



Alcohol and Drug Foundation



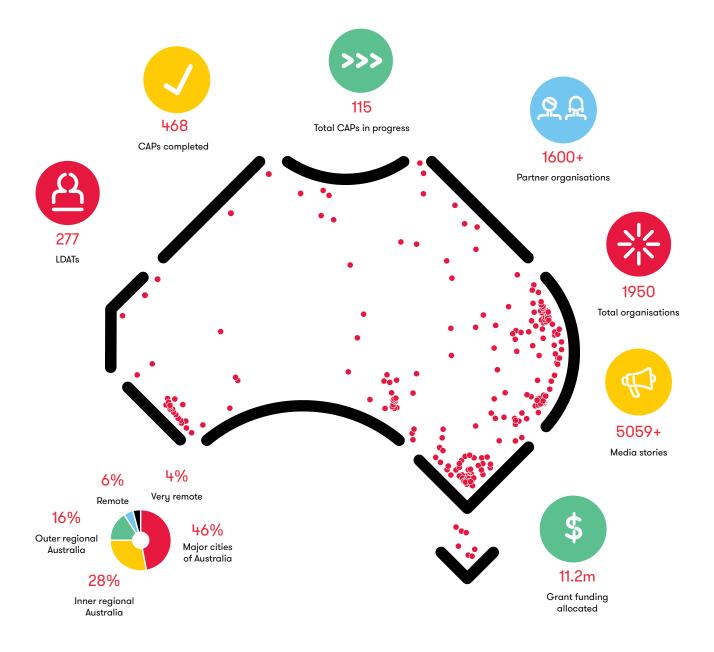
Strengthening community-led prevention across Australia.

The Local Drug Action Team (LDAT) program fosters partnerships in communities across Australia, helping build knowledge and skills to address local issues associated with alcohol and other drugs (AOD), including methamphetamine (ice).

LDATs can be a mix of schools, educational institutions, health workers, police, community organisations, businesses and local government who unite to drive a community-led response.

The program emphasises building 'protective factors' in the community, working to prevent alcohol and drug issues starting in the first place.

There are 277 LDATs who are supported by the Alcohol and Drug Foundation (ADF) to work with communities and develop a Community Action Plan (CAP) to guide implementation of evidence-based activities to minimise AOD harm.



Community Hub

The ADF Community Hub is a resource supporting our Local Drug Action Teams, as well as a broader range of groups and individuals looking to make a difference in their communities.

The online hub houses a suite of evidence-based information and resources, including toolkits, local government tools and guides, LDAT stories, promotion guidelines and more.

Many people recognise the harms alcohol and other drugs can cause in the community and want to do something about it but aren't sure where and how they can start.

That's why the Community Hub's evidence-based and simple-to-use resources are freely available to all, helping people develop and deliver primary prevention projects in their local area.

community.adf.org.au

Protective factors

Alcohol and other drug (AOD) issues can change at different stages in people's lives. Each life stage carries with it different protective factors, which either increase or decrease a person's chance of developing or being impacted by AOD issues. Local Drug Action Teams work to improve protective factors for their identified target audience in the community.



Upskill

Mentoring Matters Cunnamulla LDAT, QLD

Project partners

Cunnamulla Aboriginal Corporation for Health, Paroo Shire Council, Cunnamulla P-12 State School, Deadly Choices, Queensland Police Service, HOPE Project (South West Hospital and Health Service) and RESQ employment service.

Target audience

Young people attending secondary school.

Local challenge

Cunnamulla in Queensland's southwest is home to around 1200 people who have a strong connection to country. More than 85 per cent of the school's 124 students identify as Aboriginal and live in diverse family units with often-changing living arrangements. Students can sometimes have large gaps in attending school, which disrupts their learning. The region has the highest rates of youth unemployment in Australia. This, combined with limited resources, affects young people's self-worth and self-esteem, and perpetuates risky behaviours and disengagement.

Solution

The LDAT partnered with the South West Hospital and Health Service's HOPE project to engage students and help them learn in a different way.

The project aims to identify and support initiatives to equip young people living in Charleville and Cunnamulla with the skills they need to lead healthy lifestyles and to reach their potential.

Woodworking lessons were delivered to students where they designed and constructed wooden coffee cup carriers. They also learnt about graphic design and marketing which enabled them to produce brochures and use social media to advertise their products.

