



under age drinking

rating the risk

An Interactive Research Activity About Alcohol for Years 7 & 8

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Before you start, [click here for the Key Activity Worksheet](#)





your brief

You are a police officer who has been recently posted at the local station in town. When you arrived, you discovered a community that is suffering from a recent tragedy. A group of young people were in a serious car accident. Two fatalities occurred and others were seriously injured. As you delve further, you find that vandalism is an issue and late night violence at sporting and nightclubs is also a problem. In spite of widespread newspaper coverage, the community does not seem concerned about the excessive and widespread alcohol use that is responsible for these community problems. The more you delve, the more you realize the problem is beginning early, among young people who are still at school.

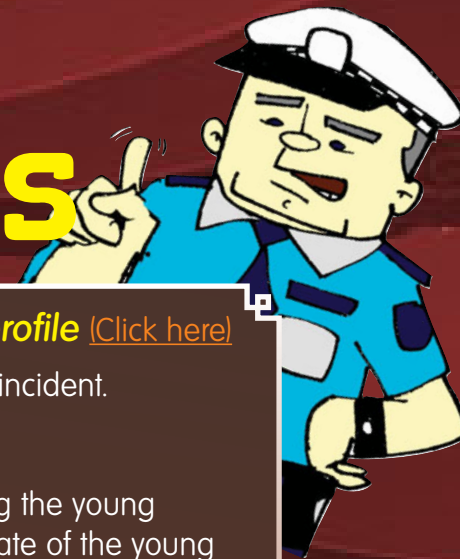
the task

In this activity, you come across a young person who has been consuming alcohol. Your task is to determine their level of risk, and then to decide what you will do about it.

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the steps



1: PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION: *establishing a risk profile* [\(Click here\)](#)

Gather some basic information about the young person and the incident.

2: POLICE INCIDENT REPORT: *risk profile* [\(Click here\)](#)

You need to do a police incident report, which includes estimating the young person's BAC (Blood Alcohol Concentration). Doing a rough estimate of the young person's BAC will help you to understand their behaviour and level of risk. To access the 'Police Incident Report – Risk Profile' [\(Click here\)](#).

3: POLICE RISK ASSESSMENT REPORT [\(Click here\)](#)

Before deciding what to do, you need to complete a 'Police Risk Assessment Report'. This will ensure you have considered the possibilities thoughtfully.

4: POLICE ACTION PLAN REPORT [\(Click here\)](#)

Now you have established the facts, and the potential risks, you must decide what action to take. These will be those immediate actions, and if necessary, those actions that may help the younger person to overcome their difficulties in the long term.

5. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA [\(Click here\)](#)

Read the 'Assessment Criteria'. Then discuss with your teacher so that they are fully understood. Then check your reports to ensure you are satisfied with the standard of your work.

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step 1: establishing a risk profile

instructions

1. You will need a dice. Roll the dice for each Risk Profile Characteristic

2. Click on the drop down box in the column that corresponds with the number you have rolled on the dice.

Eg: if you roll a 3 for '**Age in years**', you would click on the dropdown list and select '**3. 13 years old**'

3. You then proceed to the next roll, and roll the dice again.

Eg: if you roll a 4 for '**Situation**', you would select, '**4. Sitting around a bonfire at the beach**' and so on.

4. After rolling the dice **8 times** you will have a basic profile of a young person.

5. Record the information on the **Police Incident Report: Risk Profile Sheet** on the next page. Use the "back" and "next" buttons to help.

6. You now need to do some further investigation to complete the **Police Incident Report: Risk Profile Sheet**. Follow the prompts from the sheet.

activity

ROLL #: **PROFILE COMPILER:** **SELECT** from the dropdown list that matches the number on the dice:

- 1 Age in years
- 2 Situation
- 3 Physical characteristics
- 4 Alcohol intake
- 5 Period of time
- 6 In the company of...
- 7 Other factors
- 8 Other difficulties

REMEMBER:
Use this data to help you fill out the next page.

