poll found more than half of all drinkers (57%) consume alcohol before going out to a club or pub.

Among Gen Y who drink, preloading is even more prevalent with more than three quarters (76%) drinking before they go out, and over half (57%) of Gen Y indicating that their primary reason to preload was to save money.

FARE Chief Executive, Michael Thorn warns that the risky behaviours and dangerous patterns of consumption identified in the Poll are not driven by individuals, but by the deliberate and careful manipulation of the alcohol industry.

"The health and welfare of our young people is being placed in jeopardy by an alcohol industry hell bent on increasing profits at everyone else's expense. It's no accident that our young people preload when takeaway alcohol is cheaper than it has been in three decades, and it's no surprise that they are drunk before they even hit the town, when we have so many late night trading venues. Without Government measures to tackle availability and price, we'll continue to see devastating alcohol harms throughout the country," Mr Thorn said.

With smart phones now ubiquitous, there are more ways to embarrass yourself than simply dialling while drunk.

Almost half of Gen Y drinkers (47%) were most likely to have regretted some form of phone or internet communication while drunk.

Of drinkers aged 18-24 years, 26 per cent regretted sending a text message, 18 per cent regretted making a phone call, 13 per cent regretted sending an email, 18 per cent regretted posting a comment on social media and 18 per cent regretted posting a photo on social media.

The impact of social media extended beyond drunken tweets.

20 per cent of Gen Y have noticed alcohol advertising or promotions on social media, with almost half of those (45%) having subsequently interacted with an alcohol brand online.

With the alcohol industry's aggressive presence online mirrored by its dominance in traditional media, Australians are increasingly aware and concerned about how they are exposed to alcohol advertising.

Almost two thirds of Gen Y (64%) believe alcohol advertising influences the behaviour of people under the age of 18 years, with slightly less (58%) supporting a ban on alcohol advertising before 8:30pm, seven days a week.

Mr Thorn says the alcohol industry's aggressive push into social media should ring alarm bells for all Australians concerned about the cost of alcohol use and misuse in our communities.

"The alcohol industry is pushing misleading messages and dangerous products onto our young people and we need to target the root cause of the problem. Governments should prioritise regulating alcohol advertising and marketing, and reforming alcohol pricing and taxation. In this election year, I call on the Government to show leadership and commitment to reducing alcohol harms," Mr Thorn said.

Key findings:

- More than half (51%) of Gen Y who preload drink the same amount or more before going out than while they are out.
- Gen Y (47%) are more likely than Gen X (30%), who in turn are more likely than baby boomers (18%) to have regretted some form of phone or internet communication while drunk.
- Almost half of all 18 to 24 year olds (46%) consume alcohol and energy drinks.
- During the previous year, almost half (47%) of Gen Y drinkers had a feeling of guilt and remorse after drinking.
- Gen Y (33%) are more likely than Gen X (25%) and baby boomers (22%) to state that they are occasionally uncomfortable or uncomfortable with their alcohol consumption.
- Gen Y (22%) are more likely than Gen X (16%) and baby boomers (18%) to rarely or never feel comfortable when not drinking at a pub, club or bar.

Michael Thorn is available for interview.

Media Contact: Jeremy Henderson 0425 559 710

Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) is an independent, charitable organisation working to prevent the harmful use of alcohol in Australia. Since 2001, FARE has invested over \$115 million in research and community projects to minimise the impact of alcohol misuse on Australians. Through its national grants program and commissioned research, FARE has established itself as a leading voice on alcohol and other drugs issues. FARE works with community groups, all levels of government, police, emergency workers, research institutions and the private sector to address alcohol-related problems. For further information visit FARE's website: www.fare.org.au