While an outbreak of COVID-19 postponed the project's launch, it became part of the students' learning experience in how to solve problems. The gala event saw many students taking turns at working the stalls, telling people about the project, and selling their wares.

Impact

One of the most important outcomes of the Coffee Cups 2 Go initiative has been as a pathway to employment for young people.

Surveys showed all students involved in the project increased their knowledge base, professional development, self-confidence, cultural knowledge and connection to the community.

The program has seen improved behaviour at school, home and in the community.

The coffee cup carriers are sold in regional cafes and at the Cunnamulla Fella Visitor Centre. Sales proceeds go straight back to their school for future projects.

Around Australia | LDAT snapshots

Walking the Talk with Young People LDAT, SA

This LDAT builds young people's skills and helps them gain valuable experience through the development of a podcast series. The young participants are involved in all aspects of developing the podcast, from planning and promoting to developing content and evaluating their impact. It also gives them a platform to speak about their experiences with trauma and mental health issues and promote healthy messaging to other young people in similar positions.

Changing the course of alcohol (and other drug) consumption in ACT higher education institutions: A coordinated response LDAT, ACT

The Brief Alcohol Intervention Training project teaches students at three ACT universities how to deliver the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) to their peers - a screening questionnaire that picks up risky drinking patterns. During the half-day training course, student leaders learn about harmful alcohol use. They're also shown how to support others to change their drinking habits through face-to-face discussions.

Logan Youth at Work LDAT, QLD

The Logan Youth at Work LDAT is led by social enterprise Substation33, an organisation that specialises in e-waste recycling. Substation33 provides a workspace where long-term unemployed volunteers and individuals can gain the confidence and skills needed to transition to sustainable employment. The LDAT runs activities that focus on upskilling young adults by increasing their confidence and peer connection through a mentor training program, as well as increasing their awareness of the harms caused by AOD.

Access to training and employment pathways

This protective factor is particularly important for young people.

"Because the students were so involved and enthusiastic, we were able to get parents' support and with that came support from the community."

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Belonging

Gundagai LDAT, NSW

Partner organisations

Cootamundra Gundagai Regional Council, Gundagai Neighbourhood Centre, Gundagai Lions Club, Red Cross, CWA, Rural Fire Service, Gundagai Local Health Action Committee, Scouts, Gundagai Youth Council, Gundagai RSL and the Men's Shed.

Target audience

Farming families and hard-to-reach farmers, many living in isolated areas.

Challenge

After coming out of drought, the Gundagai area experienced the Black Summer bushfires over 2019 and 2020, followed by COVID-19 restrictions. These combined events caused significant economic distress, post-traumatic stress and increased alcohol use. Isolation took a toll on farmers' health due to few opportunities for social connection.

Solution

The LDAT wanted to increase community awareness of the harms associated with risky drinking and other drug use as well as provide an outlet for rural farming families to engage with their communities post COVID-19 lockdowns.

It worked with rural agencies and community services to distribute information about health and local support services to 1400 households, as well as communicating regularly through newsletters and social media. Simultaneously, farmers were supported to set up freshly grown produce and homemade condiment stalls within the 'Sundy in Gundy' community markets. LDAT funding contributed to their training.

The markets and other events like Monthly Wellbeing Forums created a platform to engage with residents on the risks, signs and symptoms of alcohol and other drug use and mental health. Leaflets were used to support difficult conversations and provide support services to contact.

Over the project period there were 29 produce, information or activity stalls at the 'Sundy in Gundy' markets and another 16 stalls at the Gundagai Seniors Expo.

The LDAT frequently consulted ADF staff and online and community engagement resources through the Community Hub. ADF services, Path2Help and DrugInfo, were promoted through social media.

Impact

Despite COVID-19 restrictions, the LDAT established 27 networks and partnerships to deliver health messages to target communities via local events, the market stalls and information sessions.

The markets built new businesses, created a hub for getting back to community life and attracted more tourists. They also gave stall holders a sustainable income, support from peers, friendships and skill development.

Residents felt a sense of pride, which helped build community morale.

Local services reported that the information packs were well received, while mental health and drug and alcohol workers received increased enquiries for support.

Around Australia | LDAT snapshots

Blacktown LDAT, NSW

Blacktown LDAT's creative art workshops set out to increase participants' understanding of alcohol and other drug harms and how drinking during pregnancy affects the developing baby, including Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). The workshops collaborated with women from a variety of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to create a safe and nonjudgemental space for discussion.

