

Empowering young people pilot

An evaluation of the
LOVE DRUNK performance and the
RESPECT, PROTECT, CONNECT program

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INTRODUCTION

Decisions that young people make can have a significant impact on themselves and those around them for years to come. Reports of young peoples' involvement in car accidents, violence and binge drinking remind us of the vulnerability of this demographic to poor decision making. As such, it is vital that young people are equipped with the right information, and are empowered to make informed choices about the behaviour they engage in. This is particularly the case when it comes to personal safety and the safety of others as part of negotiating and developing personal relationships. In this regard, education within the school environment plays a significant role in assisting young people to develop these skills.

The provision of programs and services designed to support young people to negotiate the issues surrounding personal safety and respectful relationships has been identified as a gap in young peoples' education in Victoria. This gap has been acknowledged by the Victorian Government with the release of Victoria's Plan to Promote Respect in early 2009. The Plan to Promote Respect was driven by community concern about the perceived increase in rates of binge drinking, violence and other forms of inappropriate behaviour.¹ Promoting respect within schools is a central element of the Respect Plan. In recognition of this, the Victorian Government has recently announced the future roll out of a Respect in Schools strategy.² This strategy aims to drive cultural change amongst young people by fostering a greater sense of personal responsibility and by encouraging young people to think about the potential consequences of their actions.

As part of this strategy, schools have been acknowledged as important sites of respectful relationships education, both in Australia and internationally.³ In recognition of this, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) released a report in November 2009 that identified existing violence prevention and respectful relationships programs in Victorian Secondary Schools. One of the report's goals was "to identify and explore best practice in violence prevention, intervention and respectful relationships education in schools in Victoria and elsewhere"⁴. It identified good practice as being "inclusive of impact evaluation".⁵

In another measure which supports the Respect in Schools agenda, DEECD is currently developing a Health and Wellbeing Service Framework (HWSF) to provide overarching policy guidance to support the delivery of its student wellbeing programs. In a recent discussion paper DEECD identified programs that promote respectful relationships as those that fit within the domain of 'health promotion and primary prevention'.⁶ While the HWSF is focused on departmental services, the concepts that underpin the need to supplement traditional, classroom-based health and wellbeing curriculum with additional programs have been

¹ Victoria's Plan to Promote Respect, <http://www.premier.vic.gov.au/your-voice/statement-of-government-intentions/victorias-plan-to-promote-respect.html>

² See press release from the Minister for Education, 'Schools help to drive respect agenda', 2 February 2010, access at <http://www.premier.vic.gov.au/component/content/article/9269.html>

³ Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 'Respectful relationships education', November 2009, p. 7

⁴ Respectful Relationships Education, Violence prevention and respectful relationships education in Victorian secondary schools, p.3

⁵ Ibid, p.89

⁶ Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 'Towards a health and wellbeing service framework: a discussion paper for consultation', February 2010

articulated in the *partnerships* element of the proposed HWSF. In this vein, the importance of teachers being aware of the range of services that provide a key role in young peoples' health and wellbeing was underscored.

*"I want classrooms to become the engine room of cultural change, we need to build more respect in the community. And I want to foster a greater sense of individual responsibility by encouraging young people to think about the consequences of their actions on the people around them."*⁷

Victorian Premier, John Brumby

As the Victorian Government is strongly advocating for schools to focus their attention on respectful relationships education in schools, teachers will be looking for resources that support them in delivering this education.

The Office of the Child Safety Commissioner (OCSC) believes it can assist DEECD staff and its teachers to deliver beneficial outcomes for students, through the provision of this report. The report details this office's evaluation of the *Empowering Young People pilot project* - a collaborative partnership between the OCSC, schools and external programs, working together to deliver and test performance and workshop activity that has been designed to support the development and maintenance of respectful relationships amongst young people.

In 2008, the OCSC became aware of the Love Drunk performance that uses a theatre-in-education approach to deliver messages about respectful relationships and personal safety. Attendance at a Love Drunk performance provided confirmation to the OCSC that it was an engaging and innovative tool to get students thinking about common decisions they may be confronted with and the potential consequences of these decisions. The OCSC was also aware of the Respect, Protect, Connect (RPC) program that utilised peer educators in small single sex groups to discuss issues such as bullying, violence and relationships. Aware of community perceptions regarding young people engaging in risky behaviours such as binge drinking, the OCSC wondered about students' attitudes to such behaviours and whether programs such as Love Drunk and RPC would have a positive influence on the students' attitudes and behaviours.

The OCSC decided to establish a program that would test this. As a first step, the OCSC made contact with the Student Wellbeing Unit in DEECD to explore whether there was interest in the project and what approval would be required to undertake the project in schools. DEECD advised the OCSC that the proposal would need to be considered by the department's Research Branch before it could proceed. Following approval to proceed with the proposal and agreement to provide a copy of the evaluation to the department, the project commenced.

The Empowering Young People pilot program involved the participation of approximately 464 students in six Victorian secondary schools during 2009. This pilot combined the Love Drunk performance with the RPC program. An evaluation of the pilot is contained in this report. The evaluation aimed to measure the ability of Love Drunk and RPC, both individually and as a package, to contribute to young people's health and wellbeing education by assisting young people to make informed decisions about their behaviour. As such, the evaluation aimed to measure this contribution in terms of the pilot acting as a catalyst for young people to think about and discuss issues related to personal safety and respectful relationships. Ultimately,

⁷ Respectful Relationships Education, Violence prevention and respectful relationships education in Victorian secondary schools, p.89

the survey responses provide evidence that demonstrates that RPC and Love Drunk have been successful in making students stop and think about these important issues. These findings provide a valuable source of information for those charged with developing the Respect in Schools strategy.

Key Findings

- Individually, Love Drunk and RPC are successful in engaging with young people and stimulating thought and discussion about issues relating to personal safety and respectful relationships;
- The combination of Love Drunk and RPC provides greater opportunity for young people to engage with and access this education and also to consolidate their understanding of the issues;
- Love Drunk and RPC are beneficial additions to broader, classroom based education strategies and therefore can be seen to support teachers in their delivery of health and wellbeing curriculum;
- The benefits of Love Drunk and RPC can be further enhanced by ensuring the programs remain relevant to students; and
- Schools require assistance to access programs such as Love Drunk and RPC.

In addition to the findings above, both the quantitative and qualitative analyses provided important insight, not only into the strength of the individual pilot programs, but also more general findings that may prove useful in the development of a broader Respect in Schools strategy. The qualitative evaluation results can be seen to indicate **four key strengths of the pilot program** for supporting young people to consider their own safety and the safety of others when making decisions:

- Engagement with young people;
- Catalyst for thought;
- Catalyst for discussion; and
- Positive contribution to the broader health and wellbeing curriculum.

Further, the quantitative evaluation results highlighted the following important considerations for schools as they focus their attention on this important area of education, and also for DEECD as the Respect in Schools Strategy is developed:

- The pilot program engaged young people and provoked thought about the issues;
- Young people in each school engaged with the pilot program differently; and
- Sometimes male and female students engaged with the pilot program differently.

Recommendations

The *Respect in Schools* strategy could benefit from the inclusion of Love Drunk and RPC in its school based curriculum. This would require consideration being given to:

- a) Appropriate funding mechanisms to ensure that schools have equal access to external programs such as Love Drunk or RPC;
- b) Providing flexibility for schools to tailor the Respect Strategy to meet their unique and changing needs;
- c) Strongly encouraging schools to identify the particular needs of their students when implementing the respectful relationships program. The surveys used in this evaluation are one useful method for schools to use to understand the issues facing their students;
- d) Positively engaging both male and female students and thus reflecting a balanced and holistic education strategy; and
- e) Undertaking a longitudinal study into the effectiveness of such health and wellbeing initiatives.

Program facilitators of Love Drunk and RPC could:

- f) Ensure the relevance of their programs to students by liaising with each school to understand the issues of particular importance in order to tailor their programs accordingly; and
- g) Continue to facilitate structured classroom follow-up by providing appropriate and relevant materials to teachers to enable them to lead students in a reflection of the messages contained in the programs.

THE PILOT

The Empowering Young People pilot combined the Love Drunk theatre performance, run by Phunktional, and the Respect Protect Connect peer education program, run by the South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault (SECASA) in partnership with Women's Health in the South East (WHISE). Love Drunk is a harm minimisation tool for upper secondary college students and has been seen by over 80,000 young people in approximately 420 schools nationally over the last five years. Phunktional uses a theatre-in-education approach, with Love Drunk performances utilising a small number of skilled actors to actively engage audience members in discussion of the issues presented with their accompanying ethical complexities.

Exploring an incident of sexual assault among three teenage friends, Love Drunk deals with issues relevant to most young peoples' lives including drug and alcohol use and abuse, partying and relationships. It is a condition of the performance that the school nurse or counsellor is present to provide support to students if necessary. The performance ends with a question and answer session led by the performers and teachers notes are provided to encourage follow-up conversations in the classroom.

