



Putting People First

AGENCY DRUG AND ALCOHOL ACTION PLAN

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2003 - 2005

Foreword

Putting People First The Western Australian Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2002-2005 was developed following a Community Drug Summit held during 2002 that focused attention on the impact of drug and alcohol use in the community. The Department for Education and Training's Drug and Alcohol Action Plan 2003-2005 provides a high level summary of the Department's contribution to the Strategy.

The Department's key objectives are to ensure that schools and training providers actively support and provide for the learning, physical, health, emotional and behavioural needs of all students and to strengthen the capacity of the organisation to support the work of schools and training providers in response to identified needs. The Department's commitment to collaboration and securing local education solutions and partnerships, is critical to building the capacity of local communities to address the important social issues underlying drug and alcohol misuse. This underpins the role that education and training can play in supporting not only preventative programs but programs that support optimal development for all students. Schools and training providers will tailor distinctive approaches that are innovative responses to the unique needs of students, their families and the local community.

The Drug and Alcohol Plan outlines the Department's Key priorities and actions for 2003-2005 in relation to curriculum, information, professional development, policy and community capacity building. This includes our ongoing commitment and support to the School Drug Education Project which models a comprehensive approach in the planning and implementation of drug education interventions in Western Australian Government Schools and fosters a coordinated and integrated community approach.

The Department also participates in the implementation of a number of whole of government strategies which complement the Drug and Alcohol Strategy. These include the implementation of the State Government's *'Response to the findings of the Inquiry into Response by Government Agencies to Complaints of Family Violence and Child Abuse in Aboriginal Communities'* (Gordon Inquiry) and the *Statement of Commitment to a New and Just Relationship between the Government of Western Australia and Aboriginal Western Australians*.

The Plan will be reviewed to incorporate Departmental activities in support of the Drug and Alcohol Area Plans currently being developed by the Drug and Alcohol Office.

PAUL ALBERT
DIRECTOR GENERAL

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 4

Prevention and Early Intervention

Treatment and Support Services

Law, Justice and Enforcement

INTRODUCTION 6

Background.....

Links to broad Social Policy.....

Links to Area Drug and Alcohol Plans.....

AGENCY CONTEXT 14

Agency Overview.....

Agency Mission.....

Agency Objectives

Broad Policy Directions

PRIORITY ACTIONS..... 25

Key Strategy Area: **Prevention and Early Intervention**

Key Strategy Area: **Treatment and Support**

Key Strategy Area: **Law, Justice and Enforcement**

EMERGING POLICY ISSUES..... 29

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Education and Training functions as the strategic manager of the Western Australian education and training sectors taking advice from the community, industry and other stakeholders on the education, training and employment needs of the State.

The focus of the Drug and Alcohol Action Plan for the education and training sectors is on the identification and consideration of relevant policy and related program development in response to the following priority areas identified in the *Western Australian Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2002-2005*:

- prevention and early intervention; and
- support.

Specifically the focus of the Action Plan is on raising awareness of drug and alcohol use at education and training facilities in Western Australia and in the workplace through employment programs managed by the Department. This will involve identifying strategies related to young people participating in government schools and publicly funded training and employment programs, developing support programs and material for students/staff/trainers working within the education and training sectors, and enhancing and promoting referral processes for students and staff at government schools and publicly funded training institutions.

The key stakeholders identified for this Strategy include:

- Students of government schools

During term one 2003 there were 251,463 students in 779 government schools and 1,563 students enrolled in 42 community pre-schools. About 1,300 students received schooling from parents or other care-givers.

- Publicly funded training institutions

During 2001, the Department funded 26.0 million student curriculum hours to approximately 98,000 students. People aged 15-19 represented the largest student cohort (29%), although there is fair representation across most age groups.

- Trainers working at publicly funded training institutions:

There are approximately 1,700 permanent and contract staff (including both full-time and part-time) currently working in the TAFE sector. In addition, there are approximately 2,000 casual trainers. The number of casual trainers working at any given time varies from week to week.

- Teachers at Government Schools
There are 19,722 teachers and administrators in government schools supported by 10,409 non teaching staff.
- Department of Education and Training
2,117 staff are employed in the Department of Education and Training to administer education, training and employment policies and programs.
- Other Agencies:
 - Department of Justice
 - Department of Community Development
 - Department of Housing and Works
 - WA Police Service
 - Department of Indigenous Affairs
 - Drug and Alcohol Office

To support the key priority areas of *prevention and early intervention* and *support*, the Department will explore the viability of developing and adopting an integrated strategy that will enable all identified stakeholders to acquire the skills necessary to adopt healthy behaviours in the workplace.

