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## > AER Project Management Workshops 2009

Following the highly successful series of workshops conducted in 2007 and 2008 addressing grant and report writing, financial management and governance, AER has continued to run workshops in 2009. Read more on page 4

Changing the way we drink

# NEWSLETTER

**AUTUMN 2009**

On March 5, Chairman of the Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation (AER), Professor Ian Webster AO, announced his retirement from the role as Chair. The AER Board appointed former Deputy Chair, Mr Scott Wilson as new Chairman and Board Director Cheryl Bart, AO as Deputy Chair. Professor Webster will remain on the AER Board as a Director and said he is proud of the achievements of AER since its inception, but has decided it is time for a change of leadership.

## Letter from Scott Wilson, Chair

It has been a busy first quarter for AER this year in terms of our future funding activities, building strategic alliances with organisations in the public health and social sectors and policy plans. We welcome the Government's commitment to providing solutions to reduce binge drinking and the impacts of alcohol misuse in our communities.

The health related impact of alcohol misuse is costing the Australian economy more than \$15.3 billion each year. When we talk about the price of drinking, this is the real cost that needs to be considered by all Australians as well as governments.

Without the appropriate funding, our health and social services can no longer afford to carry the growing burden created by excessive drinking. Therefore, it's important that a significant portion of the tax revenue is channelled towards the health and community organisations that facilitate and deliver the frontline services in this area.

AER recognises that taxation and alcohol pricing measures do not provide a panacea, and that a range of policy steps are needed. However, this alcopops bill would pave the way for investment in other elements of

the national alcohol strategy to reduce alcohol related harms.

AER will also establish a youth committee this year, so we can be better informed and accurately target our programs to reach young Australians. We will continue to focus on Indigenous issues around substance abuse in particular the areas of volatile substance abuse.

On behalf of AER I would like to welcome Joanna Allebone to the team as our new Public Affairs Officer. Joanna brings with her a range of media and public relations skills in both corporate and community environments. We look forward to introducing Joanna to our clients and constituents.

Our recent support of the highly acclaimed Australian feature film Samson and Delilah was a natural progression from the funding of indigenous projects in the Northern Territory region. AER are working towards building alliances with organisations that strive to raise awareness and understanding around issues facing young indigenous people in Australia.

One of AER's current focuses is maternal health and fetal alcohol syndrome. Through the AER grants scheme, valuable research and educational resources have already been developed and disseminated throughout Australian communities on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. It was also pleasing to see that the revised NHMRC Standard Drinking Guidelines now include zero alcohol consumption for pregnant and breastfeeding women.

AER will continue its work with all levels of government in helping address these and other social issues. We are also looking forward to sharing the evidence based learnings of our organisation and building strategic partnerships with other organisations to develop alcohol policies that will promote attitudinal and behavioural change.



## Samson & Delilah

*A feature film by Warwick Thornton*

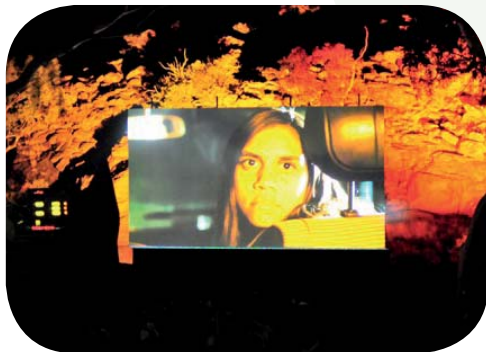
Samson and Delilah's world is small – an isolated community in the Central Australian desert. When tragedy strikes they turn their backs on home and embark on a journey of survival. Lost, unwanted and alone they discover that life isn't always fair, but love never judges.

"Samson and Delilah is a powerfully confronting film which presents the complexities and realities of everyday life for many young indigenous people. Amongst its culturally loaded content, the film provides a voice for youth on the issue of substance abuse which is a significant challenge for too many young Australians." Scott Wilson, Chair, Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation.

"Samson and Delilah is a powerful film because of its brutal honesty about the pleasures and pains of Aboriginal life in Central Australia today... This is a very brave film and deserves to be widely shown."

Maggie Brady

Film and storytelling can be a very powerful medium in raising awareness and understanding around complex social issues and Samson and Delilah is a story that needs to be told.



*Marissa Gibson (Delilah) Lights up the big screen at the Alice Springs premiere of the film*

The free theatrical premiere of the film took place on Friday April 17 at the historical Telegraph Station in Alice Springs and was supported by the AER Foundation.

