

The Impact of Violence Amongst Australia's Youth

Conducted by Madison Strutynski

Violence in the form of 'bottling or glassing'

The new risk of attending a party or walking down the streets of the suburbs now is being attacked by other young people, and a new weapon has now hit the streets. The concept of bottling or glassing is when a bottle is smashed and used to stab or slash another causing major injuries or even death. Bottles are thrown at other people or police and smashed leaving glass littering the streets or floors which becomes highly dangerous also.

This increasing use of violence has become more widespread with the use of alcohol and drugs. It seems that this form of behaviour pushes the boundaries of absolute destructive behaviours leading to new forms of after affects to affected young people. Often you will find that with the help of drugs or alcohol if you are the wrong person at the wrong time and you have a disagreement at another young person then you could be glassed. I have seen glassing from one person to another via the neck region, just slicing a few centimetres off a main artery.

We feel that alcopops and other such drink advertising are targeted at young people and these drinks come in the form of a glass bottle, which just seems so convenient to those with a violent history.

Plastic bottling of alcopops which will reduce injuries and death caused by glassing and also all bars and clubs to give out plastic cups instead of glass cups.

On an occasion I saw this first hand, and also many youth around my age have heard numerous stories about such incidents. The impact on the Australian youth is destructive and destroying lives. Hospitalisations, death and sometimes just beatings could have been stopped if only there wasn't that form of weapon.

This is my story.

Recently I was the victim of violence, by three girls. I was in the wrong place at the wrong time.

I had just graduated year 12 not yet been accepted into college and awaiting my university acceptance in January.

Later in the night as the party was getting into full swing I was helping the host locate the number of a 14 year old girl's parents who had overdosed on alcohol when I was approached by three girls, who were fairly intoxicated. They tackled me from behind and while I was on the ground they attacked me, until I was helped up by a few of my friends who also held them off me. They knew they were in the wrong and didn't want their parents or friend's parents to know they were drinking, as obviously they were underage and did not have parental consent, so instead they thought it would be better to become violent and take that anger out on myself for no less than helping someone.

I am the kind of person who doesn't believe in violence, does her part in the community more than often, just trying to help someone out, never been in a fight before and this sort of this happens. I was lucky it was only the tip of the iceberg of what could have happened and what I have seen happen too many other of my peers. If I had of been by myself I probably would have come out of it a lot worse than I did, If one of the girls had a bottle or some other form of weapon I could have been seriously injured.

This type of thing is the result of young girls who drink inappropriately, and these girls were of ages from 14-16. This has really opened my eyes to the types of things that are going wrong to good people and the increase of violent situations just out of the blue and randomly.

Since this has happened I have begun hearing more and more about fighting and violence, also since turning 18 I seen more and more fall victim in drug and alcohol rages in the main street of my home town. Whether it being a case of wrong person wrong time, looking at another boys girlfriend or another girls boyfriend, cyber bullying or going behind the back of someone and talking about them. I have seen a lot of younger underage teen girls particularly use foul language on mySpace or facebook which has led to a confrontation. This aspect of violence is fast growing and it seems that no matter what any young person does they cannot escape violent situations of friends that have been victimised. The sort of pain that comes

from being a victim of this can in cases institutionalise young people or lead to attempted suicides often leading the parents of the young person to clean up the mess and more then often the parents cannot do anything at all.

The cyber bullying aspect fuels the violence more than a plain confrontation. I have seen young peers been glassed or attacked for no means. On Australia day a day where companionship and comradely means the most, I have seen other girls and boys attack each other sparking huge brawls. And all of these attacks I believe were alcohol fuelled, and has had massive effects on the culture of young Australian leading to destructive behaviours and territorial fighting.

Drinking, and Boredom leading to Violence and the Impacts.

Tackling the issue of teenage boredom in Rural and Regional Queensland and Australia is a huge issue. The main contender being the lack of activities for young Australians to partake in, thus initiating boredom and therefore resulting in drinking and sometimes drugs which in turn leads to destructive behaviours and increased violence particularly between young men and women in our communities.

We are proposing as the young men and women of Australia that implementing a school scheme that provides compulsory co-curricula's throughout the school system maintaining a balance of in school and out of school hours and a compulsory weekend sport or employment for all youth 17 and under would reduce the amount of destructive youth by giving the youth a sense of participation, purpose, distraction and getting them into a team environment.

This in turn will help maintain boredom and the many issues raised from young Australians such as obesity, binge drinking, mental health, wellbeing and destructive behaviours particularly violence and the impacts that violence have. Maybe one day in the future Australia will become one of the healthiest nations not only with regards to health issues as mentioned above but also ridding of violence and aspects relating to violence.

Just a little something about a group of young volunteers that I believe has saved thousands of youth already from falling victim to violence, by giving that safety and security of getting home or having an extra eye looking out for them reducing violence, overdoses and giving young people something else to do with their time.

Red Frogs Australia

Red Frogs Australia Chaplaincy Network is a non-profit program which originates from Citipointe Church (Brisbane), which focuses on establishing a safety support network for students in local Universities. It comes off the back of our schoolies week campaign where we come into contact with school leavers all around Australia. These school leavers then come to university in which we have contact with them again. To do this we assist in university residential colleges, provide a 'chill out' safe zone at the university bar during large bar nights and functions where students may seek help or escape from the party scene, promote WalkSafe assisting students back to dormitories after such events. In these chill out areas we provide water, donuts, red frogs & icy poles free of charge. By having our presence on these residential colleges we contribute to a positive & safe environment.

We run a training package for the residential advisors that comprises of a session on youth and student culture as well as drug and alcohol issues related to these environments. In these sessions, we detail statistics and patterns representing a snapshot of student culture in Australia and major issues affecting residential colleges and halls including peer pressure; binge drinking and associated issues; and the alienation of moderate and non-drinkers in college events. We then focus on creative alternative programming options for generating successful non-alcohol driven opportunities in the college environment. Along with these sessions, Red Frogs offers workshops on topics including Strategic planning for O-Week and college programming.