Respect, Protect, Connect (RPC) is a peer education program for secondary students which began in late 1998 and by the end of 2001 had been involved in 600 workshop sessions with more than 12,000 participants in over 50 schools and community settings. Respect, Protect, Connect addresses issues such as violence prevention, homophobia, bullying, masculinity, relationships and anger management. The program utilizes peer educators to present small group single-sex workshops in years 7 to 12, with participants empowered to take responsibility for their life choices and resourced to make informed decisions.

The decision to combine the Love Drunk performance with the RPC program as a package within the pilot, was driven by an acknowledgment that one-off intensive efforts to educate young people about personal safety and respectful relationships is not the most effective education strategy. In the pilot, RPC aims to expand on young peoples' consideration and discussion of the issues raised in the Love Drunk performance. It is hoped that supplementary educative tools such as RPC and Love Drunk, when integrated with an ongoing health and wellbeing curriculum in the school, will provide the most effective means of supporting young peoples' personal development.

One of the strengths of programs such as Love Drunk and RPC is their ability to make a strong impact on students in a short amount of time, enabling teachers to follow-up the issues raised with the young people in the following days, weeks and months. For this reason, such programs can often be considered to be quite controversial as they vie for the attention of students by creating edgy, provocative, engaging and thought provoking programs. Love Drunk can be considered to be one such program. It is for this reason that we considered the partnership of Love Drunk with the RPC program to be complementary, as the RPC program allows for follow up of the issues raised in Love Drunk in a smaller group environment.

METHODOLOGY

Between August and December 2009, up to 464 students in years 9 - 12 in six Victorian secondary schools participated in the pilot. These students were from two public schools in rural Victoria and four metropolitan schools (two public, one independent and one Catholic). As illustrated in the table below, more males participated in the pilot than females. This is due to the inclusion of an all-boys school as one of the six pilot schools. Further, approximately 30 languages other than English were listed by students participating in the pilot as being spoken at home. Therefore the participants in the pilot can be seen to reflect Victoria's cultural diversity.

Table 1: Numbers of pilot participants

	Males	Females	Unspecified	Total
Survey 1	271	182	11	464
Survey 2	182	94	10	286
Survey 3	175	92	9	276
Total	628	368	30	1026

This report provides the findings of the evaluation of the Empowering Young People pilot. The aim of the evaluation was to measure the ability of Love Drunk and RPC, both individually and as a package, to contribute to young people's health and wellbeing education. Specifically, the evaluation measured this contribution in terms of the pilot acting as a catalyst for young people to think about and discuss issues related to personal safety and respectful relationships. However, in addition to measuring the effect of the pilot on young people, the evaluation also provided a snapshot of the attitudes and opinions of young people towards issues such as alcohol and drug use, friendships and sexual relationships.

The evaluation sought to answer the following:

- Is Love Drunk a useful tool to get students thinking about issues like personal safety and respectful relationships and does it impact on their behaviour?
- Is Respect, Protect, Connect a useful tool to get students thinking about issues such as personal safety and respectful relationships and does it impact on their behaviour?
- Is the integrated Love Drunk and Respect, Protect, Connect package a useful tool to get students thinking about issues such as personal safety and respectful relationships and do they impact on their behaviour?

To answer these questions, the evaluation used surveys to test the influence of both programs on students' attitudes and behaviours. Students were surveyed at three stages during the pilot process: prior to seeing Love Drunk, after seeing Love Drunk and finally, after participating in RPC (surveys attached at Appendix 1). In an attempt to gauge changes in students' attitudes and behaviours, the surveys contained the same set of nine questions with the same four options for answer. The questions were designed to elicit students' attitudes towards personal safety, looking out for friends, drug and alcohol use, and sexual relationships at the three different points in the pilot program.

It was envisaged that the survey responses would result in a set of quantitative data for each stage in the pilot process that could be compared and analysed to identify any impacts of the

Love Drunk and RPC programs on student attitudes. In addition to these same nine questions, the surveys also contained questions specifically related to either Love Drunk or RPC. This not only provided the opportunity for students to supply their opinions on the benefits of both Love Drunk and RPC, but more importantly it also provided the opportunity for students to demonstrate their understanding of the issues contained in the programs and therefore the messages that had remained with them.

Measuring changes in peoples' attitudes and behaviour can be a complex task. This task is further complicated when attempting to attribute the changes to a particular program or event. With this in mind, the design of the surveys was central to the efficacy of the evaluation. A pre-pilot phase was undertaken in a rural secondary school in order to test and modify the surveys accordingly. In addition to the student surveys, teachers were also surveyed to capture their views on the impact of the pilot on students' attitudes and behaviour following the students' participation in the pilot. Teachers were surveyed on two occasions, the first was following the students' participation in RPC and the second survey was conducted approximately three weeks later, in order to ascertain whether teachers believed any impact on the students had been sustained over that time.

The teacher surveys not only provided a secondary angle of evaluation, they also provided the opportunity for teachers to comment on how Love Drunk and RPC support them in their delivery of the health and wellbeing curriculum. This is particularly interesting given the responsibility that teachers have for delivering school-based education regarding personal safety and respectful relationships to students.

Methodology Challenges

As mentioned, there are many difficulties associated with any research that aims to measure the impact of an activity on a person or group of people. Additionally, there are also limitations associated with survey use. While the main challenge for the evaluation can be attributed to consistency of data collection, other challenges that faced the evaluation process included a complex and protracted research approval process and time pressures at schools that hindered participation in the evaluation.

As highlighted above, the surveys were designed to assess changes to young peoples' attitudes and possibly behaviour as they participated in the Love Drunk and RPC pilot program. If considered through a purely quantitative lens, the data collected from the surveys appears inconsistent. That is, student responses across the three surveys did not always change as might have been expected. While there are many probable practical reasons for this, the inconsistencies in the data can also be seen to be a reflection of the complexity of these issues for young people.

One obvious practical limitation is that surveys rely on the participants to provide honest responses. In the case of this evaluation, there was the risk that students would write what they thought was the 'correct answer'. This risk was possibly decreased due to the surveys being anonymous. Further, there was also the risk that the students would not take the task seriously and write deliberately rude or humorous responses. This possibility was further increased as all students were provided with an envelope to put their surveys in and seal to ensure confidentiality (a requirement of undertaking research/evaluations in public schools). For many students, mainly males, this temptation to provide what they considered to be a

humorous response proved too hard to resist. One potential reason for this behaviour is that some students find it difficult to discuss and consider these issues seriously. Another potential explanation is that the desire for students to 'fit in' socially may cause them to make light of issues that they may find to be too personal or embarrassing.

Further, there was the risk of a low survey response rate. We attempted to minimise this risk by having the students fill out the surveys in class time while under teacher supervision. However, as students were asked to fill out three quite similar surveys, there was also the risk that survey fatigue would lead to much lower response rates in the second and third surveys. For various reasons, there was certainly a notable difference in the number of surveys filled out within each school. Reasons for this difference include absent students, time pressures in schools and where parents did not provide consent for their children to participate in the surveys (another requirement for conducting research in public schools). The difference in the number of returned surveys across the three surveys was quite substantial for some schools. As the surveys are de-identified, the difference in the numbers of returned surveys somewhat limits the ability to undertake a meaningful analysis and comparison of the quantitative data for some schools. Further, it was unfortunate that the low response rate was also reflected in the teacher surveys, given that when teachers filled out their surveys, the responses were rich and informative. However, only a handful of teachers in only three schools completed the surveys.

The surveys also provided students with the opportunity to write their assessment of both programs and to comment on other aspects of personal safety and respectful relationships. Some of these questions were uniform across the three surveys, while some were unique to each survey. It is these responses that have primarily been used to assess the engagement of students during each of the three phases of the pilot and also to gain an understanding of the students' thoughts about these issues.

Both the qualitative and quantitative information captured in this evaluation suggests that the programs are successful in provoking students to think about issues surrounding respectful relationships and personal safety. However, the survey responses can also be seen to be more reflective of the attitudes of the young people towards these issues, rather than a measurement of their actual behaviour. In this regard, evaluating the effect of an event, situation or program on an individual or a group is a notoriously difficult task, as the extent to which programs such as these will affect young peoples' behaviour may only really be tested when they are faced with such decisions. And even then, it is difficult to attribute a sound decision partially or wholly due to the impact of these programs given the multifaceted basis of behaviour.

“The evaluation findings provide a rich source of information regarding the benefits of the Love Drunk performance and RPC program for young people. This is particularly the case when reading the written responses of both the students and the teachers.”