Not So Straight Up LDAT, ACT

The LDAT supports sexuality and gender diverse people to reduce the harms associated with the use of alcohol and other drugs, by working with their peers to co-design primary prevention activities and support services. The LGBTQIA+ community can face barriers to getting support, such as stigma. The LDAT produced a series of videos featuring members of the community discussing what the alcohol and other drug landscape looked like for them growing up. The videos were live-streamed and audiences were able to chat with a facilitator during the screenings.

Healthy Glenelg, VIC

The LDAT ran a mentoring program for students called Standing Tall, using the ADF's Mentoring LDAT Module as a guide. It included regular meetups between mentees and mentors, as well as organised activities to foster connectedness. These included morning teas and an Indigenous history and culture excursion in the local Cape Nelson area, encouraging a sense of belonging and pride. Mentors reported increased confidence in their role modelling, communication, listening and conflict management skills.

Sense of belonging and engagement with community

This protective factor is relevant to all age groups.



Education

Mandurah LDAT, WA

Partner organisations

Mandurah City Rotary Club, Palmerston Drug and Alcohol Service, John Tonkin College, the Department of Education, South Metropolitan Health Service, School Drug Education and Road Aware (SDERA), Billy Dower Youth Centre and the City of Mandurah.

Target audience

13 to 17-year-olds, including LGBTQIA+ young people.

Local challenge

The LDAT wanted to increase adolescents' knowledge of alcohol harms as school-based alcohol and other drug education was not engaging students. Feedback showed that young people respond better to messaging delivered by their peers outside of school. Another concern was that some local bottle shops were selling alcohol to people under the age of 18. The project also sought to involve youth leaders and support a newly formed LGBTQIA+ group.

Solution

With insights from a school survey, the LDAT knew what protective and risk factors to address. The solution centred around a two-pronged approach - increasing peer connection and support between young people, as well as reducing their access to alcohol.

Alcohol education sessions were held with existing youth groups, including the Council's Young Yorgas and Thrive Young Women's programs. Using story boards, they workshopped ideas for short videos on challenges and choices around alcohol that could be shared with friends. Of most interest was how to tackle risky situations such as getting home after a late night out, looking after friends and saying 'no' in a cool way, without offending people. Real life scenarios were filmed on how to handle social pressures and stay safe.

The Youth Advisory Group played a leading role in designing and delivering the alcohol-free Beats Under the Bridge event, which included local services connecting with young people. Peer facilitators were trained for the Sprinkles group, which connected LGBTQIA+ young people. Run by headspace, 36 meetings were held over 12 months.

The Mandurah LDAT partners continued to monitor the sale of liquor to minors by auditing local bottle shops and reminding them of their responsibilities.

The LDAT also worked with the Council's recreation team to promote the ADF's Good Sports program to local clubs.

ADF resources and advice helped the LDAT plan and implement its evidence-informed primary prevention strategies.

Impact

Peer-to-peer connections work.

Post project research showed that participants were more aware of the risks of alcohol, felt more knowledgeable about the challenges and choices around alcohol and shared messaging amongst their friendship groups. All the Young Yorgas and Thrive Young Women's group participants agreed that they now were better able to say 'no' to alcohol and get out of tricky situations.

The Youth Advisory Group's school holiday event attracted more than 400 participants, and the Sprinkles group is happily established in a permanent space where they feel safe and free from judgement.

Around Australia | LDAT snapshots

Fairfield LDAT, NSW

Working with community and faith leaders, the LDAT is dismantling stigma in refugee communities. Consultation showed there was shame and stigma around the use of alcohol and other drugs in culturally diverse families in the area due to cultural and religious values. Various sessions were held to help inform the development of a toolkit aimed at generating discussion on the topic. A two-day workshop trained 100 community and religious leaders to use the resource kit.

Burnie Works LDAT, TAS

Key partners of the Burnie community worked with a planning group of around 15 parents and young people to deliver workshops aimed at increasing knowledge and confidence in communicating effectively with loved ones about alcohol and other drugs. Community members, parents, young people, extended family and committed organisations came together to produce a booklet that genuinely responds to the stories and truths told throughout the consultation.

Evidence-based drug education

This protective factor is relevant for people aged 6 to 30.



