# Fun and forgetting: Alcohol and other drug use by African young people in Hobart

## Researcher

Mr Martin Gibson

## Summary

Discussions by Link Youth Health Service with African parents indicate considerable concern regarding how their children would cope with the influence of Australia's drinking and drug-taking culture. African young people themselves indicated they were concerned about alcohol and marijuana use by their peers.

Comments from African young people included, “alcohol and marijuana make you feel good,” and, “to look grown up, look strong.” However the negative influences of alcohol and drugs—on the individual and the community—were also acknowledged, “alcohol shrinks your brain,” and, “if one person does wrong everyone...gets the blame.”

## Outcomes

This study found that alcohol use among young Africans is low, but tending to increase with time spent in Australia. Marijuana use is minimal with only 3% indicating use in the past month.

The main stressors experienced by the group are racism, finding employment, school, language issues, loneliness, low income, and transport issues. These can lead to a sense of failure and loss of hope if an individual is having difficulty coping.

Although alcohol and drug use is low within the group, there is a high incidence of this group being victims of other's drug and alcohol use.

In addition, there is, within this group a lack of awareness of available services and a high incidence of nightmares and other evidence of past trauma.

[view the report](/wp-content/uploads/FINAL-REPORT_Link-Youth-Health-Service_925.pdf)