**FARE- Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education**

The Reduce Risky Drinking campaign was officially launched at the ACT Legislative Assembly on Friday 11 May 2018. This project aims to reduce risky drinking among undergraduate university students in the ACT. The 3 year project will involve the development of a campaign that addresses misperceptions of social norms around drinking.

The three project objectives are:

* Identify existing norms of alcohol use
* Address common misperceptions through implementation of a campaign
* Increase students' confidence in discussing risky drinking behaviours with their peers

The project consists of three phases:

* The baseline survey (completed) and focus groups to assess social norms and their influence on drinking patterns and attitudes
* The development and implementation of a campaign to address any misperceptions of social norms about drinking alcohol
* A follow-up survey and project evaluation to assess any change in attitudes and behaviour

Some of its main messages are:

* Risky drinking behaviour can be highly visible among university students, giving the impression that it is more common than it actually is.
* With public behaviours driving social norms, students tend to drink more in line with their perception of the norm at university.
* Less visible is the behaviour of the students that make up the majority who don't drink or who drink moderately.

By empowering university students with information on the actual drinking behaviour of their peers, we aim to create a new social norm that does not promote risky drinking.

148 1st year students were surveyed at University of Canberra and ANU on their beliefs regarding how much their peers consumed alcohol.

The information captured in the survey will be the basis for a social norms campaign to reduce risky drinking.

Results from the survey align with previous evidence that university students tend to over-estimate the drinking behaviour of others. On analysis, significant differences were found in the following areas:

* Respondents' perceptions of their own drinking differed significantly from their perception of alcohol consumption by close friends and students in their year.
* Respondents overestimated the frequency with which others drank at frequencies of 2-3 times per week and more than 4 times per week, but underestimated the frequency with which others drank 2-4 times per month, monthly or less, and never.

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