



# Social Marketing and Alcohol: a Focus on Parents

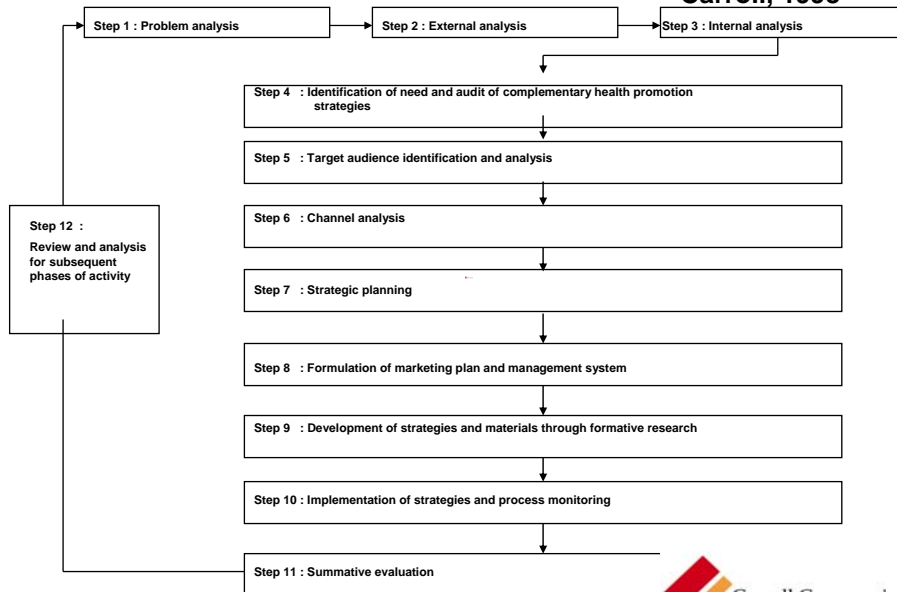
**Tom Carroll**

Social marketing and research consultant

Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing

Thinking Drinking  
Melbourne 23 February, 2005.

## MODEL FOR COMPREHENSIVE CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENT Carroll, 1998





## Parents and alcohol - Key issues

(Shanahan and Hewitt, 1999)

- More concerned about their teenagers trying illicit drugs
- Feel alcohol is promoted and normalised through alcohol marketing (alcohol advertising and sponsorship pervasive)
- Report finding it difficult to talk with their children about alcohol because of their own drinking - don't want to sound like a hypocrite
  - Yet teenagers speak of the benefits of knowing what their parents consider to be acceptable regarding alcohol
- Are looking for advice and strategies once prompted



## Parent newspaper advertisement

### HOW MUCH DID YOUR TEENAGER DRINK LAST NIGHT?



If your teenager was out last night, think for a moment about whether they drank alcohol and, if they did, how much.

Like most parents, you probably couldn't say for certain. Some may even dismiss it with a "well it could be worse, at least it's not drugs" philosophy. Here are some facts that may surprise you.

A recent Australian survey found that more than half of all 15-17 year olds were already drinking alcohol. One in five teenage drinkers had more than 10 standard drinks the last time they drank alcohol, a quantity that is considered a high risk level, even for adults.

Just as alarming as the health risks for young people are other negative consequences – violence,

sex, and physical harm are all very real possibilities associated with this excessive drinking.

Thankfully, there is something that you, as a parent, can do. Contrary to what you may think, talking to your teenager about alcohol is the first and most effective thing. Don't wait until there's a problem – do it now.

New television commercials targeting teenage drinking start this week. It's an ideal opportunity to discuss with your teenager the importance of the choices they make about drinking alcohol.

The influence you can have on these decisions is enormous.

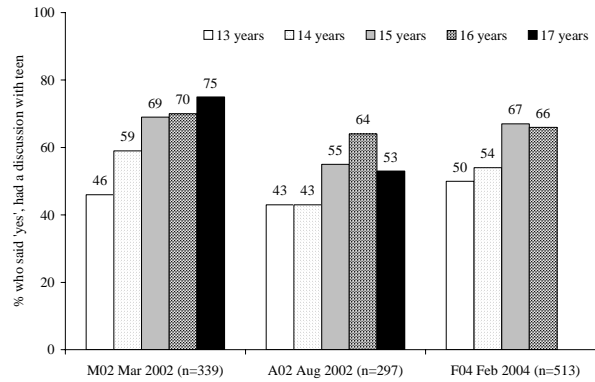
For more information, you can visit our website at [www.nationalalcoholcampaign.health.gov.au](http://www.nationalalcoholcampaign.health.gov.au) or for a campaign brochure call 1800 610 125.

**TEENAGE DRINKING.  
HELP THEM MAKE BETTER DECISIONS.**  
NATIONAL ALCOHOL CAMPAIGN  
A Commonwealth and State/Territory Initiative

Authorised by the Commonwealth Government, Capital Hill, Canberra.



