

# the drinking & teens project

THE UNIVERSITIES OF NEW SOUTH WALES, QUEENSLAND, NEWCASTLE, & TASMANIA AND CURTIN UNIVERSITY

The Drinking and Teens Project is now in its 8<sup>th</sup> year and is one of the longest running studies of youth alcohol behaviours in the world. This would not have been possible without the commitment and support of our participants – Thank you!

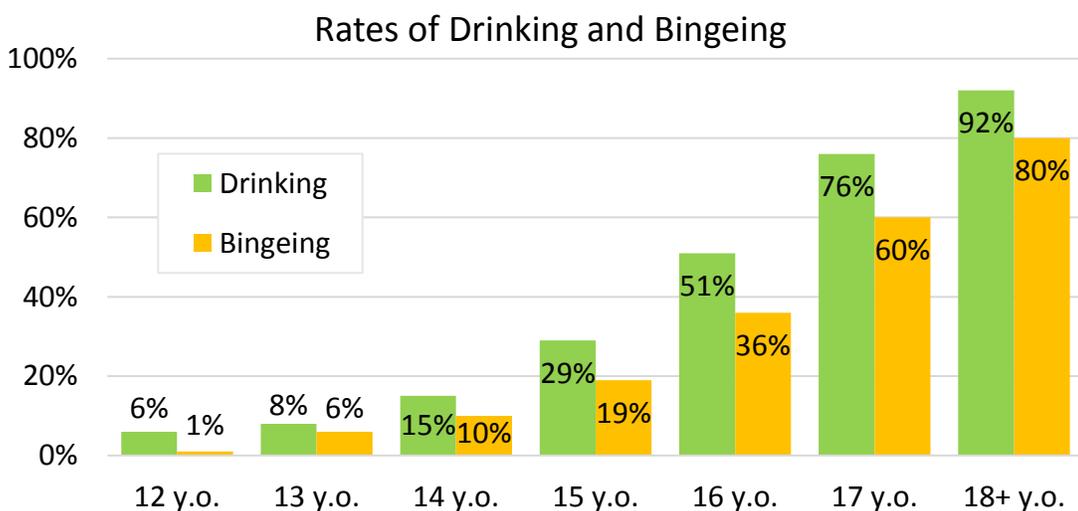
Your experiences in early adulthood are vital for us to understand the factors which influence the way that you and your friends use alcohol and how your early experiences with alcohol influence you as adults.

We understand that you may now lead very busy lives. To say thanks for your continued contribution to our study, we will be **increasing your reimbursement to \$50** starting from the upcoming 9th wave of data collection.



## Rates of alcohol use in early adulthood

The graph below shows the percentage of people in the study who reported drinking and bingeing each year through from 12 years old to 18 years old and beyond. The majority of people who used alcohol reported drinking between 1 and 4 standard drinks on a drinking occasion. However, binge drinking has increased over time, with around 80% reporting drinking 4 or more standard drinks on at least one



in the past year. We have included some information about early initiation of drinking and how it is related to later binge drinking on the next page. You also reported that the majority of your friends have tried alcohol and drink alcohol regularly.

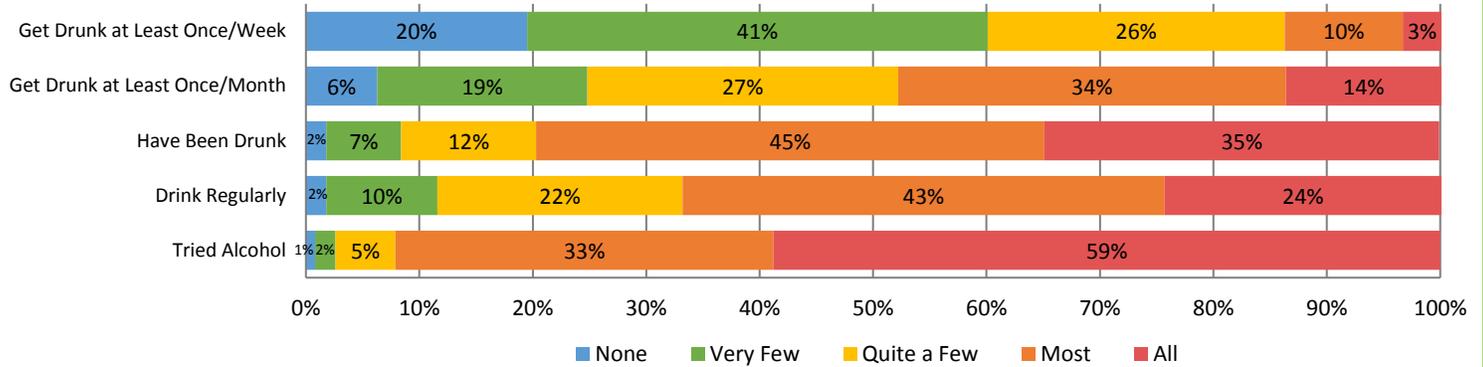
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### Friends' Experiences

