



National Binge Drinking Campaign Backgrounder: The National Binge Drinking Strategy and other activity

The National Binge Drinking Strategy

On 10 March 2008, the Australian Government announced a new national strategy to address the binge drinking epidemic among young Australians. Binge drinking among young people is a community wide problem that demands a community wide response, including an emphasis on young people taking greater personal responsibility for their behaviour.

The National Binge Drinking Strategy provides \$53.5 million to address the problem of alcohol misuse among young Australians, including:

- \$14.4 million to invest in community level initiatives to confront the culture of binge drinking, particularly in sporting organisations:
 - \$2 million is being invested in Club Champions – two members from each major sporting club competing in the national competitions across all six sports – to help foster leaders in responsible drinking at the elite level,
 - \$5.2 million will be invested in a significant expansion of the Good Sports initiative of the Australian Drug Foundation – to support local sporting clubs to build a culture of responsible drinking at the grassroots level,
 - \$7.2 million for a community based grants round, which will provide an avenue to establish sustainable partnerships between non government organisations, local government, sporting groups, police and interested parties to work together to develop local solutions to address youth binge drinking within their own community.
- \$19.1 million to intervene earlier to assist young people and ensure that they assume personal responsibility for their binge drinking.
- \$20 million to fund advertising that confronts young people with the costs and consequences of binge drinking.

Other activity

Council of Australian Governments

At the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) meeting on 26 March 2008, members agreed on the importance of tackling alcohol misuse and binge drinking among young people. COAG asked the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy (MCDS) to report on options to reduce binge drinking.

COAG noted the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy's (MCDS) progress in

developing options to reduce binge drinking including in relation to closing hours, responsible service of alcohol, reckless secondary supply of alcohol and the alcohol content in ready-to-drink beverages. COAG is expected to consider the MCDS's final report in 2009.

Preventative Health Taskforce

The Australian Government has established a Taskforce to develop a National Preventative Health Strategy which will focus on obesity, tobacco and excessive consumption of alcohol. In developing the Strategy, the Taskforce will consult widely across the health care sector and broader community.

The Taskforce released a discussion paper, '*Australia: the healthiest country by 2020*', on 10 October 2008, which is the first step in developing the National Preventative Health Strategy. The Taskforce is now calling for submissions on this discussion paper. The closing date for submissions is Friday 2 January 2009.

The Strategy will be developed by June 2009.