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## Community Research

### Alcohol a community concern

**What better way to find out what the issues around young people and drugs and alcohol are, than to ask our own community.**

That is exactly what Youth Solutions has done.

From October – November 2007, Youth Solutions conducted a survey with over 500 members of our community, including parents and young people. The survey was handed out at a number of functions and events as well as being available online on the Youth Solutions Website.

*"We asked parents and young people across the region, a number of questions such as what issues concerned them and where they access help and information. This information has been crucial in planning to work in our community over the next three years",* stated A/CEO Debbie Roberts.

The messages from young people and parents alike were fairly consistent, with an overwhelming majority of the 500 participants, listing Alcohol as the drug of most concern in our community.

Alcohol is entrenched in today's Australian culture. Notable moments in our history are linked to it, including major sporting events and key celebrations and rites of passage.

In our society many may find the choice not to drink a difficult choice to make as they are pressured by others in social situations to drink.

Each year 3000 Australians die and another 10,000 need ongoing medical treatment through alcohol related harm. The annual cost in alcohol related absenteeism is 7.5 million working days and the economic impact of its misuse is \$15.3 billion.



*A/Manager Rebecca Whitford and Administration Officer Sue Willoughby at our Community Research Stall, Macarthur Square Kellicar Lane*

The culture of drinking in Australia is a real community concern. It is important for parents as well as all adults in our community to consider the impact of role modelling when it comes to their own behaviours around alcohol and young people. Often young people lack the support and the skills to be able to say no to drinking alcohol in social situations.

*"Youth Solutions would like to call the community to action. Unsafe use of Alcohol has far reaching consequences, with damaging effects including; relationship breakdowns, malicious damage, assault, loss of employment, criminal convictions and various health problems".*

*"When Youth Solutions works with young people, we try to teach them ways keep themselves safe whether they choose to drink or not drink alcohol"* states A/CEO Debbie Roberts.

Watch this space for further updates on our Community Research Results. A full copy of the report will soon be available on request.



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## Working with our Community

Welcome to the first edition of Solutions for 2008! To keep you up to date with our projects and activities, we plan to publish three newsletters this year along with a special Christmas flyer. As long term supporters of our Service, Snap Printing of Campbelltown and Ingleburn have been kind enough to again donate the printing of these newsletters. In between time if you would like to know more about what's on, please check out our ever changing website [www.youthsolutions.com.au](http://www.youthsolutions.com.au).

A continuing challenge for Youth Solutions is managing our growth while making sure that we have adequate resources to deliver innovative drug and alcohol projects and activities. The Staff and Board recently worked

together to plan for the next three years (July 2008 – June 2011). Our core funding is provided by NSW Health through Sydney South West Area Health Service, and we are looking forward to their support over this next period.

We welcome the attention *Alcohol* is getting at a Federal level as well as at our local community level. From my long involvement with Youth Solutions, working with our young people and our broader community, I feel strongly about Alcohol being 'on the agenda'.

Our recent Community Research Project highlighted the issue of Alcohol as the drug of most concern, raised by young people and parents alike. Hopefully families in our community will talk more about Alcohol as this message is brought into more living rooms with the Federal Government's current focus on binge drinking as well as this years' message for Drug Action Week, which is: *Alcohol is a Drug - TOO!*

Alcohol continues to cause incredible harm to our young people, and we need to at a community level rethink the way alcohol fits into celebrations.

A wave of enthusiasm is spreading through our Service with the show of support from a number of businesses and individuals who have already jumped on board to sponsor and support our 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebrations and Annual Charity Event.

Our sincere thanks are extended to the following people for their recent generous donations: the Staff of Delfin Lend Lease \$220, Board Member and Annual Golf Day Coordinator David Michell \$200 along with Board Member and Treasurer Peter Campbell \$200.

Enjoy the rest of Solutions.

**Debbie Roberts**  
Acting Chief Executive Officer

## Inspiring Youth Solutions

CD Rom Resource Now Available



that will enable other communities to implement a Youth Drug Forum.

A *Youth Forum* is an example of peer led community action. Young people are actively involved in the process of identifying youth related issues of concern relevant to their community and subsequent solutions to address these concerns.

*Youth Forums* provide an excellent opportunity to place young people's issues firmly on a community's agenda and can act as a catalyst for action.

