



Really!?

Alcohol was the most common drug people received treatment for in 2020-21

Alcohol is the most common principal drug of concern for people accessing treatment, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW's) new report.

a) Almost two in five (37 %) treatment episodes for people accessing support for themselves were for alcohol, followed by b) amphetamines (24 %), c) cannabis (19 %) and d) heroin (4.6 %).

Between 2011-12 and 2020-21, alcohol was the most common principal drug of concern in treatment episodes provided to people for their drug use. This number has increased by 24 % in past 10 years to approximately 83,000 episodes in 2020-21

A.I.H.W April 2022

According to the Home Office's latest figures, roughly three million people took 'recreational' drugs in England and Wales last year, with around 300,000 in England opting for opiates and/or crack cocaine. In terms of valuation, the illicit drugs trade is worth an estimated £9.4 billion a year — which makes it larger than the UK music industry and gaming industry combined, and with an annual turnover bigger than several major retail chains.

How drug dealers won lockdown - UnHerd

Burning Bridges – Of Toxic Relationships (Recovery & Prevention)

So, what about the addiction arena – specifically alcohol and other drugs?

This catch-cry phrase 'Don't burn your bridges' encompasses many scenarios in this space, and for several reasons. However, what I want to focus on in this short piece is when it really is okay to burn a bridge in the relational arena and perhaps, a little about keeping a 'boat.'

To torch, as it were, a major thoroughfare regardless of size, is a serious business and one very tough to come back from. We all know such conflagrations in the relational space can be near impossible to rectify.

It's also very important to remember that *bridges* are not constructed overnight, and the investment in that 'structure', whilst perhaps not as deliberate and intentional as one may have proposed, is significant. For the relational bridge to be a bridge, it must not only land in, but be easily accessible in at least two peoples worlds. The span, the pathway of that connection, even if a little shaky, has been attached to a significant shared relational context – hopefully a healthy one, but not necessarily.

In healthy relationships, those attachments are anchored to caring supportive engagements where the best interest and well-being of the other is a high priority. Trust, nurture, mutual care, and investment build an ever-stronger *bridge*.

However, bridges can also be built around and from much less than the short list of quality *materials* than we have just mentioned.

Some of the *components* that can build a relationally traversable structure are much less praiseworthy, as the following will outline.

- Loneliness
- Isolation
- Limited options
- Proximity
- Shared activity
- Shared experience (good, bad, or ugly)
- Coercion
- Fear
- Co-dependency
- Addiction

It is when we begin to reflect on the above list in the specific light of exiting an addiction, that we begin to find a more workable context for the 'burning' protocol.

So, what do I mean?

Addictive behaviours, particularly the abuse of any substance, legal or illicit, are always found to be attached to some toxic relationship; either an overtly harmful connection or a *well-disguised socially acceptable one*.

I have watched over many years these connections and as non-user of substances can see very clearly, from the outside looking in (as well as walking with) the various components of these unhelpful *bridges*.

But I also have people in my orbit have lived personal experience in these toxic connections and the following commentary is from their journey.

What's Up at Dalgarno?

Education: Training: The development of our new AOD Well-being Resiliency training program continues. We will be seeking accreditation (funding reliant) More next time!

New culture Conversations:
The AOD Dilemma 2021 – Update: We have completed the fully edited 30 second video introduction and deployed to both our websites home pages. Final focus group for crafting the end product being completed before term three, ready for deployment.

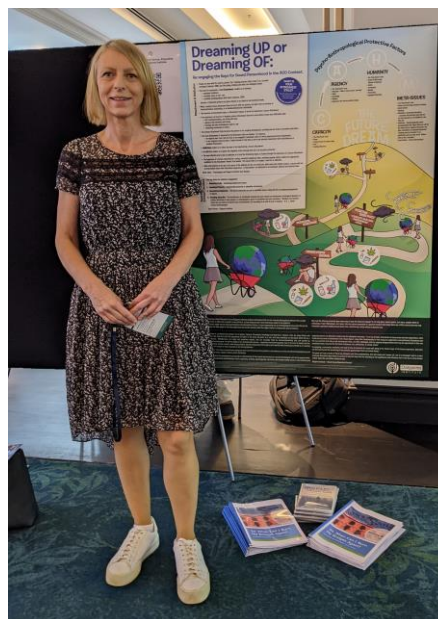
ECOSOC Status: Consideration of our application for consultation with the United Nations has finally been scheduled for special session in May 17-26. As of the preparation of this newsletter, we had still not received word from the panel on our application.

Submissions: The Idea at using THC as a 'medicinal activity' and then be exempt from drug driving regulations is a strong push by a small yet vociferous group of pro-cannabis advocates. Our Institute made very strong submissions on this Cannabis and Driving issue to both Western Australian and Queensland Governments.

