

## Australian youth get their say on alcohol and drug policy

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Young Australians' opinions on responses to alcohol and other drug use are currently being sought in a new research study.

The Australian National Council on Drugs (ANCD) has commissioned the Drug Policy and Modelling Program (DPMP) and the Youth Support and Advocacy Service to survey 16 to 25 year-olds. The online survey aims to uncover young Australians' thoughts on policies and programs designed to reduce the harms caused by alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs.

The survey will provide an important voice to young people in Australia, who are often the group most directly affected by alcohol and drug policy decisions. It will also provide new data for policy makers.

The ANCD is the Council appointed by the Prime Minister to give advice to government on drug and alcohol issues.

While other surveys have canvassed young Australians' drug use and adult Australians' thoughts on drug policy, this is the first survey expressly examining Australian youth's thoughts about drug policy.

DPMP research associate Dr Francis Matthew-Simmons is leading the project.

"The survey covers a vast array of topics, from policy options like decriminalisation and raising the legal drinking age, to services and interventions like detoxification clinics and supervised injecting rooms," Dr Matthew-Simmons said.

"We want to hear from young people all over Australia about these drug and alcohol related issues. It doesn't matter if they live rurally or in a city, or whether or not they've tried alcohol and illicit drugs, we want everyone's input."

The survey is available at [www.youthdrugsurvey.com.au](http://www.youthdrugsurvey.com.au) and takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. It will remain open until 5 December 2012.

DPMP is part of the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre at the University of New South Wales.



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