



Alcohol and Drug Use Among Teenagers

An information evening with Paul Dillon from the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre

I have just arrived back from a very informative evening given by Paul Dillon from the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre on current trends in alcohol and drug use among adolescents.

It was a great presentation and one that, I'm sure, shocked a few parents. For me there were a few key learning points of the evening:

- the drug to be most concerned about with our teenage children is alcohol
- it is **NOT** ok to serve alcohol to underage teenagers
- we, as parents, need to model responsible behaviour
- parents need to provide community support around underage drinking
- illicit drug use is reasonably low
- fear based education is ineffective
- personal resilience is one of the key factors in preventing abuse
- family responsibilities and traditions create a supportive environment
- a caring positive relationship with at least one adult enhances their development of resilience

"Children have never been good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them." Children learn respect (or disrespect) from how we treat them and others. They reflect back everything we, as parents, say and do. When we give children the same respect we demand, we are modeling this important character trait. Remember, how we teach them is what we teach them."

James Baldwin