

SAFER DRINKING STRATEGIES

Objective: To examine a range of strategies to reduce the harm associated with drinking alcohol

Materials:

- Printed sheet of 'Safer Drinking Strategies'
- Pens
- Butcher paper or post-it notes
- Textas

Students are organised into small groups and the printed sheets of 'Safer Drinking Strategies' are distributed. This sheet provides a list of possible strategies that alcohol drinkers can use to reduce the harm associated with drinking.

Ensure that it is made clear to the students that if a person is under the age of 18 there are other legal consequences that also need to be taken into consideration when considering the harms associated with alcohol use, i.e. it is illegal and you could find yourself in trouble with the law if you are caught drinking.

Students should read the list themselves and identify the Top 5 strategies that they believe are the 'most useful', ranking them from 1-5, with 1 being the most useful. If students ask what 'most useful' means, tell them that at this point in the activity that is up to them to decide.

Once they have chosen their Top 5, get them to turn to a partner and share their list.

- 1** Are there similarities? Are there differences?
- 2** How did you define 'most useful'? How did your partner define 'most useful'?
- 3** Partners should now attempt to agree on a Top 5 together and then rank them from once again from 1-5.

Once the partners have developed their list, the small group should come together and develop a group list in a similar way.

- 1** Groups should write their final list onto butcher paper or post-it notes and display them at the front of the class.
- 2** The teacher should bring the class together and discuss the lists that the groups have developed. What are the similarities and what are the differences? Did different groups have a different definition of what 'most useful' was?
- 3** Are there any of these strategies that are useful for teenagers? Which of these are useful for those teenagers who choose not to drink?

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On your own, choose the Top 5 'most useful' strategies in reducing the harm associated with drinking. If you can think of a strategy that is not included here, make sure you add it to your list.

Rank these strategies from the most useful (1) to the least useful (5).

Strategy	Your Top 5	Group Top 5
Always have a designated driver		
Always have a mobile phone		
Buddy-up and stick with friends		
Don't drink shots		
Don't mix your drinks		
Make sure that the first drink is non-alcoholic		
Always eat a meal before drinking		
Avoid rounds or 'shouts'		
Plan the night and stick to it		
Don't play drinking games		
Don't leave a drink unattended		
Keep hydrated during the night		
Maintain a steady pace		
Look after friends		
Never put someone to bed to 'sleep it off'		
Drink one drink at a time		
Drink slowly – sip don't gulp		
Always know your location in case you need to call for help		
Walk away from confrontations		
Make sure you drink with people you know and trust		
Never leave someone alone who is vomiting		
Know the recovery position		
Know the difference between someone being drunk and being poisoned		
Alternate between alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks		
Limit the amount of alcohol that is taken out		
Limit the amount of money that is taken out		
Avoid drinking before going out, i.e. preloading or 'power drinking'		
Make sure you have planned who you would call if something goes wrong		
Never go out drinking on the spur of the moment		
Don't eat salty foods when drinking		
Don't drink and swim		