

Voices of Youth Research

Understanding the role and impact of harm reduction programmes among 11-17 year olds in South Africa.

#1 AWARE.org is a non-profit organisation that strives



to reduce the harmful use of alcohol in the country and eradicate under-age drinking.

#3 AWARE.org supports a



whole-of-society approach

that combines the efforts of different role-players to



change individual behaviour

and positively influence our country's drinking culture and environment.



#2 Our strategy is informed by research with emphasis on 3 forms of alcohol misuse that contribute to serious harm to:



Under 18s



Road Users



Mothers & Babies in South Africa.

#4 AWARE.org's flagship initiative, **#NotoUnder18**, aims to eradicate under-age drinking.

Our key message is:

#maketherightchoice

#saynotounderagedrinking

Comprehensive baseline to understand youth behaviour around alcohol.

#1 In 2024, AWARE.org commissioned **Frontline Research Group** to conduct a national study on how -



perceive harm reduction programmes and mass media campaigns.

#3 The study appraises:

1. Under-age drinking patterns
2. Media influence
3. The importance of messaging that is age and gender-specific and informed by social circumstances.



#2 The study combined



512 teens
online survey



over 600
targeted face-to-face interviews



1. allowing for deeper insights into the dynamics of alcohol use
2. and prevention in areas directly exposed to harm reduction programmes.

Key Findings

12% of the online sample **25%** in the face-to-face interviews indicated that they consume alcohol more regularly. Experimentation peaks at **age 16** and alcohol is mostly consumed with peers.

PEER PRESSURE
was cited as the leading contributor of alcohol use among teens.

Alcohol consumption and behavioural drivers

NON-DRINKERS
report **higher school enjoyment** and better integration compared to participants who consume alcohol.

Younger teens (**11-13**) are more influenced by **65%** Family drinking habits **53%** Stress

Non-drinking teens VS teens who consume alcohol
rely more on parents for support, while participants who consume alcohol are influenced by peers.

Attitudes

Teens recognise the dangers of under-age drinking, **over 90%** agreeing it is harmful to them.

Awareness

High awareness of alcohol harm reduction initiatives among adolescents,

63% recalling campaigns in the online sample
41% (recall falls in face-to-face interviews)

58% of online respondents **49%** of face-to-face interviews recognised the **AWARE.org logo**.

Programme associations vary, with having **higher** recognition.



Awareness of under-age harm reduction initiatives **increases with age**, peaking at

71% for 17-year-olds

in the online survey.

The **most effective** touchpoints for awareness, especially among younger respondents:

#1 School is the most effective
#2 Media is the second

77% of online respondents **67%** in the face-to-face survey found harm reduction programmes **helpful**.

Effectiveness

Sports-based initiatives are particularly **effective** in engaging **non-drinkers**.

Messaging effectiveness varies across demographics, favouring aspirational, future-focused messaging for **older teens** and preferring educational content for **younger teens**.

Programmes – **MOT*** and **Skeem Saam**** – are seen as:

- ☒ informative
- ☒ relatable,
- ☒ messaging clarity is high.

Evaluation of AWARE.org U18 campaigns

Approximately **1/3** of the respondents believe these programmes **work** because they provide **RELEVANT** information in a **FUN** and **ENGAGING** manner.

The **Makers of Tomorrow** campaign

greater resonance with the online sample

than face-to-face participants.

80% was the **Skeem Saam** recall rate suggesting that it is **popular** among this age group.

Specific campaigns



Teens prefer **engaging activities** like creative arts, music and sports.

Preferred types of programmes

Structured activities

Positive role models

are **key strategies** for alcohol avoidance.



***Makers of Tomorrow (MOT)** is AWARE.org's primary **#NotoU18** multimedia platform
****Skeem Saam** is a popular youth-focused SABC TV show that Aware.org partnered with to integrate MOT messaging into the shows storyline in 2024

Is alcohol having a negative impact on your life?
SANCA substance abuse toll-free hotline 0800 121314 | SMS 32312
Department of Social Development | WhatsApp helpline 087 163 2025
SADAG | 0800 12 13 14 | SMS 31393