How much is a standard drink?

- A standard drink contains 10 grams of pure alcohol.¹

- Different types of alcoholic drinks contain different amounts of pure alcohol. A wine glass can hold two or more standard drinks.¹

- Cocktails may contain as many as five or six standard drinks, depending on the recipe.¹

- Mixing different alcoholic drinks, or mixing alcoholic drinks with other drugs may mean you take more risks and put yourself and others in danger.²

Guidelines for young people under 18 years

- There is no guaranteed safe level of drinking alcohol for young people under 18; not drinking alcohol is the safest option.¹

- Children under 15 years of age are at the greatest risk of harm from drinking. For this age group, not drinking is especially important.¹

- The safest option for young people aged 15-17 years, apart from not drinking alcohol, is to delay beginning to drink alcohol for as long as possible.¹

Did you know alcohol lowers inhibitions?

You might find yourself taking risks you wouldn’t normally take if you hadn’t been drinking, such as having sex. This could lead to unwanted pregnancy, or sexually transmitted infections. Fighting or vomiting after drinking could make you feel embarrassed or be excluded from your friendship group. Drinking can make you more likely to be taken advantage of.¹² One in two Australians aged 15-17 who get drunk will do something they regret.²

Alcohol can disrupt brain development during the very important period of growth that occurs between 12 years and the mid 20s.³ Alcohol can affect your brain so that you might have problems remembering things and you might not do as well at school.¹³

Standard drinks: each one of these drinks equals approximately one standard drink.
What is the law regarding young people and alcohol?
In WA people under 18 years of age are not allowed to buy, possess, drink or bring alcohol on to licensed premises, even if they are with their parents or guardian.⁴

What are the short term risks of drinking too much alcohol?
Depending on how much a person drinks, they could become less coordinated, have slower reflexes, not be able to concentrate as well, have blurry vision, feel nauseous, vomit or even go into a coma.¹

These effects may place young people at risk of serious injury or even death, by being involved in road accidents, violent assaults, unwanted sex or sexual assaults, suicide or drowning.¹²

Every week, 70 young people under the age of 25 will be hospitalised due to alcohol-related assaults, and 4 young people under the age of 25 will die due to alcohol related injuries.²

What is risky drinking?
There is no level of drinking for young people under 18 that can be guaranteed to be ‘low risk’; that is why not drinking alcohol is the safest option.

For adults, regularly drinking 3 or more drinks is associated with increased risk, and drinking 5 or more drinks on a single occasion is associated with increased risk of doing something they will regret, getting in trouble with the law, fighting with friends or family members, getting injured, and other unnecessary risks.¹

The risk can change depending on the circumstances - drinking quickly before driving is more risky than drinking slowly at home over dinner. It can also vary depending on an individual’s characteristics as some people are more vulnerable to the effects of alcohol.¹

Can drinking alcohol place you at long term health risks?
Yes. Continuous heavy drinking over a long period of time can cause heart disease, cancers, liver disease, brain damage, memory loss, sexual dysfunction (especially male impotency), risks to a pregnant woman’s unborn child, emotional and mental health problems such as depression and anxiety, problems at school, work and with relationships.¹²

Where can I get further information or help?
- For more information about the short and longer term effects of alcohol on teenagers, visit www.druginfo.adf.org.au
- To discover the truth about some common alcohol myths, head to www.decd.sa.gov.au/drugstrategy/files/links/teenalchohol_factsheet4_we.pdf
- For information about Australian alcohol guidelines and tips on how to keep your alcohol-related risks low go to www.alcohol.gov.au
- Should you like further information or to talk to someone about alcohol, drugs, mental health or other issues young people face, see WANADA Youth www.wanada.org.au/Youth or phone the Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS) on 9422 5000 or *toll free 1800 198 024

REFERENCES