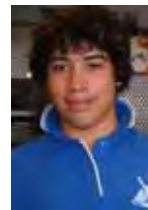
This user friendly resource contains all the necessary background information, comprehensive workshops, slides, handouts and planning tips required to successfully facilitate the entire Forum process.

For further information or to obtain a copy of the CD Rom please contact us.

The Youth Drug Forum Manual CD Rom, which has been funded by the IMB Community Foundation, is a valuable and comprehensive resource

## Perspective

Work Experience



(Edited by Youth Solutions)

I have completed 35 hours with Youth Solutions, which was a requirement of my placement with the Macarthur Workplace Learning Program.

The work that I did when I was on placement with Youth Solutions included: how to handle incoming and outgoing mail and I attended a staff meeting with all the staff members where I got to know a whole lot more about Youth Solutions. Other office duties included: making checklists, creating a bebo for Youth Solutions and attending the McDonald's Charity Night.

What I actually got out of the placement was how important everyone's role is. It also showed me how much I want to work in business. It gave me experience in other areas which I didn't have before and has strengthened me in areas that I had experience.

**Adam Taylor**

[youthsolutions.com.au](http://youthsolutions.com.au)

## Helpful Phone No.s

Drug & Alcohol Treatment Access Line  
Sydney South West Area Health Service  
9616 8586

ADIS (Alcohol Drug Info Service)  
24 hour free service  
1800 422 599

For Emergencies  
000

After Hours Counselling  
Lifeline 13 11 14

## Helpful Websites

State Health Information  
[www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au)

Comprehensive drug information site  
[www.druginfo.adf.org.au](http://www.druginfo.adf.org.au)

Provides accessible counseling  
service to all Australian children  
[www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au)

Web based service that inspires  
young people to help themselves  
through tough times.  
[www.reachout.com.au](http://www.reachout.com.au)

# Drugs in Focus: Ice

The results from Youth Solutions' recent Community Research Project, highlighted 'Ice' as a 'Drug of Concern' for many parents and young people in our community. 'Ice' or 'Crystal Meth' has received considerable media coverage over the last year, possibly because of the link between its use and aggression.

'Ice' or 'Crystal Meth' is a highly purified crystalline form of methamphetamine. It is a man-made stimulant that acts on the central nervous system, speeding up the messages that go between the brain and the body.

'Ice' is different from speed and base in terms of its purity. Ice is around 80% pure while other forms of methamphetamine that are typically available in Australia are around 10-20% pure. 'Ice' may have a stronger effect and may also cause stronger side effects.

The effects of all drugs including 'Ice' can vary from person to person, depending on the individual's size, weight, health, how much and how the drug is taken and whether other drugs are taken.

### Some Effects of Ice may include:

- Euphoria (or high)
- Confidence
- Alertness
- Motivation
- Feeling more energetic
- Sweaty or Clammy Skin
- Dilated or Large Pupils
- Agitation
- Talkativeness

If you or someone you know are experiencing problems or would like advice on 'Ice', please contact Youth Solutions for Referral, or alternatively consult your GP or other health professional.

Adapted from the following sources:  
Drug Info Clearing House  
<http://www.druginfo.adf.org.au>

Fast Facts on Ice Pamphlet  
The National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre

To find out more about ice or to download an Ice Fact Sheet log onto  
[www.druginfo.adf.org.au](http://www.druginfo.adf.org.au).

Copies of the Fast Facts on Ice pamphlet can be purchased from The National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre.

## Drug Action Week

### Alcohol is a Drug TOO!

During Drug Action Week (22 – 28 June 2008) the theme being promoted will be loud and strong – **Alcohol is a drug – TOO!**

Drug Action Week 2008 is a week of activities held nationally to raise awareness about alcohol and other drug issues across the country. The week will also highlight the achievements of those in the AOD sector who work tirelessly to reduce alcohol and drug – related harm.

Drug Action Week is an initiative of the Alcohol and other Drugs Council of Australia (ADCA).

Youth Solutions will celebrate Drug Action Week 2008, by offering FREE Responsible Service of Alcohol Training across Macarthur (see page 2). For further information check out the website  
[www.youthsolutions.com.au](http://www.youthsolutions.com.au).

## Parent Project

### Camden and Wollondilly

Funded by the Commonwealth Government through their Community Partnerships Initiative, the Strengthening Parents Project will run a media campaign for parents in the **Camden** and **Wollondilly** regions later this month.