Bernie Geary, Child Safety Commissioner

SNAPSHOT OF YOUNG PEOPLES' VIEWS

In addition to evaluating the benefits of Love Drunk and RPC for young people, the evaluation also provided the opportunity to gain an insight into the views of young people regarding issues such as personal safety, drinking alcohol, taking drugs, sexual relationships and friendships. The issues facing students will vary greatly between schools and even within schools. This was evidenced in the surveys undertaken during the evaluation process where the responses from students in particular schools demonstrated the need for a health and wellbeing focus on a specific issue(s). For one school, the responses indicated that bullying and racism were a particular challenge for the students, while in another school it was evident that the students were in most need of support in negotiating healthy and safe relationships. Further, these issues will differ again between males and females. The results below demonstrate these differences between student attitudes and behaviours in the response to the first survey.

Personal Safety

Question 1: I make sure that I am safe when out with friends

Never

Sometimes

Mostly

Always

Survey responses of students at the five co-educational schools demonstrated that in all schools, females are more likely to consider their personal safety when out with friends. The majority of females in all five schools indicated that they 'Always' make sure that they are safe when out with friends. However the male responses at these schools, and also at the all-boys school, were spread most commonly between 'Always' and 'Mostly'. Two schools had notable numbers of 'Sometimes' as a response when compared to the other four schools.

These findings are not surprising as it is generally understood that females develop and mature at an earlier age than males. Further, the two schools that had an increased number of 'Sometimes' responses relating to young people making sure they are safe when out with friends also had, on average, a younger cohort of students participating in the surveys (14 and 15 years of age respectively) and this issue may not be as relevant to younger students as it is to their older counterparts. Students were also asked to define what it means to make sure that they are safe when out with friends.

Common responses can be seen below:

"Taking my phone with me and using common sense" Female, 16

"Telling other people where I am" Male, 16

"Knowing the people I'm with and what we're doing" Female, 16

"Staying together at all times" Female, 15

Safety of friends

Question 2: I look out for my friends' safety when we are out together (e.g. when we are at a party).

Never *Sometimes* *Mostly* *Always*

Interestingly, when it comes to these young people's attitudes about looking out for their friends, there is an obvious increase in 'Always' responses when compared to their responses to looking out for themselves. This increase was demonstrated in the responses from females at all schools and from males at five of the six schools. This is a clear illustration of the value that young people place on friendship and the importance of looking out for each other. For teachers, parents and other support staff working with young people in this area, the knowledge that young people appear to consider the safety of their friends equally, if not more than their own safety, can be utilised in strategies for educating and informing young people about safe and respectful behaviours and attitudes. As well as identifying the above methods for looking out for their own safety, the students also identified the following ways that they look out for their friends' safety:

"I take care of them if drunk or injured" Male, 15

"Making sure they don't drink too much" Male, 16

"Backing each other up, e.g. if one of us gets into a fight everyone helps" Male, 16

"I try to but I can't control my friends, they make their own decisions" Female, 15

Looking out for each other

Question 3: My friends look out for me when we are out together.

Never *Sometimes* *Mostly* *Always*

Though the young people placed high value on looking out for their friends, students indicated a level of doubt that their friends would offer them the same protection and look out for them in return. In all six schools, there was a decrease in males who indicated that their friends would 'Always' look out for them when out together, when compared to the number of males who indicated that they would 'Always' look out for their friends. For females, this trend was evident in four out of the six schools, with the responses of the females at the remaining two schools staying the same. That the majority of young people indicated their commitment to looking after their friends when out on the one hand, and then demonstrated their doubt that their friends would return the favour reveals a level of mistrust. With this knowledge, teachers may be able to address this perception with students, in order to strengthen the positive and healthy relationships between students.

"They make sure I'm making the right decisions and I'm happy and safe"
15 (gender not specified)

"They back me up if I'm in a fight" Male, 15

"When I was very drunk, [they] took me home and looked after me" Female, 16

"Helping me the same way I help them" Male, 16

Possible consequences of drinking alcohol and taking drugs

Question 4: I have thought about what could happen to me and my friends from drinking alcohol and taking drugs.

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly Agree

Across the six schools, the majority of all students 'Agreed' that they had considered the potential consequences for themselves and their friends from drinking alcohol. Interestingly, when asked whether they had thought about the consequences of taking drugs, there was a significant increase in both males and females in all schools who 'Strongly agreed' that they had. This can be seen to be further evidence of the normalisation of alcohol use, as students clearly signalled that they had considered the consequences of taking drugs more thoroughly than the consequences of drinking alcohol. This is possibly because students consider the consequences from taking drugs to be more serious.

Students were also asked to name some of the potential consequences of drinking alcohol and taking drugs. Students commonly listed health related effects such as overdose, injury and death. However, common responses varied between schools and between genders. In addition to injury and death, females commonly named unsafe sex, rape, pregnancy, alcohol poisoning and bad decision making as consequences, while common responses for males included getting into trouble, jail and overdose.

It appeared that the majority of students did not differentiate between the consequences of taking drugs and the consequences of drinking alcohol, instead just listing a range of potential effects. This is in despite of the survey responses that, as illustrated above, indicated that students had generally considered the consequences of taking drugs much more seriously than the consequences of drinking alcohol. While the space provided to the students on the survey sheet may be a possible explanation for this lack of differentiation in consequences, it is also possible that, upon further reflection, students consider the consequences of drinking alcohol and taking drugs to be the same.

Sexual activity

Question 5: It's OK to engage in sexual activity with someone affected by alcohol or drugs.

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly Agree

The majority of female students in all schools 'Strongly Disagreed' that it was OK to engage in sexual activity with someone affected by alcohol and/or affected by drugs. For male students, in four of the six schools a majority also 'Strongly disagreed' that it was OK. In the remaining two schools, the majority of male students were less vehement in their opposition as they just 'Disagreed' that it was OK. Interestingly, the survey results consistently showed across most schools that the students thought it was less acceptable to engage in sexual activity with someone affected by drugs than someone affected by alcohol. Several students added a caveat to their response that it was OK to engage in sexual activity with someone affected by alcohol as long as they were affected too. These responses are very important to note in the context of developing strategies to address a binge drinking culture among young people.

In order to gauge the levels of 'sexual activity' that young people thought it was appropriate to be participating in, students were asked to define what 'sexual activity' meant to them. The vast majority of responses identified 'sex' as being sexual activity, while other responses demonstrated the knowledge some young people have of these issues by listing such activities as 'foreplay, kissing, oral, hand jobs.' Students were also asked to define what they meant by 'affected by alcohol'. Their responses to this question helped the researchers to understand young people's views and attitudes towards alcohol. Typical responses included 'to get drunk, tipsy, wasted and/or intoxicated'.

Other responses defined the concept in more detail:

"Not knowing what is happening" Male, 16

"More than tipsy, someone who is drunk and has their senses impaired" Female, 15

"Not fully knowing what you're doing" Male, 14

"Passing out, spewing, fun." Male, 14

Respect for others

Question 6: It is important to show respect for all people.

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly Agree

Young people demonstrated their knowledge of the importance of showing respect for all people, with the overwhelming majority of students in all six schools responding that they 'Strongly Agreed' or 'Agreed' that it is important to show respect for all people. However the complexity covered by this question was uncovered when young people were also asked whether there were any exceptions to showing respect. The majority of students answered 'No', while a smaller percentage of students identified that a condition of respecting people was receiving respect. An even smaller percentage of students identified people who had demonstrated that they did not deserve to be respected through committing serious crimes (such as murder and rape). For some of the schools, responses to this question alluded to possible bullying issues at those schools, as students identified individuals and people from particular ethnicities as not deserving respect.

Self respect

Question 7: It is important to show respect for myself.

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly Agree

Similarly, students from all six schools indicated the importance of showing confidence in themselves, as most students 'Strongly Agreed' or 'Agreed' that it was important to show respect for themselves. This was the case for both males and females. Students were also asked what it meant for them to show respect for themselves. Common answers included 'looking after their minds and bodies', 'being confident in whom they are as individuals' and 'not being pressured into doing something they do not wish to do'.

There were also a small number of survey responses that indicated self esteem issues for individual students. This included students who 'Disagreed' and 'Strongly Disagreed' that it was important to show respect for themselves. As evidenced by the comments provided

below, the vast majority of students who indicated self esteem issues were males at the age of 15. When asked what it meant to show respect for themselves these students provided the following comments:

“Treat myself like crap” Male, 15,

“I can hate myself and love it – no one cares”, Male, 15

“Hitting myself. Telling myself I’m not worthy” Male, 15

“I don’t care about myself” Male, 15

“Only when I deserve it” Male, 15

These comments are particularly concerning. They highlight the importance of developing health and wellbeing strategies that especially target these students to build their self-esteem and prevent the likelihood of self-harm.

Summary

An understanding of the attitudes and behaviours of young people is not only helpful at a broad level for developing high level education policies and curriculum, it is also essential for schools, as it enables them to adapt health and wellbeing programs to the unique needs of their student population. While the over arching principles of the health and wellbeing curriculum are common to all schools, the individual context of each school dictates that a one-size-fits-all approach to such education would be of limited value to students. The existence of quality programs such as Love Drunk and RPC that cover a range of issues and that can be focused on specific topics are valuable tools for schools. As evidenced above, a survey such as the one used in this evaluation, may provide a useful method of understanding the attitudes and behaviours of the student population, in order to tailor the health and wellbeing program to the needs of the students.