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step 2: police incident report_risk profile



Use the selections on the previous page to help you write in your answer and compile your report.

Roll 1. Age in years

Roll 2. Situation

Roll 3. Physical characteristics

Roll 4. How many standard drinks consumed? [\(Click here for more info\)](#)

Roll 5. Period of time taken to consume alcohol

Roll 6. Who was the young person in the company of when consuming alcohol?

Roll 7. What other factors might be taken into consideration when assessing this incident?

Roll 8. What other difficulties are affecting the young person at the time of the incident?

Estimate the young person's **blood alcohol concentration** (BAC)

[\(Click here for calculations\)](#)

Describe the likely physiological effects resulting from the young person's BAC.

[\(Click here to find out more\)](#)

What factors are likely to increase or decrease the estimated BAC?

[\(Click here to find out more\)](#)



effects of BAC

The following table indicates the sorts of physiological effects that accompany differing Blood Alcohol Levels:

BAC	Behaviour	Symptom
0.0%	Normal	Nil
0.05%	Slightly reduced motor skills	Euphoria
0.05 – 0.15%	Difficulty making judgments, difficulty with thinking, impaired motor skills	Slow reactions, uninhibited, blurry vision, aggression in some instances
0.15%	As above, but more severe	As above, but more severe, including vomiting and blackouts
0.3%		Coma
0.3%+		Risk of death



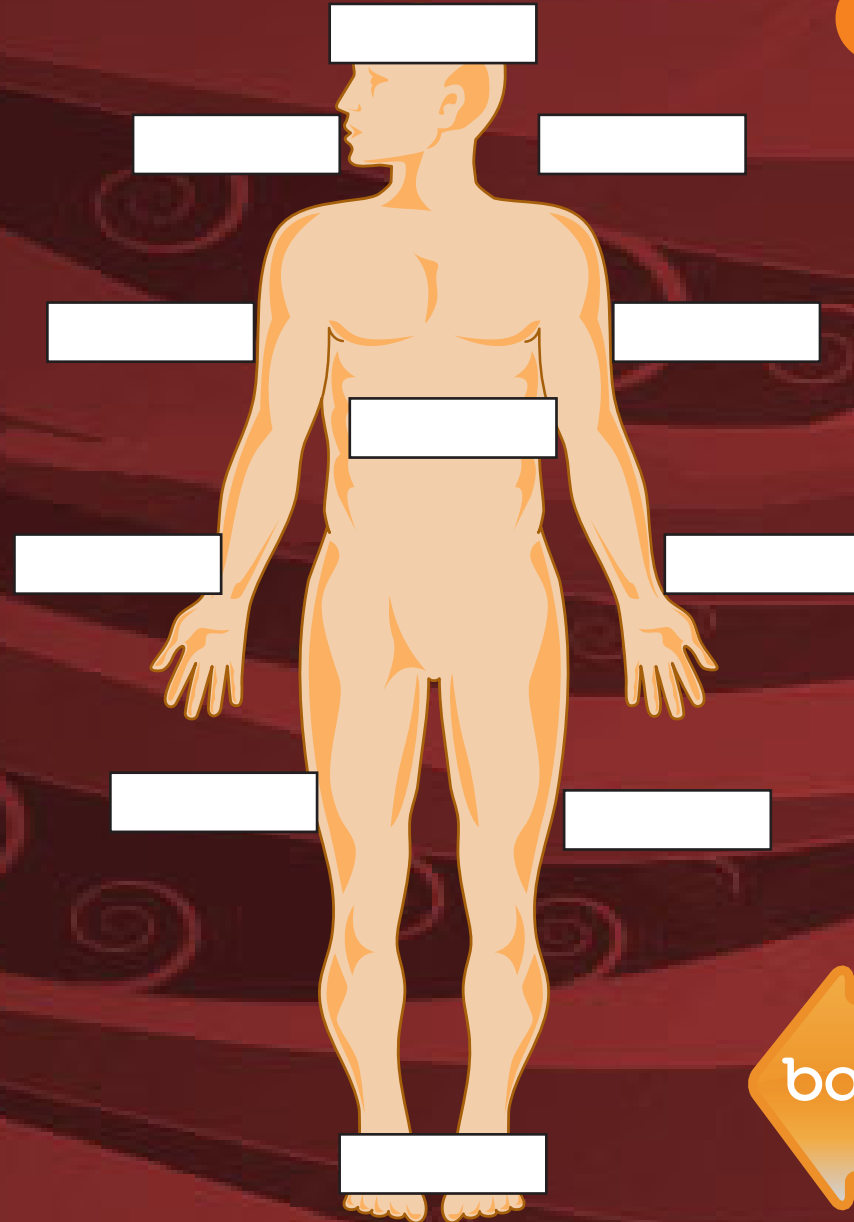
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short-term effects of alcohol

