

CIRCULAR HEAD

Drug and Alcohol
Forum 2012



NOVEMBER 2012

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About the facilitator



Mo O'Meara of MOHOW prepared this report (mo@mohow.com).

Great care has gone into accurately recording the views and ideas of young people involved in the event. Mo's experience includes Lead facilitation of:

- Numerous community planning processes across regional Australia
- National Youth Roundtable 2005 -8
- 2020 Youth Summit, Canberra 2008
- Australian Youth Forum consultation and launch
- 2012 Youth Agriculture Think Tank Canberra
- National Youth Policy facilitation in Sri-Lanka, Bangladesh and Maldives
- National Youth Council development Kuwait (current).

1. Circular Head Drug and Alcohol Forum - How it worked

Circular Head Council in partnership with Australian Red Cross and Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT) and local young leaders hosted the event at the Smithton Recreation Centre. A feature of the event was the further involvement and support provided by a range of other agencies and their staff including:

- Wyndarra Centre Inc
- Rural Health Tasmania Inc
- Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation
- Flinders Island Aboriginal Centre
- Community Connections Inc (SWOOPP)
- The Salvation Army – North West Bridge Drug and Alcohol Program
- Tasmanian Youth Forum Members (TYF)
- Waratah-Wynyard Council
- Magistrate Don Jones
- Tasmania Police

The event commenced with a Welcome to Country - immediately placing the forum as a significant cultural event in the community.

The event was further enhanced by the guest appearance and presentation by local Magistrate Don Jones and senior members of the Tasmanian Police Force.

The process was facilitated by Michael (Mo) O'Meara and focussed on more than identifying the problems of drugs and alcohol. The process sought to engage young people in more than a discuss about the problems associated with drug and alcohol use. It sort to take young people through an appreciative inquiry that enabled them to talk with each other about:

- What they value
- What they want to achieve - a vision
- Their ideas for achieving their preferred future in relation to alcohol and drugs

Topics	Description
"Hand it Over!"	Responsible Serving of Alcohol
Behind the Wheel	Drink Driving
Party Animal	Good Night vs. Bad Night!
Feel the Love	Relationships and AOD use
Law and Order	Laws to do with AOD use
Let's Talk	Mental Health and AOD use
Use and Abuse	What is the impact of using and abusing drugs? What are alternative Healthy Highs?
Let's Get Physical	Alcohol , Drugs & Sports

The event was structured to enable young people to participate in small group discussion. Local community experts conducted small sessions - looking at the topic of alcohol and drugs through the follows lenses: In excess of 80 year 10 students from Smithton High School and Circular head Christian School attended. They chose two topic groups.

The morning session invited young people to discuss the topic. In the afternoon session, young people returned to one of their morning groups to develop projects to achieve the preferred future.

2. Executive Summary – What was achieved

The Smithton Recreation Centre venue provided a positive backdrop for the forum. The initial morning session was held within eye shot of the Circular Head Wall of Fame - a powerful expression of a community that recognises and values the role of local people past and current in shaping the physical, social and economic future of their community.

Young people walking past the wall and showing friends images of family members. The facilitator posed a question to young people at the forum - what do they want to be famous for achieving in relation to alcohol and drugs in their community. The other positive backdrop to the forum included the recent history of young people achieving a youth space in Smithton - a direct outcome of a youth forum three years ago. This also enabled the facilitator to remind those present that today's forum is far more than a 'talk fest' - that there is a track record in this community of making things happen following such events.

The positive involvement of local community is a feature that young people want to continue and build upon. Young people at the forum spoke very highly of people who currently provide youth support services in their community. They shared their own positive experiences and the importance of doing things that have features including

- Rare
- Courage
- Persistence
- Satisfying

They value local schools and the sporting and community resources that already exist. Their vision for the future is based on their own life experience and that they value:

- Happier families
- Safety
- More support from friends and older siblings
- Young people training their peers
- Positive reputation
- Greater awareness of Alcohol and drug issues
- Healthy highs

Their vision for the future of Circular Head places a great emphasis on teamwork and opportunities to work together with each other and key adults in their community to make a difference. They want to be known for:

- Helping people
- Hard workers
- Respected
- Responsible

Young people want to be happy, save lives and make change. To do this they want to develop:

- Positive relationship and education programs with police

- Campaigns for safe driving supported by transport initiatives
- Free and fun activities that promote positive fun
- Improvements to their current youth space resource
- Safe spaces and places for young people escaping the relationship impacts of drugs and alcohol within families
- Access to confidential mental health emergency health responses
- Incentive based responsible servicing of alcohol

Young people then developed projects that related to these goals and each table group presented a priority project for consideration by the large group.