ANZ Addiction Conference:
New Dreams New Directions

After an approach late last year from one of the Conference organizers to make application to present at this event, we decided to make an ambitious submission

for a Panel on a more anthropological look at the addiction issue. Our panel was to be our Executive Director and two of our remarkable **D.A.R.Team** members, Clinician Warwick Murphy, and Psychologist Helen Johns. Our Abstract was innovative, but due to conference loading in the Panel space, though declined, we're offered the opportunity to submit and display a Poster. Reducing a 90-minute open panel into a one-dimensional poster was tricky, but the team performed, and the product was good.



Our newest Board Member Tracey Butler at the ANZ Addiction Conference 2022
#ADD22

Vaping Forum: In late April we conducted a successful and unique forum on this growing issue. 35 people registered for the event, with others wanting a repeat. You can access the PDF by request.

No Brainer Website Update: We completed the revamped site around start of May. This new look and search capacity gives a better user experience.

Board & Staff News: The Vice President of Dalgarno Institute, veteran schoolteacher, long-time Indigenous advocate, and Founder of Ayeye Atyenhe Art (pronounced ayear achen), Paul Tolliday has been very active for our movement in-Northern Territory where he is currently working.

Paul also was the key consultant and community liaison for our **First Peoples** section of our **I Wish I Never** – First DVD Curriculum



Our newest Drug & Alcohol Resource Team member, **Psychologist Helen Johns**, has been an outstanding addition to our already stellar reference group. Helen's qualifications and associations are remarkable and her key contribution to our ANZ Addiction Conference submission was invaluable.

Cannabis Conundrum Continues



For extensive and up-to-date research, information, and data on the growing 'Cannabis Conundrum' put the following Dalgarno online resources into your Bookmarks.

- ✓ [Cannabis As Medicine](#)
- ✓ [Cannabis Conundrum](#)
- ✓ [Cannabis & Your Community](#)
- ✓ [Cannabis Conundrum Blog](#)

#DemandReduction, #Prevention, and drug use exiting #Recovery is Dalgarno Institute's Priority.

**"You serious?
Drug use now only
has one option...
'Yes'??"**



You CAN SAY 'NO' to Drugs! It's vital!

If you'll recall in our [Summer 2021 Newsletter](#) we did a bit of 'drill down' into the imperative of Demand Reduction and Primary Prevention Education for our community, family and most importantly, children's well-being. We wrote on the emerging **'You Can't Say 'NO' to Drugs... Really?'** Project and it's development.

The following is an update, First let's recall some of the previous

The not so 'clueless' Nancy Reagan!

The mocking line of **"you can't just say 'NO' to drugs!"** was an attempt to malign First Lady Nancy Reagan's Anti-drug programs. However, the facts, not the pejorative meme, tell a different story...

When the Reagans moved into the White House on Jan. 20, 1981, drug use, particularly among teenagers, was hovering near the highest rates ever [measured](#). Of that year's graduating class, 65 % had used drugs in their lifetimes and a remarkable 37 % were regular drug users.

Eight years later, when the Reagans left Washington, only 19.7 % of 1989's graduating class were regular drug

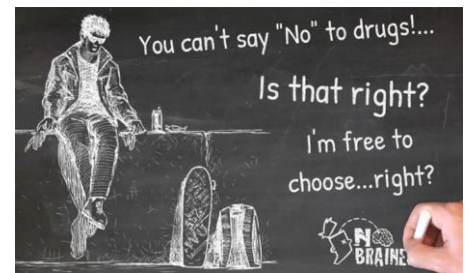
users, a 47 % reduction. And the trend that began under their leadership persisted until it reached an all-time low of 14.4 % in 1992, 61 % lower than 1981.

*While it is too simplistic to credit Nancy Reagan alone with this downturn, it is impossible to ignore her leadership and the massive shift she led against the drug culture. Her off-the-cuff response to a young Oakland girl who asked her what to do if confronted with drugs became a clarion call: **"Just say no."***

And that powerful option of a **protective decision** is being aggressively eroded by small but vociferous pro-drug actors in the public square. Actors who are being aided and abetted, not so much by 'pushers', but more disturbingly, [promoters in the political and policy](#) making space.

The capacity to exercise **NO** particularly in the incredibly self-harming drug use space should be bolstered not diminished. The Dalgarno Institute continues to work tirelessly with its very limited resources to put up relevant, contemporary, engageable and evidence-based resources to empower the **'NO'** for our vulnerable young.

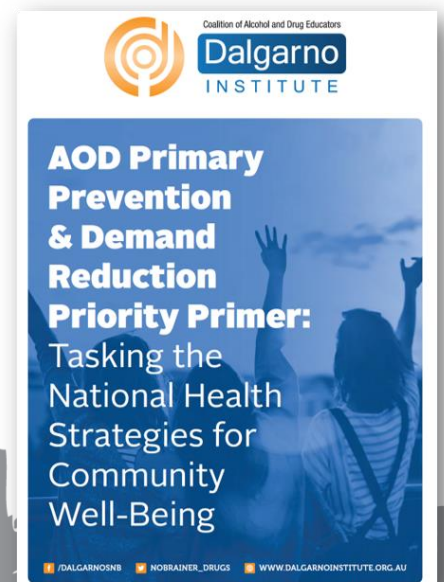
We are nearing the end of phase one of this project with our first video offering almost completed. Depending on funding (increasingly harder to get) we are hoping to complete and launch this offering in the next month of so. Phase two will developed, again, as funding presents.



