

Education and training for young people

By improving young people's awareness of the liquor laws as well as providing education about potential harm and injury and personal responsibility, alcohol misuse amongst young people may be reduced.

Many accords have conducted education schemes targeting young people ranging from providing fully accredited RSA training, to licensee education sessions explaining what expected behaviour both in and around licensed venues is.

RSA training for high school students

This strategy gives year 12 students the opportunity to complete an accredited *Responsible Service of Alcohol* (RSA) course.

Identified as a prevention initiative, it was anticipated that by educating young people before they can legally enter a licensed venue, fewer alcohol related incidents may occur. The participants come away with a greater knowledge of the laws associated with the responsible service and consumption of alcohol and are more aware of the associated risks and consequences.

RSA training also encourages responsible attitudes and awareness of alcohol consumption on a personal level and provides participants with a qualification.

The initiative commonly known as *Think the Drink* originated in Goondiwindi, Queensland and was further developed by the Eurobodalla Liquor Accord.

If your accord is interested in conducting this strategy:

- i. Consider forming a working group to determine how the scheme is going to be funded. Will the accord raise money, utilise accord membership fees, or apply for grants etc. This working group would also undertake the necessary research, promotion and evaluation. Further funding information is available from our information sheet *Funding liquor accord strategies*.
- ii. Obtain quotes from approved RSA training organisations. A list is available from our website at www.olgr.nsw.gov.au/courses_rsa_courses.asp. It is important to note that some training providers do not issue the RSA certificate until the student turns 18, and that some training organisations may not accept students under the age of 18.

- iii. Determine whether the accord will fully subsidise the cost or if a contribution from each student will be asked for. Charging a nominal fee may make the students more accountable as they are more likely to attend training if they have paid money towards the course.
- iv. Advertise for expressions of interest and the number of available positions in your local paper or speak to your local high school about passing the information on to students to register their interest.

Licensee engagement with high school students

This scheme educates future patrons while they are still at school and gives Licensees, police and other parties an opportunity to speak to students in an informal setting about issues including acceptable behaviour on and around licensed venues, as well as their behaviour on their way home from a night out.

If your accord is interested in conducting this strategy:

1. The accord should identify members and stakeholders willing to present information to the students. This information session can be held at the high school (consult with the Police youth liaison officer) or alternatively many accords conduct sessions on a licensed premises.
2. Topics for discussion can include:
 - Licensees - to speak on different topics of concern they have in their venues as well as to volunteer host venues.
 - Police - to speak on the licensing laws as well as some common criminal offences that occur.
 - TAFE teacher - to talk about signage, fines for venues, as well as the RSA and Responsible Conduct of Gambling (RCG) courses.
 - Council's Road Safety Officer, Community Safety Officer or Youth Safety Officer/Worker - to talk about drink driving crash rates for young people between the ages of 17-25 or any other youth related issues in the area.

- Ambulance representative - to talk about the high number of hospital admissions as a result of alcohol-related accidents and violence.
- Area Health Service - to talk about the negative health effects of risky drinking and alcohol abuse.
- Transport provider: the local bus line company to donate resources to commute the students from school to the licensed venues and then back to school.
- Youthsafe: to talk about the range of risk factors associated with drinking that work together to increase the risk of injury to young people. Youthsafe is a not for profit organisation and peak body for preventing serious injury in young people aged 15 to 25 years in NSW.

Promotion

Promoting the strategy is vital to its success and sustainability. Promotion may be done by:

- media release – draft a release detailing your latest initiative and distribute it to local papers, radio stations and television networks. You can use the draft media releases provided with this information sheets as a guide.
- OLGR publications – let us know about your strategies so that we can promote them in our liquor + gaming magazine, in eNews, our electronic newsletter, and our website.

Evaluation

A critical component of any strategy is to assess its impact, for example:

- obtain feedback from licensees about whether there has been an increase in the level of knowledge younger patrons have regarding acceptable behaviour on and around licensed premises.
- venues that record refusal of entry to minors in their incident register may over a period of three to six months notice a reduction in the number of incidents where Under 18's attempt to gain entry to the licensed venues
- after completion of RSA training, conduct a survey of all year 12 students, even students who don't undertake the course. The reason for obtaining information from students who do not participate in the course is to gather base data on drinking patterns that can be used to implement further strategies, eg an educational program targeting secondary supply.

Further details are available from our information sheet *Evaluating your accord strategies*.

Benefits

Benefits include:

- creating awareness about the harm alcohol can cause if misused and how to avoid this
- a reduction in alcohol related incidents involving young people
- raising the accord profile within the community.

For further information contact the Liquor Accord Delivery Unit on 02 9995 0312 or accords@communities.nsw.gov.au