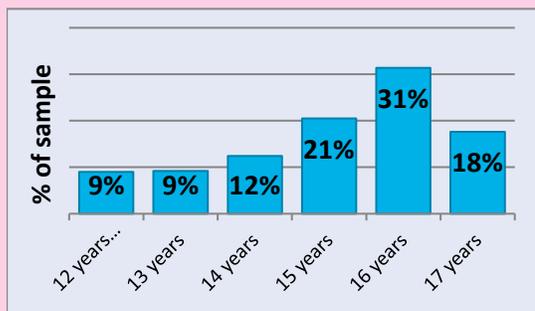


### Does drinking alcohol early increase later binge drinking?

Results from the 5 years of data from this study showed that starting to drink alcohol earlier in adolescence increased the risk of binge drinking later in adolescence.

Half of adolescents reported alcohol use and 36% reported bingeing at wave 5/Year 11 (average age 16.9 years). This was similar for males and females.

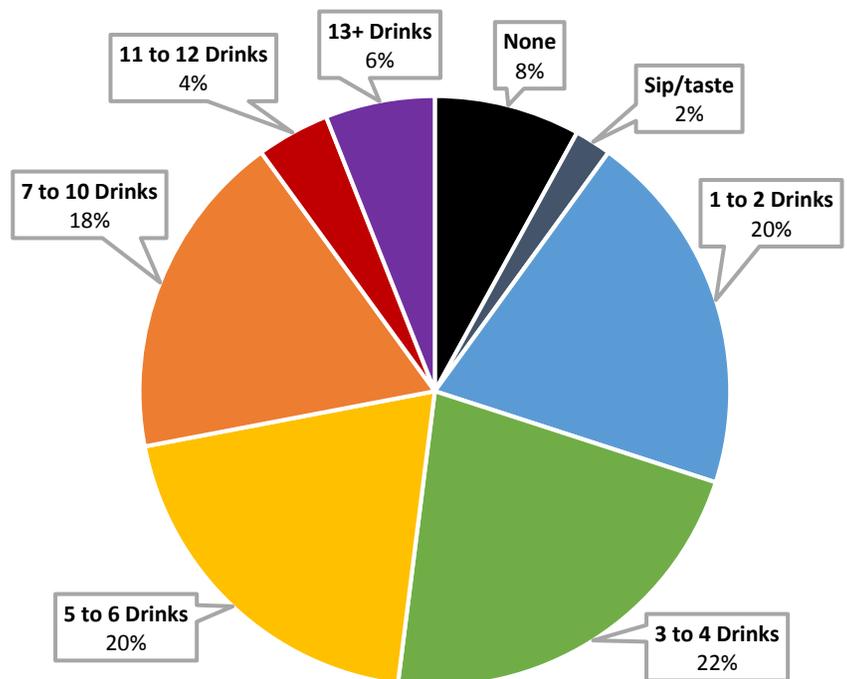
#### Percent of drinkers initiating at each age



After considering other important variables, including individual, family and peer factors, we found that earlier age of initiation was significantly related to binge drinking in Year 11.

Initiating alcohol use earlier in adolescence was associated with an increased risk of binge drinking in late secondary school, supporting an argument for delaying alcohol initiation for as long as possible to reduce the risk for problematic use in later adolescence and the alcohol-related harms including injuries and accidents.

### Usual Number of Standard Drinks



### Interviews

You may have been contacted for a telephone interview with our team or be invited to do so over the coming years. We are collecting some more in-depth information about your alcohol use in this interview. You will be reimbursed for completing this interview with us.

### Updating Contact Details

Please let us know if you have:

- New emails, phone numbers, and addresses
- Any relatives, friends, or a partner we can reach you through
- Been receiving a paper survey and would like to change to online
- Been receiving the online survey to your family's email address and would prefer to have it sent to your direct email address