

the **DFCY** News

THE DRUG FREE CHRISTIAN YOUTH NEWSLETTER - ISSUE NO.7



Wishing you all a very happy Christmas!

As we approach the end of the year, many high students will be enjoying a good break from study and youth at work will be hoping for some time out over the year end holidays.

Congratulations to the "MAD" Year 12 students at the Central Coast Adventist School in NSW who have decided to "Make A Difference" by spending their schoolies week on a service project in Fiji! They will be running a kids' club helping to re-paint a school and laying concrete for a rainwater tank. As well as enjoying a great holiday, they set a great example to others in using their talents to contribute to the well-being of others. Good planning Year 12!

Jesus Christ made a difference in our world when He came to live as man and die for us. You can "Make A Difference" too.



The Present Serious Problem of Binge Drinking

This essay was the winning entry in the Youth Essay Contest run by the WCTU of Western Australia.

It is written by Rebecca Najjar (20 years)

Congratulations Rebecca!



Binge drinking by definition is consuming four or more standard drinks a day, but is generally used to describe heavy drinking over a short period of time, with the intention of becoming intoxicated. It is often associated with drinking in large groups and anti-social behaviour, which is why binge drinking has become such a problem in our culture. Today's society has easy access to cheap alcohol, which has significantly contributed to the rise in

alcohol abuse and alcohol fuelled violence. Alcohol is the most extensively used recreational drug in Australia, and is widely accepted within society. This creates the mistaken belief that it is "safe" to drink alcohol and "everybody is doing it" Due to the fact alcohol is so readily accepted by society, many people do not consider it harmful, or even a drug. There have been studies however that look at the effects of binge drinking and there is evidence



Be MAD!
Make a Difference!



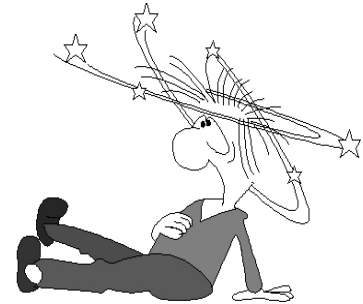


that the consumption of alcohol at harmful levels is increasing in Australia, particularly among young people. A recent survey commissioned by the Alcohol Education Rehabilitation Foundation reveals that at least one third of 18-24 year old male and female Australians consider themselves to be binge drinkers.

Binge drinking is both harmful to your health and your well-being. Short term effects of binge drinking include nausea, vomiting, memory loss, hangovers and shakiness. There is also an increased risk of injury to yourself or others around you. Continuous heavy drinking over a long period can create a physical and psychological dependence on alcohol. Other long term effects include liver and brain damage, neurological disorders and depression. Binge drinking has become a prominent issue in society however, due to the harmful social problems it creates. For example, binge drinking can lead to unsafe or unwanted sex. There are issues of vulnerability while intoxicated, feeling embarrassed by your actions later and also the spending of money on alcohol.

Sadly, binge drinking can also have fatal consequences.

Each year approximately 3000 people die, with a further 65000 hospitalized as a result of alcohol abuse. A large dose of alcohol, such as that a person consumes when binge drinking, can be lethal. Alcohol is a depressant and therefore slows down the respiratory system. Death by alcohol usually results from respiratory failure. Some people will vomit or lose consciousness before reaching this stage, but this varies on how tolerant the individual is to alcohol. Due to the increasing prevalence of this problem, in March 2008 the government budgeted 53 million dollars for a campaign against binge drinking and created new guidelines that lower the number of standard drinks a person can consume before it is considered binge drinking. Binge drinking and the related problems cost Australian taxpayers billions of dollars. It is time to start pushing the message that not drinking alcohol is always an option, and taking into account the dangers of consuming alcohol, it's always the best option.



Save Our Planet! Don't Smoke!

- ⊗ A cigarette-manufacturing machine uses four miles of paper per hour to roll and package cigarettes.
- ⊗ The tobacco industry burns as much as one acre of forest for every acre of tobacco cured, using 12% of all the timber felled in the world.
- ⊗ On average, a tree is cut down for every 300 cigarettes (about a two-week supply for a pack-a-day smoker).
- ⊗ In Brazil, the country's 100,000 tobacco farmers need the wood of 60 million trees a year.
- ⊗ Tobacco cultivation involves a great deal of pesticides, which must be used in the early stages of tobacco growth. Fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides poison farm workers, seep into the soil and pollute waterways and ecological systems, and poison livestock and food crops.
- ⊗ In the U.S., all cigarette butts thrown away in 1993 weighed as much as 30,800 large elephants.
- ⊗ Cigarette butts are washed into rivers, lakes and the ocean from city streets, through storm drains. Seabirds, animals and fish eat them by mistake. Their bodies have no way to digest the filters and they can die.
- ⊗ Cigarette butts take an average of 25 years to decompose.