The strategy will involve identifying and evaluating current initiatives across the VET sector, including:

- awareness campaigns currently in place that focus on drug and alcohol use;
- professional development of school teachers and VET trainers related to identification of peers/students affected by drugs and alcohol and referral processes for support/treatment;
- curriculum that focuses on drug and alcohol use in the workplace;
- occupational health and safety and specific drug related policies;
- training and up-skilling provided to officers from other State Government agencies;
- policies and programs for specific target groups including:
 - culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) groups, including multicultural and indigenous communities;
 - apprentices and trainees; and
 - 15-19 year olds.
- information available to all stakeholders, including referral processes for counselling and/or treatment support.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The development of the Department of Education and Training Drug and Alcohol Action Plan represents a significant step towards a more integrated response to drug and alcohol issues in this state. A key State Government commitment to 'Deliver a Better Government' has underpinned the implementation of more cohesive and integrated Government policy, enabling greater coordination and integration of services. This commitment has also been embraced by the Western Australian community through the WA Community Drug Summit, which has demanded more than a 'siloed' response from Government.

The response to the Summit, called 'Putting People First', reflected an ideological shift in responding to drug and alcohol related problems by primarily treating them as a health and social issue, rather than a criminal or justice issue. Furthermore, Government recognised the importance of a more seamless system of care for those in need, and a more coordinated response from the many agencies and individuals involved. This approach was spearheaded by the development of '*Putting People First*' *The Western Australian Drug and Alcohol Strategy, 2002 - 2005*.

The WA Drug and Alcohol Strategy provides a framework for all key stakeholders. It builds on the priorities of the WA Community Drug Summit, and provides a clear commitment to target attention towards the unmet needs of a number of priority groups in our community, namely children and young people, families, Indigenous people and communities, people from regional, rural and remote communities, and people with co-occurring mental health and drug use problems.

The approach outlined in the WA Drug and Alcohol Strategy is hinged on pragmatism and is consistent with the directions of the National Drug Strategy. The priority areas for action, which are based on the National Framework and the WA Community Drug Summit, include Prevention and Early Intervention, Treatment and Support, and Law, Justice and Enforcement.

Two key features of this new approach are the development of both *Agency* Drug and Alcohol Action Plans, and *Area* Drug and Alcohol Plans. Agency plans provide the basis for development of specific agency and sectorial contribution to drug response, for the first time clearly outlining the contribution and directions of key Government Departments in overall drug and alcohol strategy. Area Planning is both an important process of community engagement, and a means of targeting action to local need. While Area Plans are necessarily broader in scope than the activities of Government, the resultant documents should support and complement each other, and therefore should be read in parallel. Put simply, Agency Plans provide, a basis and mechanism for Area Plans through 'top-down' support of the central authority, and Area Plans provide a vehicle for Agency action at the local level.

LINKS TO BROAD SOCIAL POLICY

The impact of drug and alcohol use on the human service sector is well documented. The police and justice sectors have reported figures that up to 80% of their work is drug and alcohol related. The welfare sector reports that up to 70% of child maltreatment allegations, around 50% of marital breakdown, and a high proportion of financial assistance is associated with drug and alcohol use. The Health sector reports that up to 30% of hospital admissions, and up to two-thirds of mental health conditions are also closely associated with drug and alcohol use. Clearly, all human sector agencies have an investment in ensuring effective responses to drug and alcohol harm.

Yet drug and alcohol use and associated harms do not occur in isolation. New research clearly shows that drug and alcohol-related risk and harm share common causal pathways with a range of other social problems, including crime, welfare dependency, physical and mental ill-health, and even school and work performance and participation. Drug and alcohol use and related harm is but one part of the complexity of the human condition, not the root cause of all social ills. But when present, drug and alcohol use problems can exacerbate and complicate these other issues, such that an effective and combined response to drug use becomes essential, and can achieve solid improvements and gains. Drug use treatment and prevention has been shown to achieve up to an \$8 return on every \$1 invested.

Drug and alcohol issues affect the entire community and have significant health, social and economic impacts on all West Australians. The annual cost of alcohol and other drugs to the Australian community has been estimated for 1998/99 at \$34.4 billion (includes tobacco at a total cost of \$21.1 billion) by Collins and Lapsley¹.

The need now is to develop cross-sectoral responses that can capture the depth of people and their needs.

This is illustrated by a number of recent Government inquiries into serious health, social and economic problems in Western Australia that have all identified common themes. The inquiries and major themes include:

1. The State Government 'Response to the findings of the Inquiry into Response by Government Agencies to Complaints of Family Violence and Child Abuse in Aboriginal Communities' (Gordon Inquiry):
 - *Significantly the Report found that violence and child abuse are grave social problems that are endemic in many Aboriginal communities.*
 - *The report recommended the need to shift from planning within individual agencies to planning that is sector wide and responds to each community's need for integrated service provision.*

¹ Collins, D., & Lapsley, H. (2003). *New estimates of the social costs of drug abuse in Australia*. Paper presented to the *International Research Symposium – Preventing substance use, risky use and harm: What is evidence-based policy?* National Drug Research Institute, Curtin University of Technology, Fremantle 24-27 February, 2003.