Participation

Ballarat and District Drug Action Partnership LDAT, VIC

Partner organisations

Sports Central, Ballarat Community Health, Victoria Police, AFL Goldfields (Ballarat Football Netball League), Basketball Ballarat, Ballarat Cricket Association.

Target audience

Young people aged 15 to 30, who are engaged in community sport.

Local challenge

Local club volunteers and committees in the regional community of Ballarat saw a need to build their capacity and skills to help shift the drinking culture in sport, as well as adequately prepare for illegal drugs issues if they were to occur within the club community.

Solution

Led by Sports Central, the Regional Sports Assembly for the Central Highlands area, the LDAT is running the Leading From the Front program. Delivered in partnership with Ballarat Community Health, it's a community sport health promotion initiative which aims to raise awareness of health, safety and wellbeing issues with a focus on alcohol and other drug safety.

Participating clubs become accredited in the Alcohol and Drug Foundation's Good Sports program and work through the program to create an illegal drugs management plan for the club.

Club leaders participate in AOD primary prevention training and then host an alcohol and other drugs prevention and harm minimisation presentation for members, players and parents, delivered by Ballarat Community Health. They also receive a tailored social media campaign and access to Responsible Service of Alcohol training for club members.

The aim is to engage 10 local clubs and 50 peer leaders by the end of 2022, eventually expanding the program to further clubs and peer leaders.

Impact

The program, originally planned for 2020, is still being delivered due to delays caused by COVID-19 lockdowns in Victoria. However, it has had a strong start in 2022.

Clubs hosted a Leading From the Front Round to launch their new Good Sports illegal drugs management plan and raise awareness. Young club members have begun completing Responsible Service of Alcohol training.

Leading From the Front is coming at a good time for the Ballarat sporting community, as they get back to sport after the pandemic. There's been a positive impact on clubs as the program builds capacity and upskills local club volunteers.

Around Australia | LDAT snapshots

Maitland Drug Action Team, NSW

Maitland Drug Action Team in regional NSW is delivering sports sessions to young people aged 6 to 17, facilitated by Motiv8sports. The activities cover two locations which have been identified as areas that experience social isolation. The sessions are well attended and provide an opportunity to engage parents. A local police youth officer from Port Stephens Hunter Police and a youth worker from Youth Express attend each week.

Mitchell Shire LDAT, VIC

The Michell Youth Services Contrast Art Program ran free, weekly sessions for local students in the Seymour area, over nine weeks. Each week local artists and art therapists encouraged students to use their creativity to develop new art skills and, at the same time, increase feelings of confidence and belonging within the peer group. The program concluded with a local art exhibition.

Waroona LDAT, WA

This LDAT is delivering activities to get young people moving in Waroona, a small shire south of Perth. The program has included archery, rock climbing and basketball umpired by police officers. The aim is to use sport to develop protective factors at a local level. Health services from the area have been engaged to support the delivery of alcohol and other drug information to participants.

Participating in positive, structured social activities or sport



Community Connection

Port Adelaide LDAT, SA

Partner organisations

Red Cross, Justice Reinvestment SA, Tiraapendi Wodli.

Target audience

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

Local challenge

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community face significant issues with alcohol and other drug use in the area. Intergenerational trauma has led to a disconnect to culture and community for families. A particular focus for the LDAT is men returning to the community from prison. The time while transitioning out of incarceration carries a heightened risk of AOD use and harms, due to feelings of disconnection or lack of positive role models.

Solution

The LDAT builds community connection by providing a space for Aboriginal people to gather and meet in a culturally safe location to have conversations and get support. These weekly groups allow participants to come together and build healthy, positive connections with others from the same community. They also include educational and support sessions, provided by local community agencies (disability support, Centrelink, psychology, legal services), to raise awareness of support services that are available and how to link in to those services.

A leadership group has been established to drive the actions and content of the group sessions. The LDAT provides education to the leadership group on how to structure their own leadership governance and build the group's capacity to become self-sufficient. The group advocates for Aboriginal people's rights and supports in the Port Adelaide area.

Impact

The program has delivered weekly men's, women's and families' groups over 12 months where they have seen a significant increase in attendance in the meetings, along with an increase in social connections between group members.

Alongside the increase in attendees, there was significant positive qualitative feedback provided by participants.

Men who took part in the men's group reflected that the program provides a safe and respectful space where men can be vulnerable, learn and share stories with one another, that they feel supported and that it feels like a family.