EVALUATION RESULTS

During adolescence, young people are experimenting with new activities, testing their boundaries, exploring new skills and enjoying an increased level of freedom and independence.⁸ While they may be perceived as engaging in unnecessarily risky behaviour, these behaviours, which have in the past been linked to peer pressure and hormones, can be explained as a consequence of the stage of brain development in young people.⁹ It is now thought that humans' brains do not fully develop until their mid twenties.

For adolescents, one of the characteristics of their stage of brain development is their limited ability to foresee the potential consequences of their actions. As such, it is imperative that education programs that address issues relating to personal safety and respectful relationships assist young people to consider the potential consequences of their actions. The aim of the evaluation was to assess whether Love Drunk and RPC, individually and as a package, are useful tools to get students thinking and talking about issues such as personal safety and respectful relationships. Through this process, it can be seen whether these programs support the broader health and wellbeing curriculum. Despite the above mentioned limitations of the survey data, there were clear trends apparent in the data. These trends can be seen to provide important points of consideration in the development of a state-wide respect strategy in secondary schools.

The comments and written responses provided by students and teachers together with the quantitative data certainly suggests that RPC and Love Drunk have been successful in making students stop and think about these important issues. The survey data and comments not only demonstrated the self-reported attitudes of young people towards these issues, and by extension inferred certain behaviours, but also provided evidence of young people considering issues regarding personal safety and respectful relationships.

Qualitative information

The results indicate four key strengths of the pilot program for supporting young people to consider their own safety and the safety of others when making decisions:

- Engagement with young people;
- Catalyst for thought;
- Catalyst for discussion; and
- Positive contribution to broader health and wellbeing curriculum.

In addition to exploring these four key strengths, the potential impacts of Love Drunk and RPC on students' behaviour, as evidenced by the student and teacher survey results, will also be discussed.

⁸ Bennett, D. 'Adolescent development and risk-taking', <http://www.yapa.org.au/youth/facts/devrisk.php> , accessed February 2010

⁹ *Ibid*

Engaging with young people

The success of programs such as Love Drunk and RPC are centred on their ability to communicate the messages contained within the programs effectively and clearly to students. Both Love Drunk and RPC provide engaging mediums of communication; the former conducted through theatre performance and the latter via small single-sex peer education groups with a focus on active participation via role plays etc. The ability of these programs to engage with young people in order to communicate the messages was evident not only from observing the significant level of audience response, interaction and participation with the Love Drunk performers, but was also evident in the survey responses from both students and teachers.

In the first survey, students were asked what their expectations of the Love Drunk performance were. While a great number of students had no or very low expectations of the performance, others commented that they thought it would 'preach the obvious' about issues affecting young people and that they 'hoped it wouldn't be boring'. It is safe to say that, based on both the students' responses in the second survey and also observations of their response to the performance itself, that the Love Drunk show greatly exceeded their expectations. The examples in the box below are evidence of the students engaging with Love Drunk, not only on an entertainment level, but also taking on the important, educative messages concerning personal safety and respectful relationships.

How did the Love Drunk performance compare to your expectations?

"It was better, portrayed the situation really well, it was thought provoking." Female, 16

"Yeah it did, it was a good example to show others that even your friends can do bad things and we should know better and do things responsibly" Female, 16

"It was up front and pretty good, not what I was expecting". Male, 15

Teachers also remarked on the success of both Love Drunk and RPC in communicating these important messages to young people successfully and also in a complementary manner to their own classroom based lessons.

Programs such as Love Drunk support teachers in their delivery of health and wellbeing related curriculum, please comment

"Engaging and entertaining. All students want to participate. It is something the students will remember – easier to make connections" Teacher

Programs such as RPC support teachers in their delivery of health and wellbeing related curriculum, please comment

"It has been a great performance and supportive of our work with young people. It gives them the same messages as we are giving them but in a challenging way." Teacher

Catalyst for thought

As highlighted above, the strengths of programs such as Love Drunk and RPC are their ability to bring issues relating to personal safety and respectful relationships to the attention of young people, so that they are encouraged to think about the potential consequences of

different actions and behaviours. The student survey responses provided evidence of this consideration.

The third survey asked students to name the most important moment in the Love Drunk performance. This question asked the students to think back to the Love Drunk performance (which in most cases was several weeks in the past) in order to formulate an answer. As such, it provided the opportunity to demonstrate that not only was the performance memorable, but also that the ideas and messages in the performance had remained with the students. The comments in the box below are some examples of the student responses to this question.

Responses in the teachers' surveys also reflected the important ability for Love Drunk and RPC to provoke thought amongst students. In addition to the comments below, it is noteworthy that all teachers who had seen both Love Drunk and RPC either "Strongly Agreed" or "Agreed" that both programs are useful tools to get students thinking about issues such as personal safety and respectful relationships.

What was the most important moment in the Love Drunk performance?

"When the two boys get the girl drunk and sexually abuse her and her reaction compared to their reaction. How she feels and upset state she becomes." Male, 16

"When they all came to a realisation that the series of events were wrong, and that they all disrespected each other." Female, 15

"The definition of sexual assault" Undisclosed gender, 15

"Family issues" Male, 16

The Love Drunk performance is a useful tool to get students thinking about issues such as personal safety and respectful relationships. Why or why not?

"Have evidence with students presenting with issues that they have not thought much about prior to Love Drunk. The Evaluations showed that they are thinking since Love Drunk. Some have reported thinking more about relationships and safety." Teacher

"It brought the issues of safety and relationships to their conscious thought. It went over the laws for them too." Teacher

Respect, Protect, Connect is a useful tool to get students thinking about issues such as personal safety and respectful relationships. Why or why not?

"Well presented. Thought provoking. Great discussion." Teacher

Catalyst for discussion

Vital to reaffirming the messages in Love Drunk and RPC is a discussion of these issues in the classroom as part of the health and wellbeing curriculum. Programs such as Love Drunk and RPC provide a useful point of reference for teachers to continue the discussion of personal safety and respectful relationships related issues with students. Ideally, these programs will also encourage conversation between students, their peers and family. In order to investigate this potential, the surveys asked students what issues from the Love Drunk performance they had discussed with friends or family. While many students claimed to have not spoken about any of the issues with friends or family, the responses in the box below provide evidence of where the Love Drunk performance has prompted this dialogue.

What issues in the performance have you discussed with family or friends? Would you recommend this performance to others?

"How you have to have respect for yourself and others." Female, 15

"Sexual assault" Male, 16

"The car stealing scene" Male, 15

One of the key benefits of the pilot in pairing Love Drunk with RPC is that issues raised in the Love Drunk performance are further discussed with the students in RPC. Teachers acknowledged this benefit and also the ability of Love Drunk and RPC to individually act as a catalyst for discussion as outlined in teacher survey responses below.

Have the issues raised in the Love Drunk performance been discussed amongst students? If so, what have you heard?

"'Got to look after our mates', 'we do what they did', 'my family is like David's' [character in the play] – women are worthless', 'we are drinkers, fun loving and we don't think much'"
Teacher

"Personal safety at parties, watching out for mates, alcohol/drug use, what is rape?" Teacher

"In 2006 we had Love Drunk and kids talked about the issues in it 2 years on." Teacher

Have the issues raised in the RPC performance been discussed amongst students? If so, what have you heard?

"The term 'sexual assault', alcohol, parties, etc." Teacher

Positive contribution to broader health and wellbeing curriculum

The pilot combines the Love Drunk performance with the RPC peer education program. RPC focuses on similar issues to those raised in the Love Drunk performance. As such, it provides young people with the opportunity to further discuss and reflect on the issues in a structured environment. Further, as RPC is held in single-sex workshops, it enables young people to openly discuss and explore issues that they may not have been comfortable discussing in front of members of the opposite sex. Together, these programs aim to support teachers in their delivery of the health and wellbeing curriculum. Programs such as Love Drunk and RPC are a useful tool to tackle the issues of personal safety and respectful relationships, but they should not be seen as the sole method of providing all of a young persons educative needs in this regard.

Programs such as Love Drunk and RPC are designed to support teachers in their delivery of the health and wellbeing curriculum and also, in an acknowledgement that learning extends beyond the school environment, support parents in discussing these issues at home. It is evident from attending and observing Love Drunk performances and RPC sessions, and also from the responses in the surveys, that these programs add significant value and impact to educating young people about responsible decision making in regards to personal safety and respectful relationships. As such, these programs should be seen as but one valuable tool in supporting young peoples' health and wellbeing. It should be accompanied by ongoing support and education being provided to young people in the school and home environment.

Evidence of the strength of the combined program

Were ideas raised in Love Drunk similar to those raised in RPC? If so how?