2. The Government's Response to the Report of the Homelessness Taskforce 'Putting People First' May 2002:
 - *The combined resources of the social sector, together with the continuing input of the community, are essential in tackling this social issue.*
 - *The social, economic and health issues associated with the risk of being homeless include, but are not limited to; family conflict, mental illness, family violence, and problematic alcohol and other drug use.*

3. The Early Years Taskforce: The Government established the Early Years Taskforce to develop an 'early years strategy' aimed at improving the wellbeing of young children aged 0-8:
 - *The Strategy is to be based on strong cooperation between State and Local Government service agencies and non-government service providers and a high degree of consultation and engagement with local communities.*
 - *In keeping with the social determinants model, the Early Years Strategy aims to improve outcomes for children.*

4. The Statement of Commitment to a New and Just Relationship between the Government of Western Australia and Aboriginal Western Australians:
 - *The agreement commits the parties to work together to build a new and just relationship between the Aboriginal people of WA and the government of WA.*
 - *The shared objective is to negotiate a new approach in Aboriginal affairs policy and administration in WA based on regional agreements.*
 - *The partnership framework aims to enhance negotiated outcomes that protect and respect the inherent rights of Aboriginal people and to significantly improve the health, education, living standards, and wealth of Aboriginal people.*

LINKS TO AREA DRUG AND ALCOHOL PLANS

The Area Drug and Alcohol Planning Process identified 19 key issues during consultations conducted across the ten Health regions in Western Australia. Whilst a significant number of the issues do not have particular relevance to the education and training sectors, the following three issues do have an impact:

- School Drug Education
- Early Childhood Intervention and parenting education
- Youth

In response to these issues the Department of Education and Training already has some targeted initiatives in place.

1. School Drug Education

The Department endorses the School Drug Education Project as the main service provider of teacher training and curriculum support for school drug education in Western Australia. Through the School Drug Education Project a coordinated approach to school drug education has been achieved at central, regional and system and sectors levels. This coordinated approach has been a strength of school drug education in Western Australia. Further to this, the School Drug Education Project has developed an infrastructure that links schools with providers of alcohol and other drug services in the community, thereby, facilitating a more integrated prevention and early intervention response to drug issues in schools.

The School Drug Education Project (SDEP), launched in April 1997, models a comprehensive approach in the planning and implementation of drug education interventions in Western Australian schools and aims to:

- implement and support K-12 drug education curriculum materials within the context of a whole of school (health promoting school) framework
- provide comprehensive training and ongoing support for teachers of drug education in all schools
- support schools to develop policies and guidelines for a whole school approach to drug / health education and ensure the effective management of drug use issues for all schools
- promote parent and community participation in the development and implementation of drug education programs, policies and protocols
- promote effective school drug education practices in order to maximise sustainability
- coordinate the initiatives of the National School Drug Education Strategy.

In response to Recommendation 24 of the Community Drug Summit, the Government committed to explore ways to make drug education available in post-compulsory education. The Department of Education and Training is currently working on the development of post compulsory courses of study. The literature on this issue does not make any specific reference to post-compulsory education/training undertaken outside the school sector(s).

In 2001, 15-19 year olds represented 29% of the student segment in vocational education and training in Western Australia. Given the high representation of this group currently in post-compulsory training programs, it is expected that the curriculum developed will also be made available for implementation across the VET sector.

The Government has also committed to pursuing the viability of drug education in teacher training. If this strategy is progressed, it is expected that consultation with the Training Learning and Assessment Strategy Group (TLASG) would be conducted as part of the curriculum development for teacher training to ensure that content is relevant to TAFE and/or that similar curriculum would be developed for TAFE trainers. TLASG has been established by the Department with cross sectoral and

industry representation and has responsibility for the strategic development of an overall VET professional development strategy for lecturers in the Western Australian VET sector.

2. Early Childhood Intervention and Parenting Education

In March 2002 the Cabinet Standing Committee on Social Policy established an Early Years Taskforce to develop and implement a whole-of-government early intervention strategy to improve the health and wellbeing of young children.

The terms of reference for the Taskforce are:

- To develop an early years strategy which maximizes inter-agency collaboration and community engagement, and is informed by early years research.
- To design and implement a systemic change in the ways agencies inter-relate that is discernible in terms of more seamless, coordinated and responsive client services.
- To target two local government areas in the initial stages of implementing the strategy by carrying out a detailed audit of available services for young children and their parents.

The key elements of the Early Years Strategy, as defined by the Taskforce, are:

- An early years focus (conception – 8)
- Community engagement
- Working together – partnerships between community, government, non-government and businesses.

Achievements to date

- Six communities have been selected to be the first sites where the Strategy will operate and they will all have been approached by March 2003, to invite the participation of local service providers and community members. The sites span remote, regional and metropolitan areas. They provide opportunities to build on existing initiatives as well as demonstrate how early childhood issues can be addressed in a range of ways.
- The communities are: (City of) Mandurah;
Halls Creek townsite and immediate surrounds;
Midland/Swanview/Midvale/Koongamia/Viveash;
(City of) Gosnells;
Carnarvon townsite; and
the (City of) Armadale.

Parenting Education

- Through schools, a range of parenting skills programs are provided. At the local site level, student services staff will collaborate with interagency staff to meet the identified needs of the school community.

Programs to increase parenting skills in the area of general behaviour management are frequently provided, as are a range of specific parent skills development programs. Formal programs such as the 'Positive Parenting Program' as well as locally developed programs will be used.

