# Webinar: Unpacking the intersection of alcohol and gendered violence

On 16 September we hosted a webinar unpacking the link between alcohol and gendered violence.

The panelists were:

* Survivor Advocate, Kym Valentine
* Researcher in alcohol-related intimate partner violence, Dr Ingrid Wilson
* Palawa woman and researcher, Nicole Hewlett
* Criminology Professor Michael Salter

## Key takeaways

We know alcohol intensifies and exacerbates violence.

In sharing her research into the impact men’s drinking has on women, Dr Ingrid Wilson said: “Women described, with quite chilling precision, how their partner might start drinking, he'd be fun and loving at the start of the drinking cycle, and then become increasingly aggressive and targeted towards her, the more intoxicated he became.”

Alcohol is involved in between [23% and 65% of all police-reported family violence incidents.](https://www.anrows.org.au/publication/links-between-alcohol-consumption-and-domestic-and-sexual-violence-against-women-key-findings-and-future-directions/)

[In 2021-22, 47% of women](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/crime-and-justice/physical-violence/latest-release) who were sexually assaulted by a man in the past decade said alcohol or another substance contributed to the most recent incident.

Kym Valentine shared the story of a child who had experienced violence, intensified by alcohol.

“We often hear from adults, but we rarely hear from the most important voice in this conversation, and that is the children. The children that are hiding under beds, hiding in closets and bathrooms, hearing furniture thrown, yelling and screaming. Children who don't have a choice and they don't have a voice,” she said.

“There are some simple actions that state and federal governments can take which would help to make women and children immediately safer within their homes.”

Nicole Hewlett shared the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities leading healing informed approaches to prevent harm.

“Without healing and without a family approach to healing, there will be no stop to that violence, and this healing informed approach often underpins the programs, which is why our community led initiatives have shown, time and time again, to be so effective,” she said.

Despite victim survivors’ experiences, measures targeting the role of alcohol in violence prevention have largely been absent.

The reluctance to talk about alcohol not only invalidates the lived experience of survivors but creates policy paralysis in an area that has been neglected for too long.

Professor Michael Salter said: “Despite the very gendered nature of alcohol consumption, the gendered nature of alcohol marketing, the gendered nature of alcohol related harm - which includes its contribution to family, domestic and sexual violence - alcohol regulation and control policies in Australia remain gender blind. That gender blindness is harming women and children.”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SCLn7xIYaQg

*If you or someone you know needs support, please call*[*Lifeline*](https://www.lifeline.org.au/)*13 11 14,*[*the National 24/7 Alcohol and Other Drugs Hotline*](https://toolkit.lifeline.org.au/articles/support/national-alcohol-other-drug-hotline)*1800 250 015 or*[*1800RESPECT*](https://www.1800respect.org.au/)*1800 737 732.*