



# AWARE PROGRAMMES SEEK TO ESTABLISH RESPONSIBLE ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IN SA

Established in 1989 and registered as a non-profit organization, Aware ([aware.org.za](http://aware.org.za)) aims to develop a culture of responsible alcohol usage by providing South Africans with detailed information about the damage that is caused by the abuse of alcohol, and its impact on our communities. Aware was founded by the alcohol industry, in response to concerns relating to this misuse of alcohol.

Aware highlights the importance of promoting Responsible Alcohol Usage for the purposes of developing harmonious, safe and sustainable social settings within South African communities.

Aware hopes to make a big impact in terms of promoting the responsible consumption of alcohol, by working in partnership with other associations

to amplify its message, including the Foundation for Alcohol Related Research (FARR), the Young Free and Educated (YFE) initiative, The International Alliance for Responsible drinking (IARD) and The Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC).

Aware focuses on six key themes to promote a culture of responsible alcohol consumption in South Africa, while educating citizens on the harms caused by the abuse of alcohol in our communities. These are shared in further detail below.

### ***Fighting Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)***

Aware is mandated to address the concerning rise of FASD in the country. It is for this reason that Aware funded FAAR to conduct research on the

health and psycho-social effects of FASD in adolescence and adulthood. The study is currently being conducted in De Aar, in the Northern Cape, with young adults affected by FASD during the Prevalence Study in 2001-2003. The 68 children diagnosed in this study are now between 20-27 years old, and will be able to provide FAAR with new information on the effects of FASD during an individual's life span. This study will provide us with information that is currently not available in any part of the world.

### ***Drinking and Driving or Walking***

Aware works with several key stakeholders to support responsible alcohol consumption when driving and walking. These stakeholders each play an important role in achieving

Aware's objectives.

Aware supports the NICRO Road Offences Panel Programme (ROPP) initiative which aims to improve our awareness of the dangers and consequences of driving under the influence, as well as reckless and negligent driving. The ROPP programme supported by Aware has been rolled out in the Eastern Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape and Western Cape.

Aware has also signed a three-year MoU with the RTMC to partner with its Festive Media Campaign and Easter Campaign to create awareness and educate South Africans on the consequences of consuming alcohol when driving and walking. Aware has successfully delivered three campaigns with the partnership and reached over 700 million road users through it.

**Underage Drinking**

Underage drinking is unfortunately a common occurrence in South Africa. Accordingly, Aware has developed a multi-pronged programme to address underage drinking. One element of the programme is the distribution of specially developed material aligned to CAPS schools for use in Life Orientation and Life Skills classes.

Aware's "It Starts Today" programme aims to change the attitude of Grade 5 – 12 school learners with regards to alcohol consumption at both a Primary and High School level. This includes changing harmful attitudes and practices regarding alcohol in learners, and changing the attitude towards underage drinking within the community in which these learners live.

**Responsible Trade Facilitation Programme**

Aware's Responsible Trade Facilitation Programme focuses on facilitating the establishment of safer and alcohol harm free outlets by providing support to tavern owners in terms of understanding the implications of applicable liquor laws on their businesses, and to mentor them to operate within these laws and compliance guidelines.

Aware has also implemented a tavern scorecard against which it is able to measure the compliance of tavern owners to relevant codes and legislation.

**Binge Drinking**

Binge drinking refers to the act of consuming a lot of alcohol over a short

period of time. For men, binge drinking is normally defined as having five or more drinks in a short space of time, and four or more drinks in the same amount of time for women.

Binge drinking has several negative effects on the health and safety of consumers. Accidents, as well as falling over, are common occurrences as being drunk affects co-ordination and balance. If the accident or fall is bad, it could result in anything ranging from minor injury to severe injury, and sometimes even death.

Binge drinking can also affect a person's mood, memory and in the longer term, can lead to serious mental health problems. Binge drinking can sometimes lead to anti-social and aggressive behaviour which could have a detrimental impact on relations with loved ones or friends. Aware provides consumers with questionnaires to assess their drinking habits, and where applicable, provides tips for consumers to follow to avoid binge drinking.

The Aware website has also listed ways in which consumers can seek help with binge drinking habits,

through Alcoholics Anonymous on 0861 HELP AA (435-722) and through the South African depression and anxiety group which can be reached on 0800 21 22 23.

**Alcohol Dependence**

The Aware website also provides a detailed list for consumers to assess whether or not they are experiencing signs and symptoms of alcohol dependence, and how to manage this condition.

Like many other drugs, alcohol can be both physically and psychologically addictive, causing some consumers extreme anxiety and concern over where their next drink is coming from, while planning social, family and work events around alcohol. The Aware website provides individuals with the information they need to recognise if they have compulsive need to drink, through a list of easily identifiable behaviours.

The website also provides a list of warning signs for consumers to use to assess whether alcohol is affecting their mood and mental health.

**13% OF BOYS**  
WILL TRY ALCOHOL BY THE AGE OF 13

**8% OF GIRLS**  
WILL TRY ALCOHOL BY THE AGE OF 13

When children drink, they are more likely to make poor decisions – with bad results. Talking to your kids about the dangers of alcohol could help them to resist peer pressure.

**50% OF SOUTH AFRICAN TEENS DRINK ALCOHOL**

#itstartstoday    A BETTER TOMORROW STARTS TODAY    FIND OUT MORE

**#NOTUNDERAGEDRINKING**

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA NATIONAL IDENTITY CARD

**NO ALCOHOL MAY BE SOLD TO PERSONS UNDER THE AGE OF 18.**