- Schools utilise the interagency resources within their community to provide parent information sessions on a range of topics to build capacity within school communities. This will occur as needs are identified.
- Individual students will receive support through referrals to Student Services teams. This will occur where there are concerns about student learning. Interventions may include the development of individual educational plans in consultation with the Student Services Team, the provision of support to the parent or care-giver on parenting issues and/or the referral of the family to an outside agency.

Recommendation 17 of the Community Drug Summit identified a Government commitment to the continued development of a culturally appropriate continuum of prevention, early intervention and targeted intensive supports for Aboriginal families and communities, which will include education and training strategies.

The Department of Education and Training plays a key role in improving outcomes in Indigenous training and employment. While direct links to this strategy are somewhat tenuous, key mechanisms implemented by the Department that do support this recommendation include:

- The Aboriginal School Based Traineeship program, a school to work transition initiative in which post-compulsory school students can participate in a Certificate II level traineeship as they complete their Western Australian Certificate of Education. The program is a joint initiative between the Department of Education and Training and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission. As part of the push to support young Indigenous people achieve employment and training outcomes equal to the wider community, the number of school based traineeships for young Indigenous people will increase to 350 in training by 2006;
- Provision of funding and support for a broad range of employment initiatives, including Indigenous specific school and employment-based training and enterprise development and job creation schemes in regional communities.
- A high priority is the *Cross Agency Program* that focuses on inter-agency state wide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander capacity building initiatives including infrastructure to remote and non-remote communities. Priority projects include State-wide coordination of the delivery and implementation of *governance*, *Aboriginal Health Worker* and *Housing Management Officer* training strategies.
- Ongoing consultation with Indigenous peak bodies, Indigenous communities, training providers, industry, and government agencies to improve outcomes for

Indigenous participants in VET, to extend opportunities for Indigenous participation in school and employment-based training, and to foster enterprise development and job creation in Indigenous communities across the State.

- Membership of the Australian Indigenous Training Advisory Council. As a member of this National committee, the Office of Training has a representative from the Aboriginal Services Branch to manage the implementation of the National Strategy, entitled '*Partners in the Learning Culture: Australia's National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy for Vocational Education and Training 2000-2005*', (ANTA 2000).
- The *Making It Happen - Improving training and employment opportunities for Indigenous Western Australians 2001-2005* Plan outlines the actions that the Department, TAFE Colleges and other publicly funded training organisations will take over the next four years to ensure that the sector delivers continuously improved outcomes to Indigenous Western Australians.
- Membership of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs Taskforce on Indigenous Education, Employment, Training and Youth. In December 2002, the Department of Training wrote to the Chair of the Taskforce requesting that the following priorities be addressed in the work of the Taskforce:
 - Aboriginal School Based Traineeships
 - Governance Training for Indigenous people
 - Employment for Aboriginal people

3. Youth

Youth has been identified as a priority issue across all regions. In 2001, 15-19 year olds represented the largest student group in vocational education and training in Western Australia (29%).

The Department of Education and Training has identified the following key strategies specifically focussed on increasing the participation of 15-19 year olds in post-compulsory education and training and improve the transition of young people within education and into the workforce:

A further 1,250 apprenticeships and traineeships will be provided throughout the State each year between 2001 and 2006, with at least one-third of all new apprenticeships and traineeships provided in regional areas.

- Increased support and opportunities will be provided for young people to either continue in education and training or to re-enter if they have left and are not currently in employment. More than \$2.8million has been allocated in 2003 for training programs, including pre-apprenticeships, which are tailored to the special

needs of 15-19 year olds and youth at risk in particular. The Government has also been successful in attracting Commonwealth funding for ten Indigenous Safety Net programs for 14 year olds still at school but at risk of dropping out.

- A *Return to Learn* strategy for 15-19 year olds will be conducted initially in the Geraldton region, and will offer increased education and training options to young people as a result of a partnership between TAFE and the schools sector. Return to Learn programs located in TAFE colleges will combine vocational training with TEE subjects to enable participants to complete a vocational qualification plus secondary graduation and a TER score.
- Increase the number of school based traineeships for young Indigenous people from around 100 in 2003 to 350 in training by 2006.
- Increase the total number of school based traineeships from around 350 in 2003 to 1,000 in training by 2006.
- The Department of Education and Training has funded 20 projects for youth-at-risk in 2003. In general terms, the projects will focus on building confidence and skills in the young person at risk, encouraging relationships between peers and trainers, signing an undertaking to adhere to a 'code of behaviour', providing referrals to professional assistance, and undertaking daily assessments and monitoring.
- *Local Learning and Employment Partnerships* is about engaging education and training, community, employment, industry, regional development and local government to achieve the best possible outcomes for young people in a region. The Department of Education and Training will establish four Local Employment and Learning Partnership (LLEP) pilots to test new ways of giving local communities a greater say in post compulsory education and training priorities and services in their region. The pilots will also develop new mechanisms for ensuring that agreed priorities take into account the needs of the 15 – 19 year old age group.

