

the **DFCY** News

THE DRUG FREE CHRISTIAN YOUTH NEWSLETTER - ISSUE NO. 6

Hi all!

At the commencement of the new work year, it's a good time to say "Hello".

After the year end break, it's time to settle into the work routine whether at school, TAFE, Uni or in your job .

This is such an important time in your life when so many choices are made.

We hope you enjoy your moments of free time doing of what you like the most.

Pray that you will not be afraid to say "NO" to drugs.

The happiest and healthiest lives are DRUG FREE!

Have a great Easter break knowing that Jesus Christ is alive and at work in your lives through His resurrection power.



Beware of the Brain's Computer Virus!

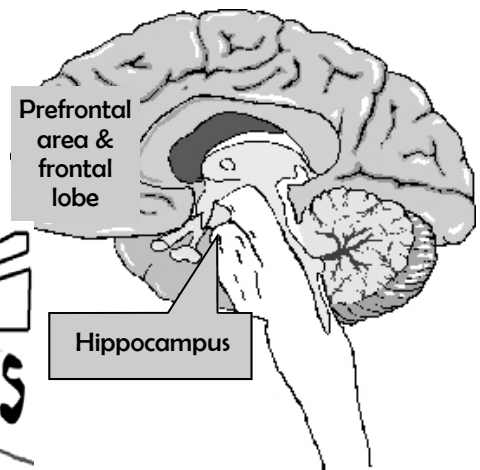
Did you know that your brain computer is still developing? The brain is not fully developed until the age of 21 or older.

While young children increase the volume of their brains—the number of brain cells and the connections between them, teen brains are creating effective neural pathways. The neurons' structure changes as they become encased within myelin. Myelin insulates the neurons and speeds the impulses carried by the brain cells. This insulation process occurs especially in the prefrontal and frontal lobes of the brain during adolescence.

Teenage drinking acts like a computer virus causing severe changes to this part of the brain. This will

affect your thinking, planning, good judgement, decision making and impulse control. It can alter the development of your adult personality and behaviour and the damage may be irreversible.

Connections between brain cells are also pruned and eliminated during these years, so that only the most efficient connections are maintained which improves your reaction times. So your brain development is occurring in areas of the brain critical for considering the

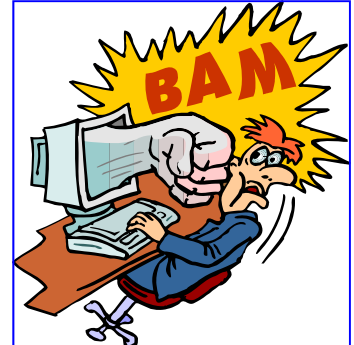


consequences of actions, responding to stress, and managing your physiological drives.

The worst damage to the brain caused by teens drinking occurs in the hippocampus. Those who drink more and for a long time may have as much as a 10% smaller hippocampus. Short term or moderate drinking impairs learning and memory far more in youth than adults.

Additional negative effects as a result of teen drinking include:

- decreased ability in planning and decision making
- decreased ability in executive functioning
- decreased memory
- decreased attention span
- decreased spatial operations
- decreased academic performance.

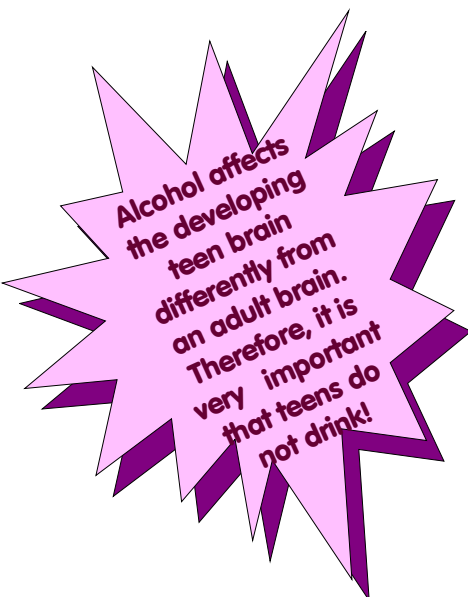


Drinking alcohol knocks out your brain, like a virus knocks out your computer

The brain rewards positive actions with feelings of pleasure so we want to repeat them. We remember pleasure from dopamine, a "feel-good" brain chemical or neurotransmitter. Alcohol tricks the brain into generating a pleasure-reward feeling from a harmful chemical by pretending to be a neurotransmitter. Because the teen brain produces an

abundance of dopamine, the teen can rapidly go from liking, to wanting, to needing alcohol, programming them for alcoholism. Those who drink before the age of 15 are 41% more likely to develop alcohol dependence than those who drink at a later age. (e.g. At 21 years there is a 7% chance of addiction)

This information is taken from a speech "Alcohol, Adolescents and Ads," by John C Nelson MD, MPH (former President of the American Medical Association)



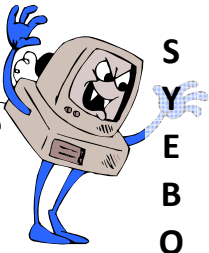
Alcohol acts like a computer virus in the brain by:

- Slowing or shutting down brain activity
- Deleting or distorting neural messages
- Damaging neuro-connections
- Hindering formation of mature brain wiring
- Rewiring the brain's pleasure-reward system, which can lead to alcohol dependence/addiction.



When young people drink and get into a car, they tend to make poor decisions that impact their safety. Traffic crashes are the No. 1 killer of teens, and over one-third of teen traffic deaths are alcohol-related!

Some of the words mentioned in this newsletter are listed below along with some extra ones. Find them in the Word Find puzzle.



S A D O L E S C E N C E Y F L
 Y U O M E M O R Y O L T R V R
 E Z P V I R U S N B I O E W S
 B S A M Y S U N I L N S A E T
 O N M T A P E S A T Y T C G N
 L O I P F C R N A N C H A N E
 A R N P T E O L A E E K D I D
 I U E I V S G P M Q L R E N I
 C E O E R S S L P V M P M N C
 O N R E X E C U T I V E I A C
 S R P Y S M S I L O H O C L A
 I N S U L A T I O N S U I P M
 T G N I K N I R D M Y E L I N
 N T H I N K I N G C T F T I R
 A L A I T A P S E K P C Y R X

- Academic
- Accidents
- Adolescence
- Alcoholism
- Antisocial
- Connections
- Dopamine
- Drinking
- Executive
- Frontal
- Hippocampus
- Insulation
- Irreversible
- Lobe
- Memory
- Myelin
- Neurons
- Personality
- Planning
- Pleasure
- Spatial
- Synapses
- Teen
- Thinking
- Virus



Smoking is Australia's Biggest Preventable Killer!

Kiss a Smoker???

NO WAY!!

DON'T START!

Say "NO! NO! NO!"
to cigarettes!

Did you hear about Krisnan Inu who plays with Parramatta Eels Rugby League Club? He had his 21st Birthday Invitation marked in bold - **No alcohol allowed** and 300 people celebrated with soft drink and cordial. What a great role model! Well done, Krisnan!