

How to help students handle the real world of alcohol

The Problem

The real world of parties, and even of 'just hanging around with friends', is fraught with danger. It's where teenagers are confronted with new experiences and new challenges. It's where they're finding out about themselves and other people.

It's where they're tempted to do things they may not really want to do, just to be part of the group. It's where they want to show that they're an adult, a grown-up and independent. It's where they can be pressured into doing things they don't really want to do, like drink more than they want or hop into a car with a drunk driver. Too often they succumb to this pressure; as do many adults.

To handle the real world of alcohol, teenagers need real world strategies and real world skills. Of course, given enough time, teenagers will learn these things themselves – through experience – but too many mistakes get made along the way, some with very serious consequences. So, why leave it to chance?

The Solution

Mark McPherson helps teenagers develop a set of realistic strategies (involving planning, diplomacy and assertiveness), and the social communication skills to put them into practice, to:

- Refuse the offer of a drink yet maintain prestige with friends – at parties, in Licensed Venues, anywhere;
- Refuse the offer of a lift with a drunk driver, or anyone they don't want to go with, and get home safely some other way, despite high-spirited friends egging them on to 'hop in'; and
- much, much more.

Mark is a former teacher with over 30 years experience in the design, development and delivery of alcohol education. He is entertaining, engaging, thought-provoking, motivating and informative. He is known for leaving teenagers with strategies they find acceptable and which they can immediately use. He is practical, pragmatic and down-to-earth.

Mark's presentations are participatory and experiential and he is happy talking to small groups as well as presenting to large audiences – at school or at school camps and retreats.

Mark's Five Principles

At the heart of many of Mark's presentations is his Five Principles for Handling the Real World of Alcohol:

1. Understand that alcohol is associated with both pleasure and pain.
2. Set high standards and obey the law.
3. Anticipate 'problem situations'.
4. Develop a repertoire of realistic and personalized strategies.
5. Become proficient at delivering the strategies in real-world conditions.

Mark uses these principles as a base for many of his presentations but does so without moralizing. Mark works with you to develop a shared vision. The result is a presentation or workshop that gives students the maximum benefit – maximum learning with maximum enjoyment. And, as a bonus, he can help students learn the art of saying 'no' to sexual harassment, etc – just ask.

Who is Mark McPherson?

Mark has been a teacher (Personal Development, Health, Science), Senior Education Officer (Family Planning Association; Drug and Alcohol Studies, TAFE; PDHPE, Board of Studies; Infection Control, Health Promotion, Health), lecturer (Health Education, Teaching Methods), research officer, and manager and team leader (Drug & Alcohol, Public Health and Health Promotion; Drug Programs Coordination Unit and Principal Policy Adviser, NSW Police).

Mark has a long track record in the design, development and delivery of alcohol education for youth, including the production of Teaching Packages, and he is an experienced presenter and teacher.

Contact **Mark McPherson** today and ask him how he can help your students

mark@markmcperson.com.au

0403 914 835

www.markmcperson.com.au