AGENCY CONTEXT

AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Department of Education and Training functions as the strategic manager of the Western Australian education and training sectors taking advice from the community, industry and other stakeholders on the education, training and employment needs of the State.

Government Schools

The Department aims to ensure that all government school students develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to achieve their individual potential and contribute to society.

In term one 2003 the Department funded 779 government schools and 42 community pre-schools. Fifty-five per cent of all government schools (429) were in the metropolitan and outer – metropolitan areas and enrolled 171 806 students, or 67 percent of government school students. The average school size was 400 students.

The 346 government schools in rural and remote areas enrolled 83 655 students, an average of 242 students per school. There were 516 primary schools with 153 578 students (average enrolment 298); 84 secondary schools with 72 813 students (866); 60 district high schools with 18 612 students (310); 27 remote community schools with 1 547 students (57). There were 70 education support schools and centres. About 1,300 students received schooling from parents or other caregivers.

In the public sector, kindergarten (K) and preprimary (P) schooling provides a foundation for compulsory education and is delivered through primary, district high and remote community schools and offsite facilities managed by local schools. Primary education (years 1-7) integrates knowledge, skills and understandings from key learning areas (including, in most schools, languages other than English [LOTE]) to provide relevant, comprehensive and challenging learning programs.

Primary, district high and remote community schools, education support schools and centres and the Schools of Isolated and Distance Education (SIDE) provide primary education.

Lower secondary education (years 8 to 10), which is delivered mostly through senior high, high, district high and remote community schools, education support schools and centres and SIDE, maintains continuity of learning with primary education in the key learning areas and enables students to focus more precisely on the development of knowledge and skills in accordance with their personal learning goals and needs.

Most government post-compulsory schooling (years 11-12) is the responsibility of senior high schools, although other provisions include senior colleges and senior campuses, the WA College of Agriculture, SIDE and education support schools and centres. For many years, it has been the policy of successive State governments and the Department of Education to encourage all students to complete their secondary schooling, and there has been a significant long-term increase in rates of retention to year 12.

The Department endorses the School Drug Education Project (SDEP) as the main service provider of teacher training and curriculum support for school drug education in Western Australia. The SDEP is based upon the Health Promoting Schools model. The model uses a comprehensive approach to school health education, widely acknowledged as best practice in promoting student health and responding to health issues of concern for students. The model provides an ideal conceptual framework within which to develop effective drug education and intervention activities for students.

Regional School Drug Education Networks provide appropriate and local support to teachers and school staff as they implement drug education in their school community to meet the needs of their students. The Regional School Drug Education Networks provide on-going professional development relevant to the locally identified needs of teachers and their students and provide networking opportunities for teachers / school staff to share ideas.

A key component of this option has involved the establishment of sixteen Regional Organising Committees (ROCs) throughout the State. Funds from the SDEP budget have been allocated to the ROCs to coordinate on-going drug education professional development and regular networking opportunities for teachers and other relevant school staff.

In addition to providing professional development and networking opportunities for schools and teachers in drug education, a broader function of the Regional School Drug Education Network is to create and maintain links with the school community by developing partnerships between schools, parents and community groups or agencies.

Teacher / school community network meetings provide on-going opportunities for teachers/school staff to meet with colleagues to share ideas and reflect upon their progress in implementing changes in their school communities to support effective drug education for their students. The teacher / school networks support best practice in professional development by providing on-going opportunities for action learning processes to occur where staff may plan, act, review and reflect as they implement changes.

The networks also provide forums where collaboration between teachers, other school-based staff, agencies and the community can occur, in order to support school and community links for health promotion and drug education.

Vocational Education and Training

The Department of Education and Training is the strategic manager of the VET sector in Western Australia. In this role, the Department liaises closely with the TAFE college network in regards to funding, policy development and system support issues.

Currently one in ten Western Australians is enrolled in vocational education and training. VET addresses the needs of new entrants to the workforce and provides for workers to update or acquire new skills. The VET system reaches into every sphere of the community and is critical in providing opportunities for groups traditionally under represented in employment, education and training.

The priorities for vocational education and training in Western Australia focus on developing a high quality system of lifelong learning which encourages and facilitates the ongoing engagement of individuals, communities and industry. The vocational education and training priorities for 2003-2004 include:

1. Increasing retention rates;
2. Improving and making easier transfer between VET and universities;
3. Increasing the number of apprenticeships and traineeships;
4. Strengthening the TAFE WA network;
5. Supporting jobs growth; and
6. Providing better career guidance and preparation for employment.

The TAFE college network is the primary provider of publicly funded VET in Western Australia. In 2001, approximately 98,000 persons undertook training through the TAFE college network, participating in almost 1000 different courses offered across the sector.

More than 50 TAFE campuses are located throughout the State. These campuses are organised into 10 autonomous colleges and two institutions.

People aged 15 - 19 currently represent the largest student cohort (29%), though there is fair representation across most age groups, as seen in Table 1. Significant growth is forecast for the 45-64 age group in the period to 2010, consistent with State population and labour market trends.