"It was really good. The program really reflected on the play and our discussion together was really useful and interesting. They were both all issues we face as teens." Male, 16

"Talks strongly about thinking before you act." Female, 15

"Ideas such as self respect were discussed in both." Female, 15

Has RPC helped you understand any of the issues raised in Love Drunk? How?

"Yes, definitely. The discussion especially. I've noticed everyone in the room/discussion took something away from it, including me." Male, 16

"About if your girlfriend is talking to someone that you shouldn't jump to conclusions." Male, 16

"Yeah rape, don't go there unless you both wanna do it." Male, 16

"Yes, explained into more detail." Female, 15

Again, responses to the teacher surveys corroborated the view that Love Drunk and RPC provide not only very useful supplements to the health and wellbeing curriculum, but also serve as valuable points of reference for future classroom based activities and learning. The benefits of these programs can be seen to be strengthened when the programs are combined as a package, as is evident in the comments below. In addition, when the teachers were asked if they would recommend Love Drunk and RPC to other schools, all teachers who had seen both programs either "Strongly Agreed" or "Agreed" that they would recommend the programs.

One teacher raised the issue that some students may see the Love Drunk performance as purely entertainment. However, accompanying the performance with structured classroom follow-up and the addition of RPC may assist in enabling these students to access the information and messages contained within the performance.

Programs such as Love Drunk support teachers in their delivery of health and wellbeing related curriculum. Please comment on this.

"It has been great value for the wellbeing team/management team and will adjust promotion/primary prevention programs to fit with the messages in Love Drunk" Teacher

I would recommend the Love Drunk performance to other schools. Why or why not?

"It has a brilliant message delivered in an amazing, captive way. Best thing I have seen in spreading the messages. The best!!" Teacher

I would recommend RPC to other schools. Why or why not? Would you suggest any modifications?

"Yes it was great. Boys group extremely powerful. Girls group not whole lot different than what we could provide. [Needs to be] more interactive like the boys group was." Teacher

I would recommend that schools have both the Love Drunk performance and RPC program as a combined package. Why or why not?

"Definitely agree as double messages around youth issues are good. Great for students to have young people presenting around these issues." Teacher

"Great follow up – forces them to acknowledge in a smaller group discussion – chance to see if the messages have sunk in." Teacher

"Respect, Protect, Connect is a good follow up and much more gender specific." Teacher

"Not in the same week or day but spaced fortnightly apart. New way of giving the same message." Teacher

Impact on behaviour

Ultimately, it is hoped that programs such as Love Drunk and RPC, when combined with an ongoing health and wellbeing program, will have a positive impact on the behaviour of students. As mentioned, identifying tangible effects of Love Drunk and RPC on students is a difficult task. In many instances, young people will not know how they will react in a given situation until they are faced with the choice. It is for this reason that the evaluation of the Love Drunk and RPC pilot focused on the ability of the programs to make students think and talk about the issues, so that they may be informed enough to make safe decisions when they are faced with them.

However, in an attempt to gauge how influential the students perceived Love Drunk to have been, the third survey asked if students had noticed a change in their own behaviour or that of their friends since the Love Drunk performance (the impact on behaviour from RPC was not assessed in a similar way due to the timing of the surveys). Further, teachers were also asked to comment on any changes they had observed in the students' attitudes and behaviours.

While a significant proportion of students did not answer the question relating to changes in behaviour, a smaller group indicated that it had not modified their behaviour, and an even smaller group indicated that it had affected how they thought about the issues rather than their behaviour. These responses are certainly unsurprising; it would have been unexpected if more students proclaimed that the programs had been a "revelation" that had changed their behaviour forever. The students' reactions to the programs will obviously be informed by their own life experiences. For example, students who don't attend parties where there is alcohol available or have close friendships with the opposite sex may see the play as being unrealistic.

Since the Love Drunk performance has your or your friends' behaviour changed:

"I guess so, I mean obviously for myself and I suppose others. We don't think about the show when we are out but I would never drink to the extreme and I couldn't think 4 myself and I'd never have sex with someone drunk or on drugs." Male 16

"Not really all that much. It makes you think but it takes a lot more to really make a person change." Female 18

"Not so much my behaviour but my awareness and attentiveness has sharpened" Male 16

I have observed sustained changes in students' behaviour and attitudes following their participation in the Love Drunk and RPC programs. What changes have you observed?

"Not in all or enough but many I have spoken with there have been significant changes." Teacher

"Gave them something to think of, but not sure if it has changed behaviour." Teacher

"Students are talking about it!" Teachers

"Many have started thinking and caring for themselves and their friends in a healthier way. Obviously until a situation arises we won't know whether they have taken onboard the messages. They are talking about the show and its messages." Teacher

"I have received more emails/facebook/texts regarding concern for friends' behaviour and how to support them. Many students have sought me out for clarification of points and in discussion I have heard many 'trying' to change." Teacher

Quantitative Data

The survey responses resulted in a set of quantitative data for each of the three stages during the pilot process that could be used to identify the impacts, if any, on the students as they participated in the pilot program. Overall, the data can be seen to provide evidence that the pilot programs engaged the young people and provoked consideration of the issues. This is evident in the way in which the responses to the survey questions changed over the period of the pilot program. Interestingly, these changes appear inconsistent between the schools and also, at times, divergent between genders. This is reflected in the different response patterns to the survey questions in each of the six schools. This finding suggests that it is important for schools to be able to tailor respectful relationships curriculum to the individual needs of their students. The data generated three key findings:

- The pilot program engaged young people and provoked thought about the issues;
- Young people engaged with the pilot program differently in each school; and
- Sometimes male and female students engaged with the pilot program differently.

Engaging and thought provoking

The importance of programs such as Love Drunk and RPC in being able to engage with young people in order to make them think about these critical issues has been highlighted previously. The quantitative data can also be seen to provide evidence of this occurring. Though the patterns of responses differed between schools, this not only demonstrated the complexity of these issues for young people, but the change in answers in each stage of the survey process suggests that young people had reconsidered their attitudes towards the issues at the time. While it is difficult to attribute these changes in responses to the pilot program specifically, the survey results can still be viewed as providing insight into the attitudes of young people towards issues relating to respectful relationships and personal safety at each point in the survey process.

Alcohol

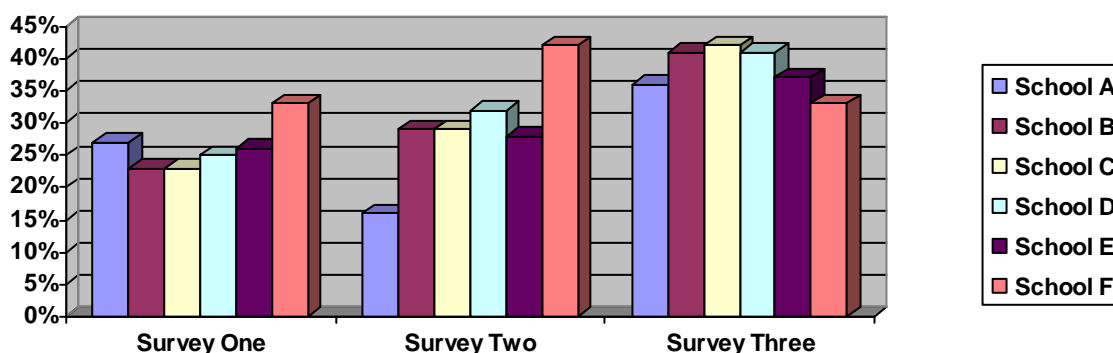
There were some questions that elicited similar responses across all schools and genders including the question asking young people if they had considered the consequences of drinking alcohol and taking drugs. As is illustrated by the table and graph below, five of the six schools demonstrated increases between surveys one and three in the average number of students who 'Strongly Agreed' that they had considered the consequences of drinking alcohol. In the sixth school – School F – while the percentage of students who 'Strongly Agreed' was

the same in Survey 1 as it was in Survey 3, there was a peak in the average number of students who 'Strongly Agreed' in Survey 2. Further investigation of this data reveals that this decrease after Survey 2 can be attributed to changes in response by the male students only. Further, the reverse occurred with the results of School A where the average number of students who 'Strongly Agreed' was at the lowest point in Survey 2 only to peak in Survey 3. In this instance, the decrease in Survey 2 results can be attributed to changes in response by the female students.

Table 2: Percentage of students who 'Strongly Agreed' they had considered the consequences of drinking alcohol.

School	Survey One	Survey Two	Survey Three	Difference
School A	27%	16%	36%	+9%
School B	23%	29%	41%	+18%
School C	23%	29%	42%	+19%
School D	25%	32%	41%	+16%
School E	26%	28%	37%	+11%
School F	33%	42%	33%	0

Figure 1: Percentage of students who 'Strongly Agreed' they had considered the consequences of drinking alcohol.