The event culminated with an exercise where each young person used 'sticky dots' to express where they would prioritise their time and resources - while this was not a formal vote - it certainly identified that young people were attracted to ideas that raise awareness and that they can contribute to making happen. Rather than being the recipient of programs, they want to involve their family, peers, schools and broader community in creating a positive community that understands the issues and engages in creating awareness and positive engagement in healthy fun.

3. Priority ideas & projects

The following project ideas were developed by each of the table groups. They are presented in the order of priority (as represented by number of sticky dots placed on the idea by young people). The relative priority is not a vote of which idea is 'best' or 'worthy'. It is however an indication of the level of interest by those young people at the forum in actioning a topic or idea. It provides an indicator of the level of interest that the young people may have in contributing to the further development of each initiative. A lower priority may be an excellent idea - but may need more effort to achieve engagement of young people in making the idea happen.

In order of priority:

(Note: similar projects were groups under broad topic areas)

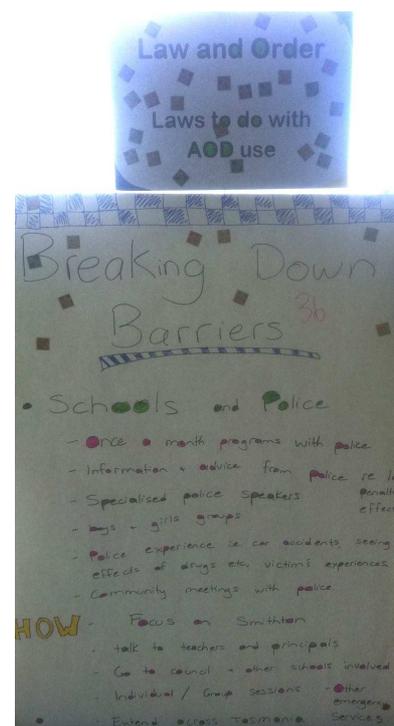
1. Law and Order: Breaking Down Barriers

Schools and Police 36

- Once a month programs with police
- Information and advice from police – re law, penalties and effects
- Specialised police speakers
- Boys and girls groups
- Police experience i.e. Car accidents, seeing effects of drugs, victims experiences
- Community meetings with police

HOW

- Focus on Smithton



- Talk to teachers and principals
- Go to council and other schools involved
- Individual group sessions
- Other emergency services
- Extend across Tasmania

2. **Healthy Highs & Party Animal: Free fun**

Free fun for Group involvement 34

- Cinema (indoor/outdoor)
- Skirmish
- Water sports!!!
- Courtesy bus to and from Stanley during summer
- Government funded
- Trips to Marrawah – surfing / comps
- Zorb ball
- Something in old butter factory

Be in control be yourself 20

- Choose who you have fun with
- Respect yourself
- Understanding your limits

Increase current 7-up+ activities 18

- Venue at night with live music
- Pool table and other activities
- Contact council, youth leaders 7up, approach Kimberly, progress group and schools
- Advertisement
 - Spreading ideas
 - Word of mouth
- Movies – projector
- Apply for grants
- Saturday every second week
- Support for other schools – open it up NW coast
- Prevent alcohol and drugs – bouncers

- Student art
- New bean bags
- Bright colours
- Tables
- Music – rock, acoustic, DJ

3. **Feel the love - relationships**

Somewhere for you 31

- Place to go when parents are fighting
- Somewhere comfortable
- Someone to talk to who understands
- Food, warmth, shelter
- On call
- Ring a number – someone comes to get you
- Fundraise
- Make money through international ‘red head /ranga’ day
- Business involved
- Fair

4. **Behind the wheel – drink driving**

Sober saints – campaign 30

- Safe travel
- Cars, mini bus/ van
- Door stop service
- Ring- we’ll pick u up
- Depot
- Grants / funding
- Full licensed drivers
- Who the bloody hell? – Older siblings
- Rules and regulations
- Facebook page

5. Mental health and AOD use

Confidentiality - You Only Live Once (YOLO) 28

- Confidentiality – educate community on laws
- Rural health should tell laws to students
- Community education
- Drug and alcohol education
- Connection with out of community help
- School visits – education – not just high school
- Location – maybe move to less visible space
- Knowledge of mental illness – education
- Workplace visits
- You only live once (YOLO)
- Committee
 - Community
 - Police
 - Sports clubs
 - Students
 - Service providers

No turn aways from emergency hospitals

- Educate doctors – Tas med local
- Strong written letter
- Petitions
- Media releases to chronicle
- Petition put into media
- Use social media
- Poll together a local committee to action the points above

6. Let's get physical – Alcohol, drugs and sport

Curfew initiative 13

- Time limits on alcohol being served
- Having drink tokens

- Circular head sports community
- Hockey, football, cricket, basketball, tennis, netball
- Promote the idea, by getting a speaker / athlete to talk to the sports community
- Sponsorship, business, companies
- Council support
- Award system to keep the sports community interested
- The club that is doing it the best gets a bonus