So be sure to check out the local editions of your newspaper and listen to local radio station C91.3FM so you can give your feedback to Youth Solutions.

Surveys conducted with parents and young people in the two local government areas highlighted Alcohol as the top drug of concern in our community.

Hopefully, the campaign will encourage parents and their teenagers to talk about the issue of Alcohol.

Access to help and information for parents will also be available on the Youth Solutions website to support the campaign message.

## Uni Campaign

### Party Hard Think Safe

Earlier this year, Youth Solutions worked with Globalive to promote the safer celebrating message, Party Hard - Think Safe! during 2008 Orientation Week at both the University of Western Sydney Campbelltown Campus and the University of Wollongong.

The information stalls included an alcohol knowledge survey which was positively received by all.

Resources distributed included Party Hard Think Safe campaign stickers and drink coolers, NSW Health 'Drug Safety - Guide to a Better Night' z-card, Youth Solutions Guide to Planning for Safer Celebrations, NDARC Drug Fact Sheets, Youth Solutions Drug and Alcohol Services Referral Booklet and Service Information Card.



Our Corporate Sponsors for 2007 – 2008 include:  
Macarthur Wealth Management  
AMP Foundation  
The Protectors Insurance Brokers  
Rotary Club of Narellan  
IMB Community Foundation

Congratulations to recipients of the Services recent **Acknowledgment Awards for 15 Years Service to Youth Solutions** Linda Goldspink-Lord, Deborah Gander and Helen Clancy. **10 Years Service to Youth Solutions** Debbie Roberts and Sue Willoughby. **5 Years Service to Youth Solutions** David Michell and Marcia Pain.

Board Acknowledgement

- Geoff Ellis – President
- Tony Ross – Vice President
- Peter Campbell – Treasurer
- Emma Mcfarlane
- Karen Dries
- Gordon Hay
- Jennifer Gleeson
- David Michell
- Lisa Hunt

Youth Solutions Team

- Debbie Roberts  
Acting Chief Executive Officer
- Rebecca Whitford  
Acting Manager
- Geraldine Dean  
Communications Project Officer
- Sue Willoughby  
Administration Officer
- Marcia Pain  
Finance Assistant

Strategic Direction

Our Mission

Supporting young people to make safer life choices to achieve their full potential

Our Vision

Creating solutions with young people, families and the community to promote positive life outcomes by preventing harmful drug use



This is a Quality Improvement Council Accredited Service



# Diary Dates

**Youth Week**  
5 – 13 April 2008

**Drug Action Week**  
22 – 28 June 2008

**World No Tobacco Day**  
Thursday 31 May 2008

**20th Birthday Celebrations and Annual Charity Event**  
Saturday 26 July 2008  
Campbelltown Catholic Club  
Tickets and Enquiries 4628 2319

## McDonalds Charity Night



Our McDonald's stores across the Macarthur region have supported us for over six years now, through the McDonald's community program, 'Committed to caring for the community'. This years' Charity Night which was held Wednesday 9 April raised \$1927. Thank you to all those who supported this event.

Left: Sue Willoughby, Jordan Ayres and Adam Taylor

## Annual Charity Event

### Join in our 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebrations

Youth Solutions is celebrating 20 years of service to the community. The Service was established in 1988 as the Macarthur Drug and Alcohol Youth Project (MDAYP) and has been managed by a community committee ever since.

The Service was set up to work with young people 12-25 years living in Macarthur (Campbelltown, Camden and Wollondilly Local Government Areas) and has continued to receive core funding by the NSW Health Department via the Area Health Service.

This years' Charity Event will include a trip down memory lane, and we'd encourage all those who have been involved with the Service over the years to join us. An 80s theme will be celebrated at this years' Charity Event in salute of the 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebrations. There are many opportunities for involvement including: Corporate Sponsorship, donating items for the Silent Auction or by attending the event. AMP Foundation and Macarthur Wealth Management will again be our major supporters of this event.

The event will be held on Saturday 26 July at the Campbelltown Catholic Club in the new 'Cube' Convention and Entertainment Centre and will include a three course dinner and entertainment. To book your tickets or to enquire about other opportunities for involvement contact Youth Solutions on 4628 2319 or email [info@youthsolutions.com.au](mailto:info@youthsolutions.com.au).



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