# Binge drinking and related risk factors amongst out-of-school 16 year olds in NSW

## Researcher

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## Summary

Young people who leave school early and do not enter training or employment are considered a disadvantaged group, at risk of adverse health consequences. There have been very few Australian studies that document alcohol use by this group and even fewer that document other associated risk behaviours. This study investigates alcohol use and associated risk behaviours of 16 year-olds who have left school early in NSW. Age 16 was chosen as this is the age at which young people begin to leave school in large numbers. The sample consisted of 283 young people who had left school by age 16.    The group surveyed had higher rates of alcohol and other drug use than those who were still in school. The out-of-school group also reported a high prevalence of violence, drink driving, being in trouble with the police, and associating with gangs. The prevalence of risk factors associated with alcohol and other drug use was also high and included sexual and physical abuse, having moved residence in the past 6 months, not being connected with their parents, and no longer living with their family.

## Outcomes

Results from the research indicated that this target group is at risk of much higher rates of adverse health consequences through higher rates of alcohol and other drug use, and being exposed to and participating in violence, drink driving, and criminal behaviour. Many early school-leavers become isolated within the community, detached from their families and social support institutions.

## References

Tresidder, JV 2003 Binge drinking and related risk factors amongst out of school 16 year-olds in NSW. Thesis (PhD), University of Sydney.