how alcohol is processed by the body

Describe how alcohol is distributed throughout the body.



On the diagram, label the effects that alcohol has on the body.

Hint:
Use the fact sheet on the next page



alcohol fact sheet

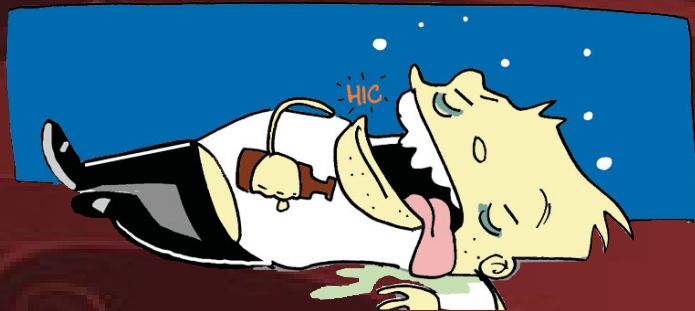
- Alcohol rapidly enters the bloodstream and is carried throughout the body.
- Alcohol effects the brain within 5 minutes of being swallowed.
- Alcohol slows down or blocks the brain's functions. This may start by reducing tension or inhibitions, helping a person to feel relaxed or excited.
- Reactions become slower.
- Movement and coordination become more difficult, and speech, thinking and the senses are affected.
- If the alcohol concentration level in the blood reaches a certain level it can cause unconsciousness. At extreme levels it can be fatal.
- Alcohol can also cause raised heart rate, shortness of breath, poor quality sleep, vomiting, reduced sexual functioning, hangovers (dehydration) and diarrhoea (irritated lining of gut).
- About 10% of alcohol is excreted through breath, sweat and urine. The other 90% is gradually broken down by the liver. If intake of alcohol is faster than the rate at which the liver can break down alcohol, the concentration of alcohol in the blood will keep rising.

Some groups who are more sensitive to alcohol:

- Women
- Unborn children
- Children and adolescents
- Older people
- People on medications

How alcohol effects a person will also be influenced by:

- Tiredness
- General health
- Hunger and food intake
- Consuming alcohol with other drugs (this can have a dramatic effect)
- Tolerance
- Experience
- Mood
- Environment
- Other people



standard drinks

what is a standard drink?

A standard drink is any drink containing 10 grams of alcohol.

A standard drink is a unit of measurement. In the same way one metre measures a particular distance travelled, one standard drink measures a particular amount of alcohol consumed.

What is the standard drink used for?