Table 1: Portion of students enrolled by age group

Age Group	Students (%)
14 or under	0.4%
15 – 19	28.5%
20 – 24	17.1%
25 – 29	11.2%
30 – 39	19.8%
40 – 49	14.7%
50 plus	8.3%
Total	100.0%

The Department of Education and Training works with its partners on behalf of the State Government to ensure the provision of quality vocational education, training and employment programs, products and services that meet the needs of its clients.

Partners include:

- State Training Board
- Training Accreditation Council
- TAFE College Network
- Registered Training Organisations
- Industry Bodies
- Employment service providers
- Regional and local communities
- Organisations representing groups with special needs
- School and university sectors
- Key Government agencies

AGENCY MISSION

To ensure effective drug education in all Western Australian schools and publicly funded training providers.

AGENCY OBJECTIVES

A number of programs developed and administered by the Department of Education and Training target the reduction of risk factors and the development of protective factors in children and adults that are inclusive of drug use.

The major initiatives of the Department support a preventative and early intervention approach that is supported by the Curriculum Improvement Program and the Students at Educational Risk Strategy.

Curriculum Improvement Program

Priority one in the Department of Education draft Plan for Government School Education 2001-2003 is *enhanced student learning through greater flexibility in the classroom and a focus upon achieving outcomes*. The key strategy to achieve this is the Curriculum Improvement Program, which entails implementing the *Curriculum Framework* with:

- an *Outcomes and Standards Framework* for describing student achievement to enable teachers and schools to monitor, assess and plan for improved student performance;
- policy on curriculum provision, student assessment and reporting to parents;
- standards of student performance for particular year levels.

Schools will complete implementation of the *Curriculum Framework* in 2004 and the *Outcomes and Standards Framework* in 2005/6.

The focus is on the implementation of an outcomes based approach to learning and teaching that will ensure all students have the opportunity to learn and achieve at the highest possible standard. It concentrates on building the capacity of teachers to use flexible approaches to pedagogy that motivate, engage and best match the needs of all students.

The Department is committed to providing appropriate support for schools to enable them to take responsibility for the implementation of the program within the context of agreed policies and guidelines over a five year period. District based Curriculum Improvement teams have been supporting schools since 1998. There will also be a suite of professional support for teachers and school leaders in the ongoing provision of relevant and inclusive classroom practice.

Participation, inclusion and achievement of all students is a focus for all schools through years K-12. A key focus of the *Creating the Future* strategy is about

providing more options and flexibility for young people to keep them engaged in education and training.

Students at Educational Risk Strategy

The Students at Educational Risk Strategy includes the Students at Educational Risk Policy that requires schools to have a process for the identification of students at risk and to then implement a plan or strategies to address that risk. The strategy includes focus areas and resources that address:

- Retention and Participation
- Behaviour Management
- Health and Well-being.

District education offices support schools in implementing programs and services related to these focus areas.

Retention and Participation

Each district develops and implements a Retention and Participation plan which articulates their initiatives for the improvement of attendance, retention and participation of students alienated from schooling.

The Retention and Participation Plan encompasses K-12 and incorporates prevention, early identification and intervention strategies. Student Services teams in district education offices have been responsible for supporting schools to develop appropriate programs for alienated students. An annual budget of approximately \$1.9m has been allocated to districts to support the implementation of retention and participation initiatives.

Research and local trials have identified successful interventions and emphasise prevention and early intervention. Support for alienated students and students with challenging behaviour has been identified as a priority area and the following strategies have been proposed:

- Alternative off-campus programs;
- Modified school-based education programs;
- Strengthening professional support for classroom teachers practice; and
- Interagency cooperation and collaboration.

Behaviour Management and Discipline Strategy

The Department's Behaviour Management and Discipline Strategy provides \$7m annually to address the issue of class sizes and challenging behaviour for students in Years 8 and 9. Training in classroom management has been provided for over 2 000 teachers in 2002. In 2003 this model will be extended to provide an intensive program for 30 metropolitan and 30 country teacher consultants.

Health and Well-being

Under the Students at Educational Risk Strategy, the Department of Education and Training identified Health and Well-being as a key focus area for action because social and emotional well-being plays a significant role in student achievement and healthy lifestyle choices. The *Pathways to Health and Well-being in Schools* focus

paper describes causal pathways to poor student outcomes and provides a framework for prevention and early intervention.

Professional development associated with the document is being offered to all districts and the goal is for the majority of them to have received professional development by the end of this year. Districts will then have responsibility for disseminating the information to schools. It provides them with a process for improving the mental health and well-being of all members of the school community.

Local District Initiatives

Many of the Department's districts are implementing local initiatives that target a range of poor outcomes in youth, including drug related harm. For example:

- Investing in Bunbury's Youth is an operating framework that focuses on creating a safer, healthier and more cooperative community. It involves a range of Government and non-Government agencies in capacity building, data collection, intervention and evaluation.
- Albany's Interagency Policy for Early Intervention in the Mental Health of Young People aims to support young people in their times of need and to reduce or prevent suffering by intervening as early as possible. Fourteen Government and non-Government agencies in Albany have agreed it to the policy.
- Perth District Education Office is currently trialing the Triple P parenting program, which is being conducted by local Government and non-Government agencies. This program has been shown to decrease the incidence of behaviour problems in children. Childhood behaviour problems are one of a number of risk factors causally linked with increased rates of substance use and abuse in youth.