Samson & Delilah is screening on the opening night of the Message Sticks Film Festival at the Sydney Opera House on May 7th, and will release in

cinemas in Sydney the next day. Other capital cities in Australia will open on May 7th. To view the Samson and Delilah trailer, or for more information about the film visit:

[www.samsonanddelilah.com.au](http://www.samsonanddelilah.com.au)

### > Project Snapshot: recently completed projects funded by the AER Foundation

AER has funded over 1000 programs throughout Australia including numerous programs which contribute to shifting community attitudes towards a responsible approach to alcohol consumption. Commitment to these objectives drives the work we do each day.

AER's ability to strengthen national and regional AOD networks through information sharing has enabled us to make a difference in many smaller and isolated communities, whose needs have not fitted with funding eligibility associated with larger portfolio drug-related programs.

The following articles are excerpts from recently completed projects, funded by AER. If you would like more information on these, or other projects visit our website at: [www.aerf.com.au](http://www.aerf.com.au) or call us on: (02) 6122 8600.

### Strategic Capacity Building: Strategic Planning & Quality Management Program

#### Family Drug Support

With assistance from AER, Family Drug Support undertook a two year Quality Control and Capacity Building project. The work undertaken by Family Drug Support culminated in the following outcomes:

- Comprehensive Policies and Procedures Manual for staff training
- Evaluation forms for all Family Drug Support services
- Stepping stones questionnaire and evaluation tool and implementation
- Professional evaluators to evaluate telephone line and Stepping Stone services
- Rewritten training manuals for telephone training, Support Group Facilitators and Stepping Stones
- Overall accreditation achieved

Family Drug Support have reported that the new quality assurance system has resulted in overall improved communication between volunteer staff, coordinators and management, improved staff and volunteer morale and job satisfaction, an increase in training opportunities for employees and improved strategic planning mechanisms.

#### Research:

### Peer Social Networks in the Development of Harmful Alcohol and Drug Use in Early High School

*University of Melbourne Centre for Adolescent Health*

The University of Melbourne's Centre for Adolescent Health conducted a research project over a two year period, studying peer social networks in the development of harmful alcohol and drug use in early high school students. Specifically, the research identified the influence of family practices on children's alcohol use and the role of parents in adolescent development. This included the encouragement of resilience and the promotion of positive social relationships by families that participated in the study.

The study revealed that almost all students in the first year of secondary school, had one or more close friends using alcohol. It was also evident that the students whose parents did not consent for them to participate in the study, tended to be more isolated from the student friendship networks. In some cases, they were from non-English speaking home backgrounds. The results of the study indicate that:

- growth in student alcohol use from age 13 to the first annual follow-up (Yr 8) was predicted by early-age (Yr 7) alcohol use and by family, community & peer characteristics that normalise adolescent alcohol use
- parents who reported that they allowed their Year 7 student a sip during celebrations or with the family meal, increased the risk that the student would report being an alcohol user in Year 8
- a higher number of friends, or a higher density of alcohol or tobacco users in the school friendship network were each independently predictive of progression to Year 8 alcohol use



- year 8 students in the schools that were randomly assigned to the intervention reported a general trend to experience improvements relative to the students in the control schools
- by Year 9 the students exposed to the Resilient Families intervention had shown reductions in substance use and other benefits relative to students in the control schools

The Resilient Families components led to more assertive parenting, improved school attendance and academic achievement. Peer characteristics in Year 9 were highly influenced by children's behaviours and peer involvements at the start of secondary school (Yr 7).

These findings suggest that the intervention could be further enhanced if it was initiated in primary school. Many of the intervention schools are continuing to conduct the Resilient Families intervention.

### Events Sponsorship: AER Mixed Pairs Challenge Final: May 5-8

Now in its 4th year, the AER Mixed Pairs Challenge has been created specifically for the club bowler and gives all bowlers throughout Australia the opportunity to participate in a high profile bowls event whilst competing on their own club greens.



*AER Mixed Pairs Challenge, 2008 Finalists*

Overall, the event increased the awareness of responsible alcohol consumption, while also increasing the responsible service of alcohol by clubs. 37% of the clubs that participated in the challenge believe that the event has had a positive impact in the long term, while nearly all clubs would like future games to promote the responsible consumption of alcohol.

The 2008-9 AER Mixed Pairs Challenge National Final will take place at Club Helensvale in Queensland from May 5-8.

To find out more about the AER Mixed Pairs Challenge visit:

<http://aerf.com.au/showcase/AERMixedPairs.aspx>

### Research: Specialised Alcohol & Drug Treatment in Victoria

*Turning Point Alcohol & Drug Centre*

Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre conducted a study on alcohol and drug treatment in Victoria. The study used telephone services to determine the prevalence of problematic alcohol use and treatment utilisation.

