The peak medical organisation in Australia – the National Health and Medical Research Council – recommends **for children and young people less than 18 years of age, that not drinking alcohol is the safest option.**

Alcohol can damage the developing brain of young people. Drinking alcohol is linked with poor decision-making, loss of control and risky behaviour (e.g. unsafe or unwanted sex, injury, violence, car crashes) with undesirable outcomes that can last a lifetime.

- Children under 15 years of age are at greatest risk of harm from drinking.
- For young people aged 15-17 years, the safest option is to delay the start of drinking for as long as possible. Risky behaviour is more likely among drinkers aged 15–17 years than older drinkers.


**What can parents do?**

- Supervision is one of the most important things parents can do. Know where your young person is going and what she/he is doing. Parents are legally responsible for their teenage children.
- Talk to your young person about alcohol, drinking and your expectations of his/her behaviour.
- If your young person is having a gathering at your place – be there and supervise.
- If your young person is going to a gathering, check that other responsible adults are supervising.
- Drink safely and moderately – your actions speak loudly to your children.
- Don’t buy alcohol for your son or daughter, or their friends.
- Talk to other parents about these issues and form a united front.
- If your child is already 18, talk to them about how the new Secondary Supply Laws may affect them.