Improving Student Retention Strategy

A Government priority is "To have 90% of students in Western Australia participate in formally recognised education and training to the end of year 12 or it's equivalent." The Department of Education and Training's response is to build strategies such as those outlined in (2) above into a cohesive approach that will engage all students in school. Second chance programs such as the *Fast track* programs operating in schools, address the external factors as well as lack of academic achievement that can cause student alienation.

It is envisaged that schools will negotiate their own realistic but challenging targets, identify strategies to reach these targets and provide evidence of achievement against their targets.

All education systems and sectors are active participant in the School Drug Education Project and the MindMatters initiative and are contributing to the development of Curriculum Council's Post-compulsory Courses of Study.

MindMatters

MindMatters is a cross-sectoral mental health promotion program involving all education systems and sectors for secondary schools developed and disseminated under the National Mental Health Strategy. The program focuses on the themes of promotion, prevention and early intervention. It facilitates a whole school approach to promoting mental health and further develops effective school-community links to meet the needs of at-risk students.

Post Compulsory Drug and Health Education

The post compulsory years of schooling are structured to provide students with opportunity to choose and focus in depth on specific subjects that will help them meet their future study or career aspirations. Health Studies is a non-TEE course that is available to schools to offer to students in years 11 and 12 to select from.

Some schools provide opportunities for students to receive information and discuss issues such as drug use, road trauma, mental health, relationship and sexuality education, further study and career and vocational choices and other contemporary issues in blocks of time that are not specifically scheduled for specific subjects.

The key to enhancing drug education in the post compulsory years is for schools to adopt a planned but flexible approach that will enable them to provide students with time to become involved and discuss these important issues as part of the schools curriculum offerings.

Education systems and sectors and community organisations have the potential to influence the directions of the Curriculum Council's Post Compulsory Review. The review is currently examining the offerings of courses of study in the post compulsory years of schooling. There is an opportunity to advocate the importance of students having the opportunity to discuss contemporary social issues that are impacting upon them in this phase of schooling, this would include issues such as, drug education, road trauma, relationships and sexual health, mental health physical health.

School Drug Education Project

The aim of the SDEP is to ensure that effective drug education is provided in all Western Australian schools. The objectives include:

- drug education training and ongoing support for teachers in all schools
- the development and implementation of drug education curriculum materials to support teachers from Kindergarten to Year12 within the context of a health promoting school framework
- the development of drug education strategies for Years 11 and 12
- the provision of drug education information for parents
- support for the development of school drug policies and guidelines for a whole school approach to K-12 drug and health education and management of drug issues for all schools

- support for parent and community participation in the development and implementation of drug education programs, policies and protocols; and
- the establishment of Regional School Drug Education Networks in Western Australia through the establishment of 16 Regional Organising Committees
- the development of the *In Touch* program that encourages schools to assess the responses to drug use at the school level by identifying internal and external expertise that may assist in providing a considered response to drug use incidents. It encourages the formation of links with community alcohol and other drug service providers and provides teachers and school support staff with awareness and skills training.

Aboriginal School Based Traineeship Program

The Aboriginal School Based Traineeship program is a school to work transition initiative in which post-compulsory school students can participate in a Certificate II level traineeship as they complete their Western Australian Certificate of Education. The program is a joint initiative between the Department of Education and Training and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission. As part of the push to support young Indigenous people achieve employment and training outcomes equal to the wider community, the number of school based traineeships for young Indigenous people will increase to 350 in training by 2006;

Cross Agency Program

The Department's Cross Agency program focuses on inter-agency state wide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander capacity building initiatives including infrastructure to remote and non-remote communities. Priority projects include State-wide coordination of the delivery and implementation of *governance*, *Aboriginal Health Worker* and *Housing Management Officer* training strategies.

Return to Learn

A pilot strategy for 15-19 year olds will be conducted initially in the Geraldton region, and will offer increased education and training options to young people as a result of a partnership between TAFE and the schools sector. *Return to Learn* programs located in TAFE colleges will combine vocational training with TEE subjects to enable participants to complete a vocational qualification plus secondary graduation and a TER score.

BROAD POLICY DIRECTIONS

The Western Australian Community Drug Summit emphasised the need for:

- a greater focus on education, prevention and early intervention; and
- the need for treatment and support to be readily accessible to those in need, with initiatives that aim to promote clear points of entry to support and treatment services and ensure that there are identified pathways for people to access the services most appropriate to their needs.

The Drug Summit strongly supported the need for comprehensive school based drug education that has an evidence base, however attention must be paid to:

- research and evaluation relating to behavioural outcomes and school implementation;
- enhanced student, family and community input into the development of school programs;
- increased government resourcing of drug education programs particularly targeting post-compulsory programs (years 11 and 12);
- compulsory inclusion of drug education in pre-service teacher training;
- enhanced provision for comprehensive parent and community education;
- cultural relevance of all interventions and materials; and
- all school administrators and councils consider the need for a comprehensive approach to school drug education.

