Youth Drinking - Are Aussie Parents to Blame?

There is some evidence to suggest that parental drinking behaviours and attitudes can influence drinking behaviours of their children. This view has been reflected in a recent television commercial showing children being exposed to adult drinking behaviours at a typical Aussie BBQ. Whilst it should be noted that this campaign was funded by the alcohol industry, and thus did not entirely capture the negative extent of the issues at hand, it did illustrate a wider issue in regards to the acceptability of drinking in Australian culture. In Australia today, alcohol retains deep-rooted cultural significance, and few question the cultural place of alcohol or its availability. Australians value the positive part that alcohol plays in their lives, but in general are largely unaware of many of the problems and costs associated with alcohol. Therefore, whilst parental modelling may have a role in influencing children’s drinking behaviours, it is also evident that it is not the only factor to consider. Rather than pointing the finger at parents, a more useful approach may be equipping parents with knowledge regarding harm reduction strategies. These may include; parents talking to their children about the risks of drinking and empowering them to resist peer pressure, taking action to lobby for stricter regulations on the sale and promotion of alcohol, and supporting initiatives that address Australia’s pro-alcohol culture.

For queries or further information about this article please contact us.