

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

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Abstract Title: Alcohol and other drug prevention for Indigenous youth: What works?

Author/s: Briana Lees¹, Mieke Snijder¹, Lexine Stapinski¹, James Ward², Nicola Newton¹, Katrina Champion¹, Cath Chapman¹, & Maree Teesson¹

¹ *Centre of Research Excellence in Mental Health and Substance Use, National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia*

² *South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute, Adelaide, Australia*

Background:

Alcohol, cannabis and tobacco-related harms are twice as common among Indigenous Australians than non-Indigenous Australians. This highlights the need for culturally appropriate prevention methods for Indigenous youth in Australia. The results of a systematic review on alcohol and other drug (AOD) prevention programs for Indigenous youth are presented to guide new prevention initiatives applicable to regional, rural and remote Australian areas.

Approach:

Eight peer-reviewed databases were systematically searched and identified 23 evaluations of AOD prevention programs for Indigenous youth in Australia, New Zealand, the United States of America and Canada. The quality of quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods was assessed using standardised tools.

Outcomes / Results:

The review identified non-cultural programs (i.e. not Indigenous specific) that are culturally adapted were more effective than cultural-based (developed for cultural group to reflect values and beliefs) and unadapted programs (mainstream programs that have not been modified for cultural group). Community programs reported consistent effectiveness, but poor quality of the evaluation methods. School-based and multi-setting programs reported some evidence of effectiveness and had moderate to poor quality of the evaluation methods. Evaluations conducted in Australia were consistently identified as poor quality, highlighting the need for an evidence-based high quality intervention.

The review identified the importance of partnerships between Indigenous members and researchers in the development and facilitation of programs. Beneficial programs included cultural knowledge enhancement, AOD education and skill development as key modules.

Take Home Message:

The implications of this review suggest a high quality school-based program that has been adapted from an effective non-cultural program will be beneficial for the prevention of AOD use and related harms among Indigenous youth in regional, rural and remote Australia.