Around Australia | LDAT snapshots

Red Dust Nauiyu LDAT, NT

The Red Dust LDAT has focused on increasing young people's knowledge and understanding of local culture and history to create a greater sense of belonging. Pride in culture and community is a key protective factor in reducing alcohol and drug harm for young Aboriginal people. The LDAT works with community Elders and the Merrepen Art Centre to design artworks that depict important messages and stories for the people of Nauiyu, ensuring that traditions are not lost. Young people receive training to develop new murals and projects to maintain the connections with each other, Elders and culture.

Lake Tyers LDAT, VIC

The community hub located on the Lake Tyers Mission, also known as Bung Yarnda, is an Aboriginal mission established in 1863 on the shore of Lake Tyers in Victoria's Gippsland. Given the isolated environment, unemployment challenges and lack of recreation and structured activities available, this LDAT has established a fishing program to engage young people. The program involves Gunaikurnai Nation Elders sharing stories, community leadership education, fishing lessons and fishing competitions.

Norfolk Island Community Action Group LDAT, NSW/ACT

Norfolk Island is a territory of Australia and tiny island in the South Pacific Ocean. The local LDAT has initiated an innovative Student Health and Wellbeing Ambassador Program (SHAW UP) which helps Year 7 to 11 students to be community changemakers by exploring what troubles or inspires them, and how to pursue their hopes and dreams. It builds young people's understanding and confidence about health, including around alcohol and other drugs.

Sense of connectedness to community, culture, school and family

This protective factor is most relevant for people aged 6 to 30.



Then and Now

Redtails PinkTails Right Tracks, NT

Then

The Redtails Pinktails Right Tracks LDAT began in 2017, with the first round of the LDAT program. By early 2019, Right Tracks saw success from linking sport and community health outcomes for remote communities in Central Australia.

Based in Alice Springs, the program was established by locals for locals, and centres on improving health and employment opportunities to reduce alcohol and drug harm. It aimed to overcome the ever-increasing disengagement of young Aboriginal men in the region through sport and a supportive training and learning environment.

In just two years, 11 sporting clubs signed up to the program, reaching around 1200 young people.

Post-program evaluation found that participants increased their awareness and knowledge of health and wellbeing issues around alcohol, domestic violence, smoking and sexual health – leading to more open discussion. Changed player attitudes and behaviours were also recorded, including a willingness to get an annual health check and sexual health screen.

Of the 11 clubs in the program, nine became accredited with the ADF's Good Sports program, creating more Smoke and Alcohol-Free Zones, better member policies and an improved club culture. There was a reported increase in the leadership capacity of players and changing attitudes towards risky drinking. Karen Sheldon Training and Employment Agency, a partner of the LDAT, found jobs for 44 of the program's participants.

Now

Today the LDAT's work has expanded. It continues to use the power of sport to inspire change on and off the field, especially for all the locals enthusiastic about footy. It has become a one-stop-shop for talent for the AFL, making dreams a reality for its young sports stars, both for male players (Redtails) and female players (Pinktails).

In conjunction with the Central Australian Football Club, the Right Tracks Program (Tjaiya Rratja) targets remote teams and clubs to create pathways for a better future for individuals and families. It works with 16 sporting clubs covering footy, netball, softball and other teams. With 1680 participants from juniors to seniors, it builds upon the sense of identity, belongingness, purpose and inspiration that comes from association with sporting clubs

Whilst coach and player development are key to the program's success, it also provides alcohol and tobacco education, life skills training, job ready mentoring, work experiences and leadership opportunities. This comprehensive approach gives participants the benefit of new experiences, new connections and new conversations. The mentoring and support helps to change the world views of young people who have never travelled outside of their small community.

The Right Tracks Program is now full time, with a structured curriculum in conjunction with Desert Peoples Centre, the Centre of Appropriate Technology and Bachelor University.

For these remote First Nations people, the lessons and experience of sport are transferring to other parts of their lives. The program's participants are putting education, wellbeing, family and community first and have become role models, leaders and mentors in their local communities.







Image: Sophie Bourchier -Community Advisory Council Chair.

Community of Practice

A Community of Practice (CoP) is a group of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis.

The LDAT CoP gives LDATs the confidence and support they need to develop and implement Community Action Plans (CAPs) through learning from the experiences of experts and other like-minded LDATs. CoP events provide opportunities for LDAT members to connect, share and learn.