Our National Health Strategies have both been tasked to promote and work toward creating better public health and community well-being. Substance use is never a proactive part of bringing success in that space – quite the contrary.

In line with this we have just released out expanded **Primary Prevention & Demand Reduction Policy Primer: Tasking the National Health Strategies for Community Well-Being**. This health education policy overview is for all people involved in health education, from politician to parent. This document is a useful tool for recalibrating thinking around Alcohol & Other Drug Education, and along with our this **'You Can't Say NO To Drugs'** project we seek to better inform the sector of best-practice policy and process for our communities

([Click here](#) for link to website)



Burning Bridges – Of Toxic Relationships (Recovery & Prevention) *continued from page 1*

'From a very early age I tended to measure my self-worth by my ability to live up to or surpass the lifestyles and friendship groups of my older siblings and peers. I lived this limiting belief around self-worth during my 30 years in active addiction from age 14; a belief that I can still struggle with today almost 7 years into recovery.

I had a knack of being attracted to and attracting harmful connections, and in particular connections with other drug users and drug dealers, all of whom on the surface appeared to be mostly 'socially acceptable white-collar workers,' including myself. Upon reflection I now know that not one of these relationships 'bridges' that I had constructed were built with integrity and would often collapse in a toxic set of circumstances'

Certainly, toxic environments (without people) can lead to substance uptake for sure, but at some point, even at the first use, you need to engage with a person – an agent of delivery – regardless of the drug type or stage of development, someone is supplying something. However, it is the 'before that moment' scenario that is not only a prompt, but often a driver toward.

'I first drank alcohol and took drugs illegally when I was 14 years of age; my 'agents of delivery', an older sibling, their partner, and adult friends. "Go on try it, we do it all the time, it's fun, it will make you feel happy, it won't hurt you" they said. I blacked out that

night and woke up in the morning in a stranger's bed, with no recollection of how I had come to be there.

Yes, I chose to drink alcohol and do drugs, but what uniformed and bad choices they were, prompted by people I looked up to and trusted.'

What About the Relationships I Really Like?

Okay, so what about those relationships that are not just activity based or co-dependant or worse, coercive?

They are people we do know well; we have shared experience with, we connect at least on some healthy level. *'Like, they do help me out, they seem to care about how I feel or are going. They are there for me most of the time, and... I like them and need them and don't want to lose that contact.'*

These connections are tougher to deal with for sure, we are not going to sugar coat this.

These are the relationships that tick many boxes but still allow, even invite toxic elements into your world, not least substance use.

These are the relationships we negotiate with. The ones where, even though we know aspects are unhelpful, the longing is that net benefit will be worth the harms this connection brings. (See [Talking to Rattlesnakes](#))

I'll put this right up front, not to put you off, but it's these relationships that you must walk back from, burn that bridge, and set your boat of connection on your side of the river for potential return.

Everything I wrote previously about 'Blitzkrieg' your bridge still holds, but you have control over strategic connection vehicle if that person changes or seeks and takes steps toward changing those toxic elements of their lives – again, not least substance use.

You see, whilst self-preservation is an imperative, which cannot be the only goal. Becoming healthy, whole, and stronger is something that can benefit others in the right season and context, and that option should be in the tool kit of the Recovery Alumni.

When you are healthy, strong, self-aware, and have no 'need' of a connection, then your lived experience and earned resiliency can be an asset to those previous relationships that too, want to become as you now are....

For complete article go to [So, When Can I Burn My Bridges Again? Dealing With Toxic Relationships in Addiction Spaces](#)

(More importantly, those earned resiliency and lived experience Alumni harnessed under professional training can become 'Fence Builders in the Prevention and Demand Reduction Space – More on that next time)

SUPPORT OUR WORK!

HELP US MAKE IT EASIER TO SAY... 'NO THANKS!'

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Card No CW

Expiry Date / Signature

☐ Schools ☐ Education ☐ Fence Building ☐ Bounce (Parent Night)

LEAVING BEQUESTS

Many long time and faithful supporters have and will choose to leave a portion of their estate to the work of Temperance. Whilst over the years, the labour and passion of our movement has not changed, its name has.

Consequently we have had recent experiences of Estates leaving bequests to our work, but under a previous name. As you can imagine, this creates some legal issues and often delays or denies our movement receiving the gracious gift.

To avoid this, we would like to simply request that if you have, or intend on, leaving a bequest to the work of Temperance that you stipulate it be given to DALGARNO INSTITUTE (C.O.A.D.E Inc.) This will ensure your gift contributes to the continuation of helping Australians have a better chance of a safer and healthier future.

Thank you for your understanding in this matter.



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