7. Hand it over – responsible serving of alcohol

RSA – winning: Raise Smithton’s awareness campaign

9

- Approach to the Tas government
- Community
- State-wide
- Pubs, clubs, RSL’s, bikie venues, restaurants, airlines, private functions, celebrity endorsement, posters, social media, advertisements, education on effects, scare tactics, you tube videos



APPENDIX 1:

RAW NOTES FROM MORNING SESSIONS - UNDERSTANDING THE TOPICS

1. RSA - Responsible serving of alcohol

WHAT

- DON'T SERVE UNDERAGE
- RSA LICENCE
- All RSA need over 18 present
- Overage buying for underage drinkers
- Social side of drinking good for community
- Self responsibility when drinking
- Fines, accidents, stress-relief
- Bad for relationships – abuse, friction and conflict over RSA
- How are youth impacted?
- Young drinkers emerging – role models aren't taking responsibility

TOPICS

- More resources in community
- Lack of access
- Sexual assault
- Hangover
- Lack of access
- RSA not very good
- Responsibility
- People drinking too much pubs
- Responsibility
- Cut off time
- Drink spiking
- Violence

- Teachers limits
- Mixing non alcohol drinks
- Training Council
- Bad name

CHALLENGES

- Older siblings are not acting in responsible roles
- Younger people are drinking from an earlier age
- Other drugs
- Big stores – underage employees aren't allowed to sell tobacco, but can restock
- Accountability for the sale – small stores can sell tobacco
- Drinking in public (bad social image), cautions from Tas police
- Young adults don't care about community issues – no care for forums
- Alcohol breath test in local venues

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO CHANGE?

- Change the RSA level
- Talking to the mayor
- Change to funding levels
- More talk about RSA
- Community event
- Name and shame for offenders
- Education through experience
- Changes and improvements to the youth centre
 - Food
 - Entertainment
 - Functions and access
- Retraining for RSA holders
- Campaigns for venues that serve alcohol
- Enforcement

2. FEEL THE LOVE - AOD and Relationships

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU

- “I did that last night”
- All relationships are affected by drugs and alcohol
- Makes you do stupid things
- Strains the relationships
- LOVE
- Changes personality
- Someone looks hot when their not
- Friends want to help because they care
- Communication
 - Starts fights
 - Can cause trouble
 - Take it wrong way
- Sounds “normal” (perceptions)
- Personality change
- Loud and obnoxious
- Equal relationship – might be influenced by partner
- Couldn’t support him and he said she had changed
- Pressure to change
- Drugs are bad

STORIES

- Abused
- Treated badly
- Painful
- Peer pressure

HOW DOES IT IMPACT ON US

- Drugs and alcohols –
 - Schooling
 - Jobs
 - Gives you cancer

- Become caretakers
- Other health problems
- Violence
- Become the target
- Relationships
- Social lives
- Gives people wrong ideas
- Leaves you feeling empty when you don't have their 'fix'
- Scared
- Felt forced
- Can't cope emotionally
- Unhealthy
- Drugs become main focus
- Can't cope emotionally
- Unhealthy
- Drugs become main focus
- Sneaking around
- Hard on both sides of relationship
- Make choices
- Causes tension / conflict

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

- Happier in families
- Service provides to train young people
- See less unwanted pregnancy
- Somewhere comfortable when parents fighting – warm – somewhere to eat
- Safe house
- Train young people to train young people
- More support – friends
- Good communication
- Feel safe
 - More educated
 - Share stories in small groups

- Education – friends

3. ALCOHOL OR DRUGS IN SPORT

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU

- Performance enhancing
- Cold and flu tablets
- Violence / aggression
- Alcohol and crowd behaviour
- Makes it unfair
- Abuse
- Bad reputation
- Bad influence

HOW DOES IT IMPACT ON US

- Loss of potential
- Performance enhancing
- Reception
- Life choices
- Get caught
- Health and wellbeing issue
- Effects on performance
- Alcohol and drugs and sport – wack your performance

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

- Start at a local level
- Curfews
- Drink tokens
- Across the whole community

4. MENTAL HEALTH = let's talk

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU

- Depression – anxiety

- Stress
- Bipolar
- Drugs and alcohol – speed, weed and LSD
- Dual diagnosis
- Dementia
- Schizophrenia – caused by drugs and alcohol

CONCERNS

- Death
- Safety
- Family issues
- Not total health
- Ruin relationships

MAJOR ISSUES

- Drinking not much to do
- Bongs
- Drugs
- Mental health issues
- Unplanned pregnancy
- Depression

BIGGEST ISSUE

- Depression
 - Psychosis
 - Welfare reliant
 - Death
 - Relationships
 - Break ups
 - Drugs, smoking, drinking