Standard drinks help a person monitor the possible effects of their alcohol. Counting standard drinks is simply a matter of adding numbers. For example if a person has 3 bottles (375 ml) of pre-mixed drinks they would have consumed 4.5 standard drinks (1.5 + 1.5 + 1.5).

standard drinks chart

Beer		FULL STRENGTH	MID STRENGTH	LIGHT
		375 ml can/stubby 4.9% Alc.Vol 1.5 standard drinks	375 ml can/stubby 3.5% Alc.Vol 1 standard drink	375 ml can/stubby 2.7% Alc.Vol 0.8 standard drink
Wine		BOTTLE	GLASS	FORTIFIED (Port/Sherry etc)
		750 ml bottle 12.5% Alc.Vol 7.5 standard drinks	150 ml glass 12.5% ALC.Vol 1.5 standard drinks	60 ml 20% Alc.Vol 1 standard drink
Spirits		PRE-MIXED (Can)	NIP (Shot)	BOTTLE
		375 ml 5% Alc.Vol 1.5 standard drinks	30 ml 40% Alc.Vol 1 standard drink	700 ml bottle 40% Alc.Vol 22 standard drinks

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blood alcohol concentration (BAC)

what is blood alcohol concentration (BAC)?

Blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is the level of alcohol in the blood. It is usually measured as a percentage of alcohol in the blood. For instance, a .05 BAC reading would equal 0.05 grams of alcohol per 100 grams of blood.

does size & gender affect BAC?

Consequently, the size and number of drinks a person consumes will determine their BAC. Females tend to reach a higher BAC than men for an equivalent number of drinks. Females have less fluid in their bodies than men and they tend to be smaller.

does consuming quickly or slowly affect BAC?

The speed that a person consumes alcohol will affect their BAC. The body breaks down alcohol slowly. The speed at which it breaks down alcohol will vary depending on general health, metabolism, genetics and other influences. Most alcohol is broken down by the liver. Keeping in mind that different bodies break down alcohol at differing speeds, an estimate is between .01 and .015 per hour. Drinking coffee, vomiting, drinking water, taking vitamin supplements, and other strategies, will have very little effect on how quickly the body breaks down BAC.

how do I estimate BAC?

The only way to get an accurate reading of BAC is to take a blood sample. Using a breathalyser gives a fairly accurate reading of BAC as well.

The estimate many people use is each standard drink is equivalent to a BAC of 0.02. From this must be subtracted the time taken to consume the alcohol.

An estimate of the speed alcohol is broken down by the body is approximately 0.015 per hour.

Example One

A person consumes 4 standard drinks over 3 hours.

$$(4 \text{ drinks} \times 0.02) - (3 \text{ hours} \times 0.015) = 0.08 - 0.045 = 0.035$$

Example Two

A person consumes 4 standard drinks in 1 hour

$$(4 \text{ drinks} \times 0.02) - (1 \text{ hour} \times 0.015) = 0.08 - 0.015 = 0.065$$



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other factors

remember

- These estimates of BAC can vary a lot.
- Females tend to have higher readings than males for the equivalent consumption.
- The effects of alcohol will vary between people. Some may have a tolerance, while others may feel more intense effects.

why is it difficult to estimate BAC?

The number of standard drinks consumed is a poor measure of BAC. Many variables influence BAC.

Some groups who are more sensitive to alcohol:

- Women
- Unborn children
- Children and adolescents
- Older people
- People on medications

BAC is also affected by body size, metabolism, genetics and amount of blood in the body.

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step 3 police risk assessment report

positive factors

risk factors

unsure

Using the **'Police Incident Report—Risk Profile'** on the previous page, place the information you have collected into the following columns. Those factors that you believe are **positive** for the young person, should be put in the **left column**, those factors that you believe are **risks** for the young person, should be put in the **middle column**, and those factors that might be **either positive or a risk**, may be placed in the **right column**.

Then list the possible consequences that the young person may face. Click on the link to find out more if you need to.