Accordingly, the Department of Education and Training will focus on *prevention and early intervention* and *support* through the identification and evaluation of current initiatives related to drug and alcohol use across the education and training sectors, specifically related to:

- curriculum
- professional development
- counselling and referral services
- information dissemination

The Department will identify and explore the development of targeted initiatives for specific groups in response to broad social policy issues and more specific issues identified through the Area Planning process.

The Department will continue to support the existing School Drug Education Project and acknowledges that there is opportunity to consolidate the work of the School Drug Education Project to all Western Australian schools and will continue to actively promote this program through all district education offices. The Department also will explore ways to ensure drug education in compulsory and post-compulsory years is connected strongly to the achievement of outcomes for students as articulated in the *Curriculum Framework*.

The Department of Education and Training plays a key role in improving outcomes in Indigenous training and employment, through a range of mechanisms designed to ensure that VET is increasingly responsive to the needs and aspirations of Indigenous clients across the State. The Department will develop specific initiatives in response to those recommendations from the Gordon Inquiry which impact on the education and training sectors.

Youth-at-risk is a broad social issue and, with the 15-19 year old cohort the largest student group in vocational education and training in Western Australia (29%), the Department of Education and Training is well placed to develop programs to support this group. The Department will continue to focus on improving training opportunities for 15 to 19 year olds, including increased support for young people to continue in education and training or to re-enter if they have left. Training programs tailored to the needs of 15-19 year olds and young people at risk are a key priority in the vocational education and training sector for the Department in 2003 – 2004.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

Key Strategy Area: Prevention and Early Intervention

Action Issue	Target Group/s	Action	Other key stakeholders	Area	Implementation Timeline
Curriculum	Teachers Students Trainers Employers	Identify and review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • existing curriculum related to drug and alcohol use and the extent to which this is delivered across the education and training sectors • opportunities where curriculum related to drug and alcohol use may be embedded into units of competency delivered across the VET sector and as part of school-based curriculum related to the outcomes of the Curriculum Framework and the school contexts. • K-12 drug education curriculum materials within the context of a whole of school (health promoting school) framework. (see SDE Plan) 	Department of Education and Training Curriculum Support Services Network (CSSNs) Drug and Alcohol Office SDEP	State-wide	2004
Information Strategy	Teachers Students Trainers Employers Parents Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities for developing an integrated educational awareness strategy focusing on drug and alcohol use in the workplace, on-campus and in the school community. • Through central, Regional Organising Committees and In Touch training, the role and access to CDSTs to students experiencing problems associated with drug use to be promoted to school staff. • To promote parent and community participation in the development and implementation of drug education programs, policies and protocols. (see SDE Plan) 	Department of Education and Training Drug and Alcohol Office Registered Training Organisations SDEP	State-wide	Late 2003-2004

Professional Development	Teachers Trainers Employers Other Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing professional development strategies for teachers and VET trainers in relation to drug and alcohol use • Identify further professional development opportunities for teachers and VET trainers, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ referral processes ○ drug and alcohol use in the workplace • Identify opportunities for supporting up-skilling/re-skilling of employees of other government agencies • Provide comprehensive training and ongoing support for teachers of drug education in all government schools. (see SDE Plan) 	Department of Education and Training Union(s) Drug and Alcohol Office Registered Training Organisations SDEP	State-wide	2004
Policy and program development	Department of Education and Training Registered Training Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing drug and alcohol policies and update/enhance as required • Identify opportunities for policy and program development for key target groups, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ culturally and linguistically diverse groups (CALD), including multicultural and Indigenous communities ○ apprentices and trainees ○ 15-19 year olds 	Drug and Alcohol Office SDEP	State-wide	2004
Community Capacity Building	Department of Education and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support and implement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Aboriginal School-based Traineeship program ○ Governance, Aboriginal Health Worker and Housing Management Officer training strategies • To promote parent and community participation in the development and implementation of drug education programs, policies and protocols. (see SDE Plan) 	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Commission Department of Indigenous Affairs		

Key Strategy Area: Treatment and Support

Action Issue	Target Group/s	Action	Other key stakeholders	Area	Implementation Timeline
Referral Processes	Teachers Students Trainers Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and enhance referral services currently in place across the education and training sectors • Review and promote information available on drug and alcohol use to students and staff across the education and training sectors 	Department of Education and Training Drug and Alcohol Office Registered Training Organisations	State-wide	2004

EMERGING POLICY ISSUES

Areas outlined in the Agency Plan for the Department of Education and Training that may incur additional resources include:

- Publicly funded training to other government agencies;
- Development of professional development programs for trainers;
- Development of an integrated awareness campaign;
- Incorporating curriculum related to drug and alcohol use into occupational health and safety units (approximately 4% of all units delivered in the VET sector);
- Developing and support programs for key target groups, specifically:
 - culturally and linguistically diverse groups (CALD), including multicultural and Indigenous communities
 - apprentices and trainees
 - 15-19 year olds