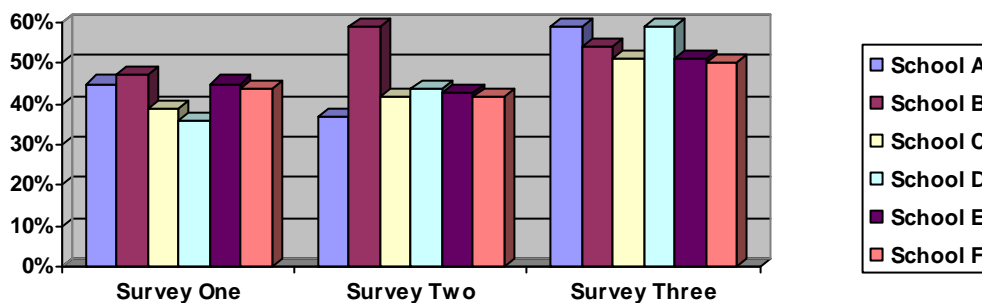
Drugs

As is evident below, all six schools demonstrated increases in the average number of students who 'Strongly Agreed' that they had considered the consequences of taking drugs over the period of the pilot program. The changes in response in both survey questions can be seen as evidence of a shift in thinking by these young people and therefore that they had been engaged in thinking and/or talking about these issues.

Table 3: Percentage of students who ‘Strongly Agreed’ they had considered the consequences of taking drugs.

School	Survey One	Survey Two	Survey Three	Difference
School A	45%	37%	59%	+14%
School B	47%	59%	54%	+7%
School C	39%	42%	51%	+12%
School D	36%	44%	59%	+23%
School E	45%	43%	51%	+6%
School F	44%	42%	50%	+6%

Figure 2: Percentage of students who ‘Strongly Agreed’ they had considered the consequences of taking drugs.



It is significant that both of these survey questions demonstrate that young people at all six schools were more confident at the end of the pilot process that they have thought about what could happen to them or their friends from drinking alcohol and taking drugs. While all schools demonstrated increases in the average number of students who ‘Strongly Agreed’ that they had considered the consequences of drinking alcohol and taking drugs, for some schools the results were quite significant. For example, four of the six schools demonstrated increases in the average number of students who ‘Strongly Agreed’ they had thought about the consequences of drinking alcohol by between 10% and 19%. For considering the consequences of taking drugs, three schools demonstrated increases by between 14% and 22%. Having thought about these consequences may assist young people to make safer, informed decisions when they are faced with them.

Young people engaged with the pilot program differently in each school

Comparison of the three sets of data between the six schools reveals variable responses. These differences in responses between schools can be seen not only in the attitudes measured regarding the different issues, but also in the changes in responses over time.

This suggests that not only did the students at each school have different attitudes towards these issues at the beginning of the pilot program, but also that the students engaged differently with the program in each school. This could be due to a variety of reasons such as the prior experiences of the students, their cultural and family backgrounds, the particular

dynamic of each school group, and also the different ways in which the students learn and receive messages.

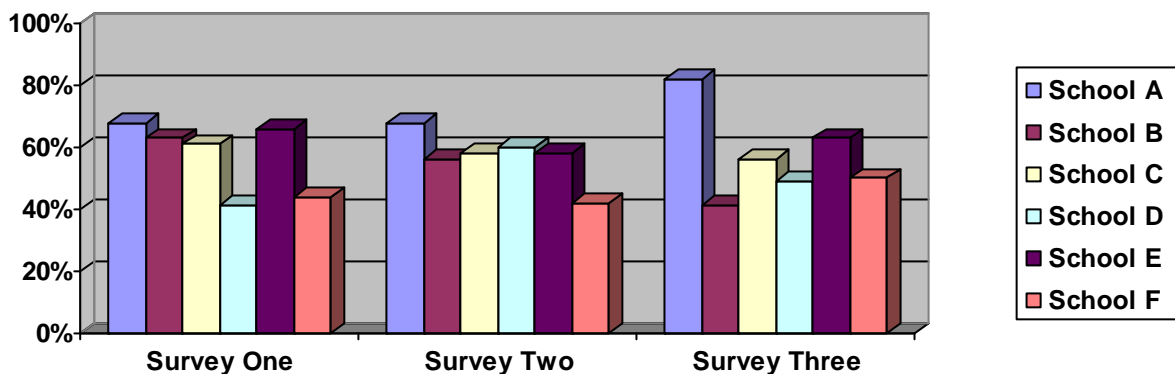
Respect

The following example illustrates one such question that received a variety of responses from students in the six schools. In each of the three surveys, the statement ‘It is important to show respect for myself’ was given to students who were asked to indicate whether they ‘Strongly Agreed’, ‘Agreed’, ‘Disagreed’, or ‘Strongly Disagreed’ with the statement. The table and graph below illustrates the average number of students who ‘Strongly Agreed’ that it is important to show respect for themselves. While in the first survey, four of the six schools had between 61% and 68% of students who ‘Strongly Agreed’, the remaining two schools had only 41% and 44% respectively. At the end of the pilot program, as measured in the third survey, these numbers spanned from 82% at the highest level to 41% at the lowest, illustrating that students not only thought differently about this question at the end of the pilot program, but also that the changes in opinion were inconsistent between schools. This suggests that the students in each school had responded differently to the pilot program.

Table 4: Percentage of students who ‘Strongly Agreed’ that “It is important to show respect for myself”.

School	Survey One	Survey Two	Survey Three	Difference
School A	68%	68%	82%	+14%
School B	63%	56%	41%	-22%
School C	61%	58%	56%	-5%
School D	41%	60%	49%	+8%
School E	66%	58%	63%	-3%
School F	44%	42%	50%	+6%

Figure 3: Percentage of students who ‘Strongly Agreed’ that it is important to show respect for themselves.



The decreases displayed in some schools in the average number of students who 'Strongly Agreed' that it is important to show respect for themselves is certainly concerning. While we cannot know with certainty the reasons for this decline, there are a number of potential causes. It is possible that students in the schools where there was a decline between the first and third surveys, had assumed that they knew what it meant to show respect for yourself when they 'Strongly Agreed' in the first survey that it was important to do so. However, it may be the case that the pilot programs provoked more considered thought about what represents behaviour demonstrating self respect which may not have equated to some students initial understanding. Further, these results may also reflect the culture in these particular schools.

Arguably, the trend for a great number of differences in survey responses between schools is expected, given that each school environment is unique. Given this, the data serves as a reminder that as each school is unique, the methods used to engage students and the focus of the programs should be appropriate for each school. As evidenced in the table and graph above, what works well in one school with one group of students, may not work as well in another. This confirms the limited value of a one-size-fits-all approach to respectful relationships education.

Differences in responses between genders

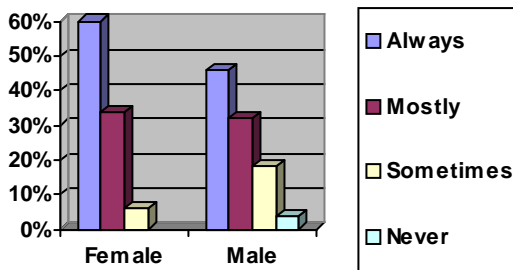
Not only did the survey data demonstrate differences in responses between schools, it also demonstrated significant differences in responses between males and females within some schools. These differences in responses are not altogether unexpected given what is known about the different rates of development for males and females. However, there were instances over the course of the pilot process, where the response trends differed between males and females which suggests that not only were there initial differences in attitudes, but also that males and females engaged with the material in the pilot in different ways. In some examples where the female students within a school had shown an increase in the desired response over time, the opposite occurred with the males, where it appeared that their opinions and attitudes, on average, had become less desirable. An example of this gender difference as it manifested in one school can be seen below.

Table 5: My Friends look out for me when we are out together (e.g. when at a party)

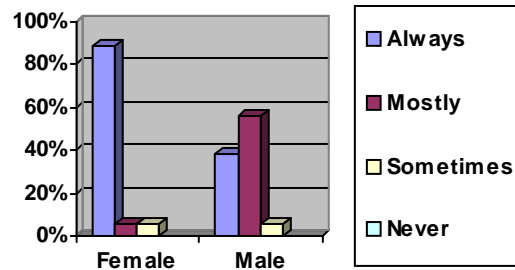
	Survey One		Survey Two		Survey Three	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Always	60%	46%	89%	38%	72%	22%
Mostly	34%	32%	5.5%	56%	17%	61%
Sometimes	6%	18%	5.5%	6%	11%	8.5%
Never	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%	8.5%

Figure 4: My Friends look out for me when we are out together (e.g. when at a party)

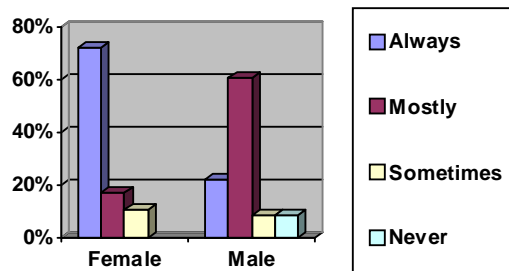
Survey 1



Survey 2



Survey 3



This example demonstrates that over the course of the pilot program, the female students at this particular school became more confident that their friends would look out for them when they go out together. This is evident from an increase of female responses of 'Always' from 60% in the first survey to 89% in the second survey and finally to 72% when they completed the third survey at the end of the pilot. Though there is a decrease in the 'Always' responses from the second survey to the third, overall there was an increase in 'Always' responses from the beginning of the pilot program to the end of the program. In contrast, the male students demonstrated a decline in 'Always' responses over the pilot period with 46% reporting that their friends 'Always' look out for them when they are out in the first survey, 38% in the second survey, and 22% in the third and final survey.