Through Conversations (online webinars), LDAT members can ask questions of LDAT presenters, chat with other LDAT members and share resources relevant to them.

Participants are able to share key learnings and challenges, and can work through problems together from different parts of Australia. LDATs who have attended so far have reported that it's an important opportunity for connection.

Community Advisory Council

The LDAT Community Advisory Council was formed to advise the Alcohol and Drug Foundation, providing insights on LDAT community needs, interests, and priorities for the CoP. The Council is made up of LDAT members from around Australia with a diverse range of experience, who are enthusiastic about prevention and community development.

Council Chair is Sophie Bourchier - Project Officer at Substance Misuse Limestone Coast and lead of the Substance Misuse Limestone Coast LDAT in SA. Here Sophie shares her thoughts on the importance of the CoP for LDATs.

"Working in rural South Australia, the CoP gives me an opportunity to learn, to make connections and build networks. It's particularly fantastic during the continued COVID-19 pandemic, where there is less opportunity to travel and meet people.

"We have a whole range of LDATs and organisations around Australia doing really great community work in health promotion and alcohol and other drugs. Because our country is so large, the CoP provides a learning tool to connect with a range of people we wouldn't normally come across, unless it was in a conference environment.

"It's the only opportunity that I have come across where we can share and learn. These activities [undertaken by LDATs] and health promotion strategies are evidence-based and are actually adding to the evidence out there, in terms of providing a bank of learnings for organisations to tap into. It's imperative and crucial to the ongoing development in the alcohol and drug prevention space."

Community of Practice sessions

Webinar attendees

Local Drug Action Teams

Planet Youth

The Planet Youth model has improved wellbeing and reduced rates of alcohol and other drug use amongst young people in Iceland and is now being implemented in over 30 countries.

In Australia, the Alcohol and Drug Foundation has been working with Planet Youth since 2019 to trial the evidence-based approach with LDATs in Lithgow and Blue Mountains (NSW), and Port Pirie, Salisbury, Limestone Coast and Murray Bridge (SA), supported by Wellbeing SA.

Surveys are a key part of the Planet Youth Model. Undertaken every two years by local Year 10 students, the survey findings provide an understanding of the alcohol and other drugs experiences of young people in each region, as well as opportunities for action.

Workshops led by Planet Youth analysts are then hosted by the LDAT with local organisations, school staff, students, health services, police officers, council and other community members coming together to understand the findings and plan activities to address them

This year our SA workshops were virtual, however we were able to gather again face-to-face in NSW in mid-2022 and were pleased to welcome back to Australia Dr Páll Ríkharðsson, Planet Youth CEO, and Dr Ingibjörg

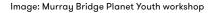
Eva Thorisdottir, Chief Analytics Officer for the Icelandic Centre for Social Research & Analysis. The pair presented the survey data and opportunities for action at two planning workshops.

Next steps will see local stakeholders deep dive into the data to come up with an action plan to reduce their region-specific risk factors and increase protective factors.

In September 2022, Planet Youth also held its first inperson conference since the global pandemic begun. Sally Underdown (State Manager for SA/NT) and Tyson Brown (Project Lead – Planet Youth Australia) formed the ADF delegation and headed to Iceland to meet with, and learn from, the Global Planet Youth community.

The trip was an opportunity to learn more about the Planet Youth model directly from the Planet Youth team and researchers that have been involved since its implementation in Iceland in the 90s, and to connect with other global sites to learn from their experiences. Tyson also presented on the progress of the Australian pilot since 2019.

Funding has been secured to enable the ADF to continue to trial the Planet Youth model through LDATs until 2024.





New Local Drug Action Team resources

The LDAT program has recently released a suite of program modules: Mentoring, Peer Support and Parenting. The off-the-shelf modules provide a guide for delivering activities to reduce or delay the uptake of alcohol and other drugs in young people aged 13 to 17 years old.

They were piloted with real LDATs and were created so that LDATs can spend less time designing activities, and more time delivering them.

LDATs can easily adapt the included resources to use in a way that best suits their community's needs.

On the back of extensive consultation conducted with LDATs in 2021, work is well under way to improve the LDAT experience – from a new easy-to-use online platform to updated, evidence-based toolkits that guide LDATs' implementation and evaluation and also rate the evidence and resources required to implement other existing programs.



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