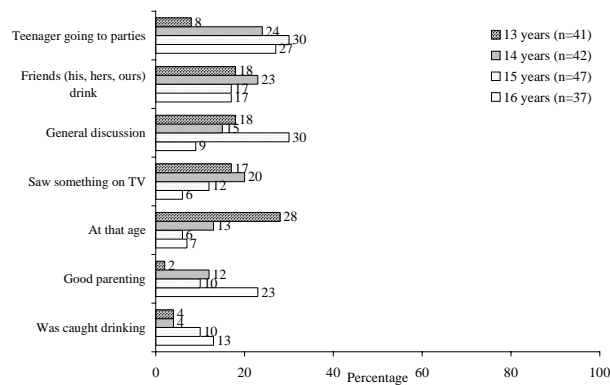
## Parental discussion with their teenager in the last 3 months



(King, Taylor, Carroll, 2005a)



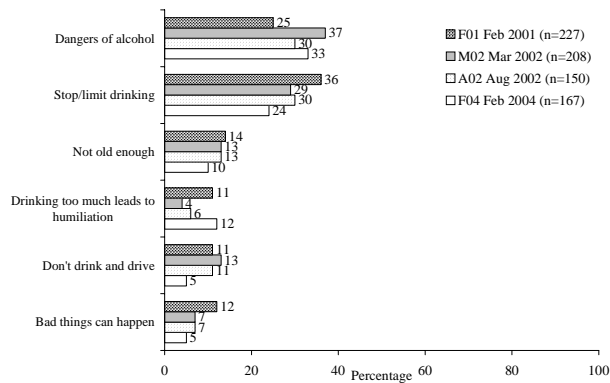
## Reasons for discussion with their teenager by age of teenager (Feb 04)



(King, Taylor, Carroll, 2005a)



## Topics covered in discussion



(King, Taylor, Carroll, 2005a)



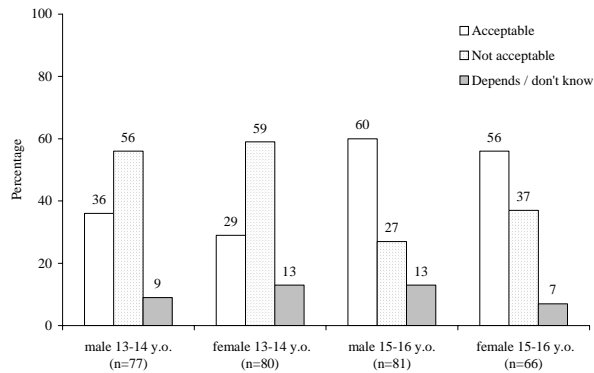
## Parents opinions regarding their teenager drinking (Feb 04)

	13-14 yrs	15-16 yrs
Wouldn't want child to drink at all at this age	82%	59%
Don't mind if drinks in moderation, not drunk	14%	35%
It's normal for teenagers to get drunk now and then	0%	1%

(King, Taylor, Carroll, 2005a)



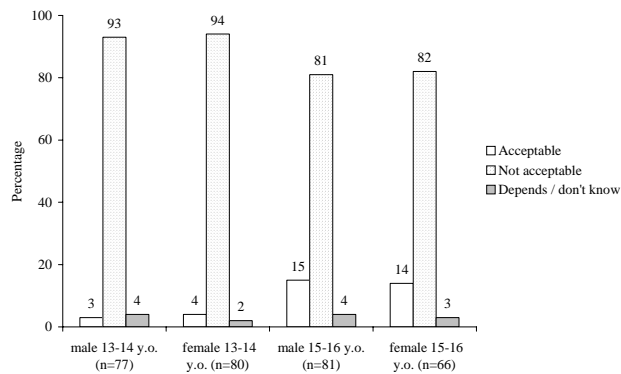
## Parental opinion on teenagers consuming alcohol at home on special occasions (Feb 04)



(King, Taylor, Carroll, 2005a)



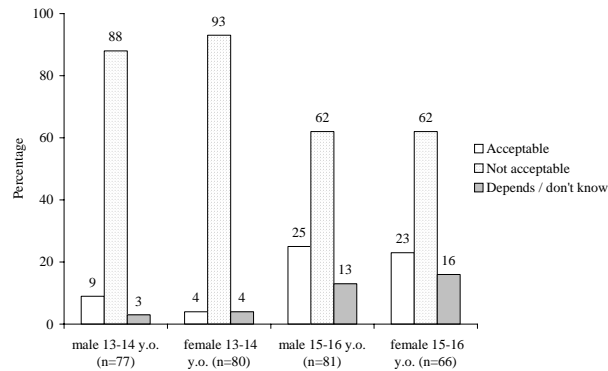
## Parental opinion on teenagers consuming alcohol at home on regular occasions (Feb 04)