The decline in males who believe that their friends 'Always' look out for them suggests less confidence over time amongst the male students that their friends will look out for them. This change could be a consequence of the students giving greater consideration to what constitutes risky behaviour and therefore what it means to look out for your friends (as they participated in the pilot program), and the realisation that they didn't believe they would be taken care of. If this is the case, it suggests the need for greater emphasis with this particular group of boys on how to actively look out for each other.

This example highlights the need to ensure that the programs engage males and females equally and address the different needs of each gender. However, while this particular school demonstrated gender differences in the response to this particular question, it was not the case for all other schools, which once again illustrates the importance of addressing each individual school's needs.

FINDINGS

The results of the evaluation can be seen to provide the following findings:

- Individually, Love Drunk and RPC are successful in engaging with young people and stimulating thought and discussion about issues relating to personal safety and respectful relationships;
 - The combination of Love Drunk and RPC provides greater opportunity for young people to engage with and access this education and also to consolidate their understanding of the issues;
 - Love Drunk and RPC are beneficial additions to broader, classroom based education strategies and therefore can be seen to support teachers in their delivery of the health and wellbeing curriculum;
 - The benefits of Love Drunk and RPC can be further enhanced by ensuring the programs remain relevant to students; and
 - Schools require assistance to access programs such as Love Drunk and RPC.
-

The survey results demonstrate that individually Love Drunk and RPC are useful tools to encourage students to think about the issues of personal safety and respectful relationships; however the package of both programs can be seen to be of greater benefit to young people, for two reasons. Firstly, having RPC follow on from Love Drunk enables students to tease out the issues that were highlighted in the performance. Secondly, as RPC is undertaken in small, single-sex groups, this provides the opportunity for a different type of discussion and interaction between the students and the peer educator.

Using a range of methods to communicate these important ideas and issues to young people not only ensures that the lessons, information and messages are being understood and consolidated in young peoples' minds, but is also an acknowledgement that students learn in different ways and therefore helped to ensure that all students have access to this learning and discussion. This is also true when considering how programs such as Love Drunk and RPC can contribute to the broader health and wellbeing curriculum and respectful relationships learning program in schools. There is little doubt that the benefits offered by programs such as Love Drunk and RPC are amplified when included in a broader health and wellbeing curriculum that reaffirms coverage of these issues in a more systemic and ongoing manner.

The unique way that both of these programs engage with young people can be seen to be an important supplement to classroom based and teacher led respectful relationships discussions. In aid of this goal, the Love Drunk program includes a package of teachers' notes designed to guide further discussion with students in the classroom of the issues contained in the performance. Additionally, it is important for parents and families to be aware of these activities being undertaken in schools, so that they may also be involved in this education. This could be achieved through discussions with their children of the programs and activities, and also through modelling behaviour that is aligned with the messages in the programs.

Enhancing the relevance of Love Drunk and RPC

While the evaluation results demonstrate the ability of Love Drunk and RPC to engage young people, there is certainly scope for both programs to potentially become more effective by tailoring their presentations for each school context. This was feedback that was provided verbally by several teachers in different schools, and also in the teacher survey responses, particularly in regard to the Love Drunk performance:

“It [Love Drunk] may have been slightly more relevant, forced students to engage with possible situations they may find themselves in.” Teacher

“No modification needed, my only suggestion to any performing group is to use our students too.” Teacher

There are a number of ways that Love Drunk could be re-focused to remain relevant to students and in particular, to the context of each school. As highlighted above, the importance of teachers knowing the students at their school and understanding the issues that they face is central to assisting the students to meet these challenges. External programs such as Love Drunk and RPC that come into the school as an intensive, supplementary health and wellbeing educational tool will be more beneficial for students if they are targeted at their particular needs as a student group. For this to occur, it is desirable for communication between the school and the program to take place prior to the event, as it enables the school to discuss the particular issues that are relevant to their students. For Love Drunk, an understanding of the school context may enable Phunktional to alter their performance by having characters that reflect the demographic of the school and also by including contemporary issues facing young people in the performance such as ‘sexting’. Ensuring that young people can easily relate to the characters and situations in the Love Drunk performance would support the implementation of relevant, inclusive and culturally sensitive practice. This is one of the five best practice guidelines as identified by Vic Health and DEECD for respectful relationships programs.¹⁰

Students also identified a particular aspect of the Love Drunk performance that could be altered to be more relevant to them. Feedback provided by students at two schools during the question and answer session at the end of the Love Drunk performance demonstrated the perception amongst some males that the performance was biased against males. Several male students felt that the performance had painted a stereotypical picture of young males as perpetrators and females as victims of sexual violence. These students commented that they would like to have seen a more balanced representation of young people. It appeared that their perception of the performance as being imbalanced had the potential to alienate some of the boys from the important messages in the performance. While the performers endeavoured to address this issue with the males in the question and answer session, these views persisted in the surveys that were completed the following day, which suggested that this perception had become the focus of the boys’ attention.

¹⁰ Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, ‘Respectful relationships education’, November 2009, p. 5.

With the aim of ensuring the performance is relevant to and inclusive of students, the Love Drunk performance could be altered to reflect a gender balance. Alternately, an enhancement of the question and answer session at the end of the performance to include this gender element in their discussion could occur. This might mean providing further assistance and training to the performers who lead the session so they are aware of the range of issues, including issues surrounding gender, that should be discussed and also providing strategies for effectively communicating the messages in the discussion. Finally, the teacher's notes could also be amended to pick up this issue in the follow-up sessions.

Equal Access to programs such as Love Drunk and RPC

In addition to highlighting the benefits of Love Drunk and RPC for students, the surveys also demonstrated the difficulty for all schools to have access to these programs. Anecdotally, through conversations with schools, we were aware of the difficulty for all schools in being able to access these programs should they choose to do so. The teacher surveys endeavoured to gather more concrete evidence of potential barriers as evidenced in the box below.

If you would recommend Love Drunk to other schools do you recommend it be held annually? What would prohibit this (e.g. cost or time)?

"Annually during Drug Ed week would be great. Cost is difficult for rural and remote areas like ours as flights and accommodation expensive. Don't want kids to go only if they pay - want all students to see." Teacher

"Annually. Costs too much!" Teacher

If you would recommend RPC to other schools do you recommend it be held annually? What would prohibit this (e.g. cost or time)?

"Yes, if possible or 2 yearly (Yr 8's + Yr 9's). Cost would be the only prohibitive factor with funding, I would insist it was a priority for school." Teacher

"Yes, annually or more – once a term!" Teacher

For some schools, mainly public schools, the cost of recruiting the services of programs such as Love Drunk is prohibitive. This challenge is even greater for schools in rural and remote areas, where the fee for the performance includes travel and accommodation expenses. Where this has been the case for some schools, they have partnered with local government or philanthropists and joined with other schools to fund the performance.

Further, RPC is run by the South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault in partnership with Women's Health in the South East, and as such both are funded to service the Southern Metropolitan area of Melbourne. Should a school not located in this region request RPC, there would be a charge for the associated travel costs.

It is evident that currently schools do not enjoy equal access to programs that successfully supplement a school's health and wellbeing program. This issue has become even more critical given the Victorian Government's intention for schools to play a central role in the respectful relationships agenda. Programs such as Love Drunk and RPC, with a demonstrated track record of successfully engaging young people in discussion of issues that would be considered

to fall within the remit of the respectful relationships programs in schools, are very useful tools for assisting schools to implement the respectful relationships program. As such, it is vital that funding measures are put in place to ensure that schools have equal access to such programs.

Recommendations

The Respect in Schools strategy could benefit from the inclusion of Love Drunk and RPC as part of a school based curriculum. This would require consideration being given to:

- a) Appropriate funding mechanisms to ensure that schools have equal access to external programs such as Love Drunk or RPC;
- b) Providing flexibility for schools to tailor the Respect Strategy to meet their unique and changing needs;
- c) Strongly encouraging schools to identify the particular needs of their students when implementing the respectful relationships program. The surveys used in this evaluation are one useful method for schools to use to understand the issues facing their students;
- d) Positively engaging both male and female students and thus reflecting a balanced and holistic education strategy; and
- e) Undertaking a longitudinal study into the effectiveness of such health and wellbeing initiatives.