After you have done this, give your young person a "Risk Rating" and give reasons why.

list some possible consequences ([Click here to help you find out more](#))

risk rating (tick): **LOW** **MEDIUM** **HIGH**

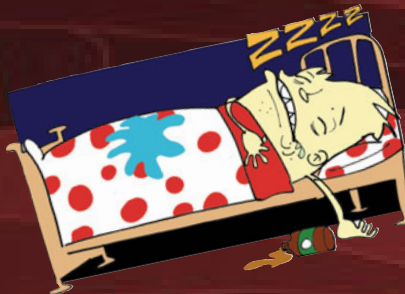
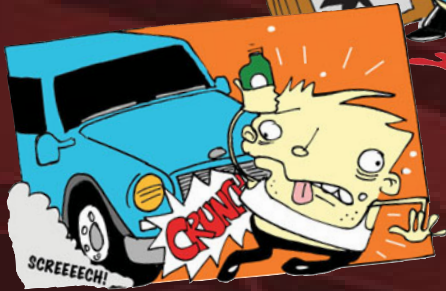
Explain your reasoning



possible consequences of excessive alcohol use

Oh No!

- Smashing up a house
- Being hit by a car
- Falling off a bike
- Having a fight
- Falling unconscious
- Vomiting
- Catching on fire
- Being arrested by police
- Wetting the bed





step 4: police action plan report



Now you have established the facts, and the potential risks, you must decide what action to take. This will include immediate actions, and if necessary, those actions that may help the younger person to overcome their difficulties in the long term.

Brief description of incident

Immediate actions [\(Click here for a list\)](#)

Charges (if any) [\(Click here for options\)](#)

Follow-up action required [\(Click here for options\)](#) Explain your reasoning



immediate actions:

options to be considered by the police officer



The aim is to ensure safety for all of those who are present. Consequently, as a police officer, you must assess the situation, and decide what actions are most likely to ensure safety.

- Dial 000 in emergency
- Ambulance
- Hospital
- Home to Parents
- Police Station
- Give Warnings
- Ask the young person if you can help
- Provide some advice
- Interview others who are present
- Ask questions



Victoria's laws on underage drinking



- The legal drinking age is 18 years
- It is an offence to provide alcohol to minors, unless it is supplied by a parent in private premises, or at public premises when accompanied by a meal
- It is an offence for a minor to be on licensed premises, unless they are accompanied by a parent, guardian or spouse
- It is an offence for a person under the age of 18 years to drink alcohol in a public place

penalties

Underage drinking

The police officer has the power to use their discretion. They may decide to take a young person home to face their parents, they may issue an on the spot fine, or they may issue a summons to appear in court.

Supply of alcohol to a minor

The police officer has the power to use their discretion to issue an on the spot fine or they may issue a summons to appear in court. It is the responsibility of the supplier to establish the correct age of a customer.



long-term actions

options to be considered by the police officer



Longer-term actions are required if you believe the young person may have difficulties that require some help. Depending on the issues, some possibilities may be:

- Counselling at school
- Contact a social worker
- Join a club
- Find new friends
- Develop healthy activities
- Access to health services

Are there other possibilities? As a police officer, how might you support the young person with your follow-up actions?



step 5: assessment criteria



Read the 'Assessment Criteria'. Then discuss with your teacher so that they are fully understood. Then check your reports to ensure you are satisfied with the standard of your work.

Level 5	Standard	Approaching	Consolidating	Exceeding
Health and Physical Education: health knowledge and promotion	Students identify the outcomes of risk-taking behaviours	Students demonstrate an understanding of BAC levels and alcohol consumption	Students demonstrate an understanding of BAC levels, alcohol consumption and links with risks	Students demonstrate an understanding of BAC levels, alcohol consumption, links with a range of risks and possible consequences
Civics and Citizenship: community engagement	Students present points of view on contemporary issues and events using appropriate supporting evidence	Produce a set of reports that demonstrate consequences in response to underage drinking	Produce a set of reports that demonstrate logical consequences in response to underage drinking	Produce a set of reports that demonstrate logical consequences and a consistent set of values in response to underage drinking
Interpersonal Relationships: building social relationships	Students learn about and practise the social conventions	Students demonstrate an understanding of how young people behave	Students demonstrate an understanding of socially responsible alcohol-related behaviour by young people	Students demonstrate an understanding of socially responsible behaviour by young people, peers and adults


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the end

quit