WHAT TO DO

- Ask if ok
- Get them help – hospital / rural health
- Hospital not assisting – lack of confidentiality
- Perception – don't want people to know
- Job employment
- Criminal behaviour

5. HEALTHY HIGHS / USE AND ABUSE

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU

- What is the impact of using and abusing drugs – what are the healthy highs
- Healthy highs – high on life, beach chilling out, fishing, music, friends, stress
- Abusing –dependent of drugs/alcohol
- Bad for the organs – kidney, liver, brain
- At risk – minimise the risk – education, youth centre, responsible friends, signage, sporting communities
- Parties out of hand
- Feeling depressed – mental health
- Impact friends, relationships
- Addiction

6. DRIVING - BEHIND THE WHEEL

WHAT DOES IT MEN TO YOU

- You are putting others in danger
- Death
- Injuries
- Damage
- Police/jail
- Guilt
- Loss of licence
- Loss of job

- Loss of freedom
- Stressful
- Responsibilities
- Money
- No freedom
- Brain damage
- No freedom
- Relationships
- Death
- Injuries
- Crashes
- Unemployment
- Loss
- Anxiety
- Physio
- Hospital
- Support
- Police

IMPACTS

- Businesses – lose employees
- Health services
- Hospitals
- Time
- Danger

BEFORE HAND

- Plan before hand
- Plan who will drive home
- Someone to contact (a few)
- Safety
- Support

COMMUNITY - WHAT TO DO

- Police

- DES
- Taxi
- Stay the night
- Find a safe place to crash
- Tell them not to drive
- Crash at persons house
- Taxi

APPENDIX 2 - the program

Drug and Alcohol Forum 2012

Time	Activity
9.15-9.30	Welcome & introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welcome to Country (CHAC) - Introduction to the day (Mo from MoHOW)
9.30-10.00	Big-picture brainstorming and ice breaker (Mo from MoHOW)
10.00-10.10	Introduction of workshop topics and 'community experts' (Naomi from YNOT)
10.10-10.35	Workshop Session 1
10.35-10.55	Morning Tea
10.55-11.20	Workshop Session 2
11.20-11.50	Report back
11.50-12.35	Lunch Break Lunch activity & Expo
12.35-12.55	Introduction of Guest Speaker
12.55-1.05	Introduction of afternoon workshop session (Mo from MoHOW)
1.05-1.35	Workshop Session 3
1.35-2.20	Report back to large group Voting on top ideas
2.20-2.30	Conclusion



APPENDIX 3 MO'S TIPS - A few ideas from the facilitator

The fundamental outcome from the Circular Head Drug and Alcohol forum and therefore the core of the next step is maintaining a focus on a process of expanding and creating a sustainable network of young people who can participate in the process of community and youth building, not as consumers of alcohol and drug programs but as creative co-producers of their community and decision-makers.

Underpinning the future success story will be the continued commitment from the agencies, schools and individuals who made this event possible and provided a space and method for young people to explore topics and develop their ideas.

At the face of the future success story will need to be young people - and an invitation from young people to their current peers and potential partners to partner with them in creating the really achievable initiatives that have been generated at this first forum.

The goal of such a process is to work towards a structure/ organisation eventually owned and led by young people - and in the doing so to not lose site of the fluid, highly supportive approach that has provided insight into the facilitation needed. While the structure may not look the same in every community there is a clear indication from young people that they would like to secure a capacity to communicate and support change locally that will then have a capacity to positively impact across Tasmania - to act locally and impact globally!

The missing link in any serious ambition for positive 'youth participation' is how to facilitate self-organised reproducible activity by young people themselves. This needs to be a medium term goal. The first step is to invest in the training and development of the skills of local young people already involved. In a broader sense - the energy and positive will exhibited by many young people at the Alcohol and drug forum provides insights into how to make significant local change with young people (not just for young people).

In the first instance this needs to be continued to be led by key adults and youth development positions in the region - but with the goal of establishing an approach that is sustained beyond the very thing that made this forum possible - beyond the passionate community development workers, schools and young volunteers already involved.

Some of the ideas are new - others focus on what young people have already got - such as the 7up youth space. There is an opportunity to build off the success of the forum and to ask more young people to become 'famous' for making improvements to what they and their peers are already achieving. The 'wall of fame' concept at the Recreation Centre is very powerful and could be expanded.

In summary -

There then needs to be an ongoing resource that works with young people to develop ideas and proposals that will seek partnership funding - this should include opportunities for young people to visit other existing groups of youth led social organisations and enterprises throughout the country and even overseas. This would include the opportunity to share their achievements in relation to alcohol and drugs, youth spaces and other future achievements.

The success of the Alcohol and Drug Forum 2012 is testimony to a new story by young people for young people - young people in Circular Head respond positively to meaningful opportunities and experiences.

Meaningful experiences for young people are the groundwork for a future where young people both inform and lead the development of the culture that they want to see in their community.