Program facilitators of Love Drunk and RPC could:

- f) Ensure the relevance of their programs to students by liaising with each school to understand the issues of particular importance in order to tailor their programs accordingly; and
- g) Continue to facilitate structured classroom follow-up by providing appropriate and relevant materials to teachers to enable them to lead students in a reflection of the messages contained in the programs.

CONCLUSION

The strength of both Love Drunk and RPC can be seen in the level of student engagement. The evaluation results demonstrated that individually, both Love Drunk and RPC had been successful in provoking thought and conversation amongst students, and that the combination of both programs further strengthened this impact. As such, these programs can be considered to be very useful tools for schools to use to complement their health and wellbeing curriculum and specifically in supporting students' physical, mental and sexual health and wellbeing. Additionally, there is scope to enhance both programs by ensuring that the programs are focused and relevant to each school environment.

Programs such as Love Drunk and RPC cannot be used in isolation. Through integrating such respectful relationships programs into the curriculum and using the messages contained in the programs as a point of reference for ongoing discussion, young people will be better equipped to make decisions that reflect respect for themselves and for others. As the Victorian Government's Respectful Relationships agenda re-energises schools regarding their responsibility for supporting young people to make safe decisions and display safe and respectful behaviours, teachers are seeking ways in which they can educate and work with young people in this way. Ultimately, the evaluation of the Love Drunk performance and RPC program provides assurance of the benefits of these programs for young people and can therefore be considered to be useful resources for schools. Schools need to be aware of such programs and also have the ability to access these programs should they so choose.

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APPENDIX

Student Survey 1

This survey is completely anonymous, please do not write your name anywhere on the page. Please circle the answer that applies to you and fill out the written sections – there are no wrong answers, just honest answers!

Age: _____

Sex: Male / Female (please circle)

What languages do you speak at home?

1. I make sure that I am safe when out with friends.

Never Sometimes Mostly Always

For me this means:

2. I look out for my friends' safety when we are out together (e.g. when at a party).

Never Sometimes Mostly Always

For me this means:

3. My friends look out for me when we are out together.

Never Sometimes Mostly Always

For me this means:

4. I have thought about what could happen to me and my friends from drinking alcohol.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

5. I have thought about what could happen to me and my friends from taking drugs.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Some of these potential consequences are:

6. It's ok to engage in sexual activity with someone who is affected by alcohol.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

7. It's ok to engage in sexual activity with someone who is affected by drugs.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

For me 'sexual activity' means:

For me 'affected by alcohol' means:

8. It is important to show respect for all people.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Are there any exceptions?

9. It is important for me to show respect for myself.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

For me this means:

10. What are your expectations of the Love Drunk performance?

Student Survey 2

This survey is completely anonymous, please do not write your name anywhere on the page. Please circle the answer that applies to you and fill out the written sections – there are no wrong answers, just honest answers!

Age: _____

Sex: Male / Female (please circle)

What languages do you speak at home?

1. I make sure that I am safe when out with friends.

Never Sometimes Mostly Always

For me this means:

2. I look out for my friends' safety when we are out together (e.g. when at a party).

Never Sometimes Mostly Always

For me this means:

3. My friends look out for me when we are out together.

Never Sometimes Mostly Always

For me this means:

4. I have thought about what could happen to me and my friends from drinking alcohol.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Some of these potential consequences are:

5. I have thought about what could happen to me and my friends from taking drugs.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Some of these potential consequences are:

6. It's ok to engage in sexual activity with someone who is affected by alcohol.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

7. It's ok to engage in sexual activity with someone who is affected by drugs.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

For me 'sexual activity' means:

For me 'affected by alcohol' means:

8. It is important to show respect for all people.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Are there any exceptions?

9. It is important for me to show respect for myself.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

For me this means:

10. How did the Love Drunk performance compare to your expectations?

11. Are there any issues raised in the performance that you wish to learn more about? If so, how would you do this?

12. What issues in the Love Drunk performance have you discussed with a friend or family member?

Student Survey 3

This survey is completely anonymous, please do not write your name anywhere on the page. Please circle the answer that applies to you and fill out the written sections – there are no wrong answers, just honest answers!

Age: _____

Sex: Male / Female (please circle)

What languages do you speak at home? _____

1. I make sure that I am safe when out with friends.

Never Sometimes Mostly Always

For me this means:

2. I look out for my friends' safety when we are out together (e.g. when at a party).

Never Sometimes Mostly Always

For me this means:

3. My friends look out for me when we are out together.

Never Sometimes Mostly Always

For me this means:

4. I have considered the potential consequences for myself and my friends from drinking alcohol.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Some of these potential consequences are:

5. I have considered the potential consequences for myself and my friends from taking drugs.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Some of these potential consequences are:

6. It's ok to engage in sexual activity with someone who is affected by alcohol.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

7. It's ok to engage in sexual activity with someone who is affected by drugs.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

For me 'sexual activity' means:

For me 'affected by alcohol' means:

8. It is important to show respect for all people.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Are there any exceptions?

9. It is important for me to show respect for myself.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

For me this means:

10. What was the most important moment in the Love Drunk performance?

11. Since seeing the Love Drunk performance, has your own or your friends' behaviour changed? If so, how?

12. How were the ideas raised in the Respect, Protect, Connect program similar to the ideas raised in the Love Drunk performance?

13. Has Respect, Protect, Connect helped your understanding of any of the issues raised in the Love Drunk show? How?

If not, why not?

Teacher Survey: Number 1

Post Love Drunk and Respect, Protect, Connect

Thank you for participating in the evaluation of the Love Drunk performance and Respect, Protect, Connect program. This is the first of two teacher surveys in the evaluation - you will also be asked to fill out the second survey in approximately four weeks.

1. The Love Drunk performance is a useful tool to get students thinking about issues such as personal safety and respectful relationships.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Why or why not?

2. Respect, Protect, Connect is a useful tool to get students thinking about issues such as personal safety and respectful relationships.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Why or why not?

3. Programs such as Love Drunk support teachers in their delivery of health and wellbeing related curriculum.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Please comment on this:

4. Programs such as Respect, Protect, Connect support teachers in their delivery of health and wellbeing related curriculum.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Please comment on this:

5. The Love Drunk performance will enhance student safety and wellbeing.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Please comment on this:

6. The Respect, Protect, Connect program will enhance student safety and wellbeing.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Please comment on this:

7. The issues raised in the Love Drunk performance have been discussed amongst students.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

If so, what have you heard?

8. The issues raised in the Respect, Protect, Connect program have been discussed amongst students.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

If so, what have you heard?

9. I have observed changes in students' behaviour and attitudes following their participation in the Love Drunk and Respect, Protect, Connect programs.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Please comment on this in as much detail as possible:

10. I would recommend the Love Drunk performance to other schools.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Why or why not? Would you suggest any modifications?

11. If you would recommend the Love Drunk performance to other schools, do you recommend it be held annually? What would prohibit this (e.g. cost, time)?

12. I would recommend the Respect, Protect, Connect program to other schools.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Why or why not? Would you suggest any modifications?

13. If you would recommend the Respect, Protect, Connect program to other schools, do you recommend it be held annually? What would prohibit this (e.g. cost, time)?

14. I would recommend that schools have both the Love Drunk performance and the Respect, Protect, Connect program as a combined package.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Why or why not? Would you suggest any modifications?

Teacher Survey: Number 2

Post Love Drunk and Respect, Protect, Connect

Thank you for participating in the evaluation of the Love Drunk performance and Respect, Protect, Connect program. This is the second (and final!) teacher survey in the evaluation - you may have also filled out the first survey. This survey is designed to assess if there have been any sustained impacts on the students following their participation in the programs.

1. The Love Drunk performance supports teachers in their delivery of health and wellbeing related curriculum.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Please comment on this:

2. The Respect, Protect, Connect program supports teachers in their delivery of health and wellbeing related curriculum.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Please comment on this:

3. The Love Drunk program has enhanced student safety and wellbeing.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Please comment on this:

4. The Respect, Protect, Connect program has enhanced student safety and wellbeing.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Please comment on this:

5. The issues raised in the Love Drunk and Respect, Protect, Connect programs have been discussed with students following their participation in the programs.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

What issues have/have not been discussed?

If there has been discussion, how did this occur?

If there has not been discussion, why not?

6. I have observed sustained changes in students' behaviour and attitudes following their participation in the Love Drunk and Respect, Protect, Connect programs.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

What changes have you observed?

What issues, that you're aware of, are your students currently dealing with?

7. I would recommend the Love Drunk performance to other schools.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Why or why not? Would you suggest any modifications?

If you would recommend the Love Drunk performance to other schools, do you recommend it be held annually? What would prohibit this (e.g. cost, time)?

8. I would recommend the Respect, Protect, Connect program to other schools.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Why or why not? Would you suggest any modifications?

If you would recommend the Respect, Protect, Connect program to other schools, do you recommend it be held annually? What would prohibit this (e.g. cost, time)?

9. I would recommend that schools have both the Love Drunk performance and the Respect, Protect, Connect program as a combined package.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Why or why not? Would you suggest any modifications?
