



Raising your kids strong: deadly activities families can do together



Evidence ratings:



This resource has undergone expert review. See our Help/Q&A section for more details.

Year: Foundation Year, Year 1–2, Year 3–4, Year 5–6, Year 7–8, Year 9–10, Year 11–12

Targeted Drugs: Alcohol, Drugs (General)

Tags:

Origin: Australian

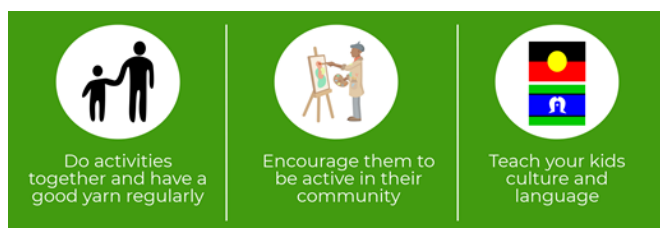
Cost:

Free

Attachments

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Key Messages



Raising your kids strong

As a parent, carer or family member, you are your kids' first and most important teachers. Research shows that young people are less likely to use drugs or drink alcohol (also called grog) if they have a supportive environment, good role models, and participate in cultural activities and sports.

Here are some activities you can do with your kids that can help protect them from alcohol and drugs.



Together-time activities

As a parent, you already know that spending time with your teenager is important to create a good relationship. It can be hard to find time to do this when life gets busy, but it's important, as it can help protect them against problems with alcohol or drugs.

You don't have to do something big to spend time with your kids, simple things can already help. For example:

- ⊗ Do something as simple as sitting down to yarn or enjoying some food together.
- ⊗ Regularly do activities together e.g. kicking the footy around, walking around your community, painting or other craft activities, sharing stories, or playing games together.
- ⊗ You could also teach them activities that can build confidence or skills, for example learning about culture, how to play a musical instrument or how to cook different meals.

Community and recreational activities

Young people who participate regularly in community and recreational activities are less likely to use drugs than young people who don't. It can also be helpful if you join in these activities yourself and strengthen your relationship with your child.

Your community might have some great recreational activities taking place that your child could join.

Activities that take place in communities around Australia include:

- ⊗ **Sporting activities:** (good for playing yourself or just watching), e.g. Midnight basketball, footy, soccer, netball, cricket, swimming, dancing
- ⊗ **Open air cinemas**
- ⊗ **Barbecues or picnics**
- ⊗ **Fishing, hunting and camping trips**

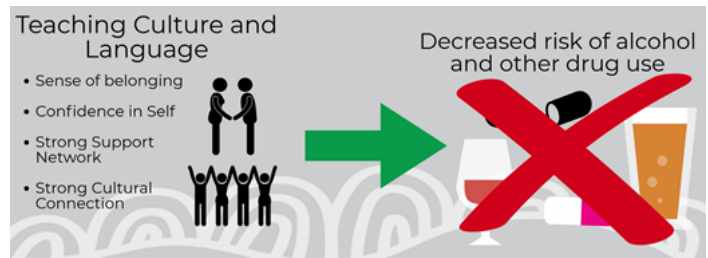
If your community does not have any of these activities, you could get some people together to organise them. For example, youth workers, teachers, other parents, elders, your local Aboriginal Land Council or young people themselves could be involved in organising activities.

There are organisations that provide funding to community groups for running activities for young people, such as Midnight Basketball Australia or the Australian Drug Foundation through their Local Drug Action Team program.



Cultural activities

We already know how important culture is, and the research reflects this too. Teaching your kids culture and language to build a strong cultural connection is shown to protect them against problems with alcohol and drugs. This is because connecting with people and culture can help build a sense of belonging, confidence in self, and a strong support network.



As a parent, carer, family or community member, encouraging your teenager to connect with culture can help them become a strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander woman or man.

There are a number of examples of what you can do with your child to help them connect with culture. This includes:

- 🗣️ **Yarning with your kids** regularly and share stories
- 🌿 **Help them connect with country**, e.g. by going bush, learning about traditional plants and medicine and hunting or fishing
- 🎭 **Teach them about cultural practices**, e.g. ceremonies, traditional dance and stories
- 🎨 **Create cultural artwork or items with them**, e.g. painting, weaving or jewellery making
- 🗣️ If you **speak language**, teach them and support them to speak it as much as possible.

Evidence Base

This factsheet was developed following expert review by researchers at the Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use at the University of Sydney, the National Drug & Alcohol Research Centre at the University of New South Wales, and Gilimbaa Indigenous Creative Design Agency (2018).

Positive Choices artwork by Jenna Lee (Larrakia artist, Gilimbaa).