(King, Taylor, Carroll, 2005a)



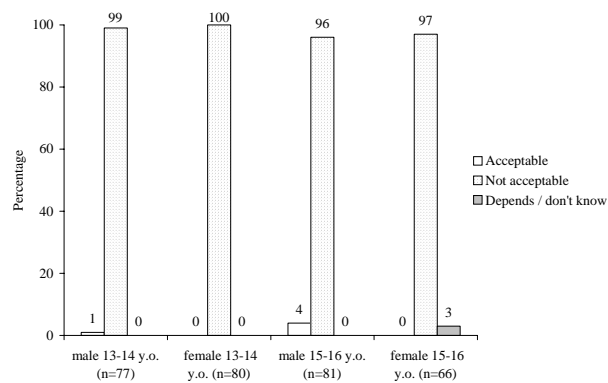
## Parental opinion on providing alcohol for their teenager for a supervised party (Feb 04)



(King, Taylor, Carroll, 2005a)



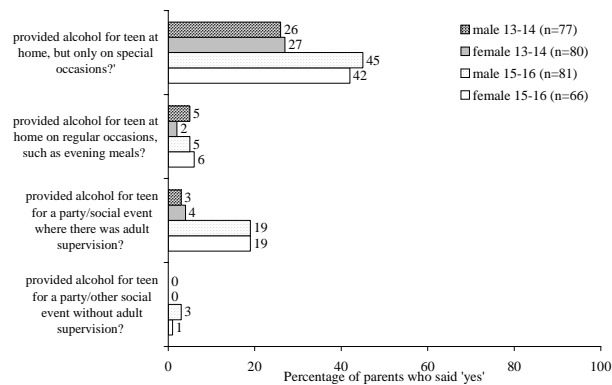
## Parental opinion on providing alcohol for their teenager for an unsupervised party (Feb 04)



(King, Taylor, Carroll, 2005a)



## Parental provision of alcohol to their teenager in the past 3 months (Feb 04)



(King, Taylor, Carroll, 2005a)



## Teenage drinking with adult supervision

- Teenagers were more likely to have consumed alcohol at a lower risk levels than higher risk levels when drinking in their own home
- Teenagers were more likely to have consumed alcohol at a higher risk level when at a friend's house or at a party

(King, Taylor, Carroll, 2005b)



## Parents' rules about drinking

- Teenagers who reported that their parents had either strict or very strict rules regarding drinking reported drinking at lower risk levels
- This represented approximately half of teenagers, who tended to be younger

(King, Taylor, Carroll, 2005b)



## Source of the greatest amount of alcohol consumed on last occasion

	Lower risk drinkers	Higher risk drinkers
Provided/bought by older friends, siblings	28%	51%
Provided by parents to drink under their supervision	39%	22%
From friends of the same age	16%	9%

(King, Taylor, Carroll, 2005b)



## Social Marketing and Behaviour

In conjunction with addressing structural **barriers to change**, personal action will be more likely if:

- Sense of **personal relevance** of the issue (severity and susceptibility)
- Sense of urgency to **take action now**
- Believe that the action being promoted will be **effective in achieving the desired outcome** (response efficacy)
- Believe they are **capable of undertaking that action** (self efficacy)
- Believe the promised **outcome justifies the efforts** required to undertake the promoted behaviour.



## Strategic Planning

- **Social marketing objective**
  - Decrease harms associated with teenage drinking



## Strategic Planning

### ■ Potential behavioural objectives

Increase the likelihood that parents will:

- Discuss alcohol issues with their children
- Delay the onset of drinking amongst their children
- Introduce their children to alcohol in a responsible manner
- Model appropriate drinking behaviour to their children
- Monitor their children's drinking behaviour
- Become involved with and support school-based alcohol prevention policies and initiatives
- Seek information and support to assist in preventing and/or reducing alcohol-related harm
- Discuss alcohol-related issues with other parents



## Strategic Planning

### ■ Potential Communication objectives

#### **Awareness**

- Increase awareness of the risks associated with teenage drinking and intoxication
- Increase awareness of the link between early access and misuse of alcohol and problem behaviours
- Increase awareness of longer term risks of teenage drinking
- Increase awareness of parenting strategies to reduce the risks of alcohol-related harm



## Strategic Planning

### Attitudes

- Reinforcing a sense of responsibility to educate your child about alcohol and the potential harms associated with drinking
- Increase confidence (self-efficacy) amongst parents about addressing drinking issues with their child
- Increase confidence amongst parents that their efforts can reduce the likelihood of their child experiencing alcohol-related harm (response efficacy)
- Increase perceptions of the importance of delaying their child's introduction to alcohol to later teenage years
- Increase perceptions of the importance of monitoring their child's drinking behaviour