The research indicated that the systematic planning of substance abuse treatment services is essential, but is generally absent. Existing treatment systems have developed in response to political pressure, personal philosophy, advocacy for a particular group and the availability of funds. Use of prevalence estimation of service demand is supported, but is especially difficult for hard-to-reach populations.

The study concluded that:

- data collected from a telephone service can be used as a treatment multiplier to calculate the number of clients that require intensive treatment for alcohol use annually
- on average, the Victorian government-funded treatment sector should expand treatment for alcohol by 300% if it is to make an impact on the issue
- the potential for research data collection on hard-to-reach populations via a telephone counselling and referral service is feasible. Special consideration should be given due to the unique service delivery type.

### Prevention & Public Education: Wakefield Youth Alcohol Diversion Pilot Program

*Country Health South Australia & South Australia Police*

Representatives from Country Health South Australia (formerly known as Wakefield Health) in conjunction with South Australia Police in the Barossa-Yorke Local Service area (LSA), conducted a pilot study examining

the impact of early intervention diversionary strategies on alcohol and substance behaviours. The program was developed in response to a need to address the high-risk alcohol use of youth in the region.

Over a 24 month period, the project engaged young people (aged 10-17 years) who had been detected by police for alcohol related offending in the early intervention program. A main component of the program was to conduct a holistic assessment of each young person involved, as well as the provision of education and harm minimisation strategies.

The results of the study revealed that during the project period:

- 132 individuals were diverted on 141 occasions
- of these, only seven were diverted on two occasions and one diverted on three occasions
- compliance with diversions was high – 95% were complied with
- over the number of diversions decreased over the pilot

Throughout the lifespan of the study, data emphasised the importance of ongoing training and promotion of the initiative among police officers and family conferencing staff.

Young people consistently described the assessment experience as being better than they anticipated. They supported the harm minimisation approach towards alcohol consumption through the provision of information and education, rather than promotion of abstinence through a "lecture".

The fact that the diversion process was meaningful rather than punitive was also identified as a positive by young people. Parents were generally positive about the appropriateness of the program in responding to young people's alcohol use.

### Treatment & Rehabilitation: Relocation of Residential Services to Refurbished Estate

*We Help Ourselves (WHOS)*

Renovations and repairs were undertaken on the 100 client capacity cafeteria in the Broughton Hall NGO Precinct (Callan Park Estate), the former Rozelle Hospital. This capital works project was part of a collaborative, staged approach to relocate the WHOS residential services and administration



to Broughton Hall NGO Precinct within the Callan Park Estate. The reinstated and renovated cafeteria comprises of a functional kitchen, dining room and revitalised garden, providing clients with a positive rehabilitation environment.

These improved resources have created an increased general awareness of the needs of the alcohol and drug service sector. The beautiful setting and heritage site of the Callan Park Estate will be used to positively promote residential rehabilitation in the region, as well as reduce the social stigma associated with alcohol and drug rehabilitation. WHOS are confident that the new facilities will assist in decreasing the rate of crimes and health costs relating to substance abuse in the region, by providing residential treatment to the target group.

## **Prevention & Public Education: Katherine Community Alcohol and Drug Strategies for Youth**

### *YMCA Katherine*

The Katherine Community Alcohol and Drug Strategies for Youth Program was developed by the Katherine YMCA and a number of community based organisations and councils. The purpose of the program was to address some of the key issues facing "at-risk" youth living in the Katherine region.

A multi-faceted program was designed whereby young participants were taken out of their every day environment and exposed to new, exciting possibilities. They were provided with adventure-based counselling and encouraged to become mentors and leaders for others within their community.

To bring about the opportunity for change, the participants needed to be taken out of their comfort zone. This encouraged openness to new thoughts, social patterns and behaviours. The program focussed on strengthening cultural and family bonds, as well as promoting the concept of identity and responsibility.

Initially the project reached over 5000 young people in the Wulgularr Community. The project will now be implemented in 9 other communities facing similar issues. The success of

the project is evident, with participants having a greater understanding of their cultural identity, respect for their community and new life skills enabling them to adopt a healthy lifestyle.



*Participants take a breather*

Ultimately, the project brought about an attitudinal change towards substance use within the Wulgularr Community.

Contributors to the program included: Wulgularr Community Government Council, Binjari Community Government Council, Kalano Community Government Council, Kalano Community Association, Sommerville Youth Services, Katherine Mental Health Services, Mission Australia, Katherine Region Indigenous Suicide and Self-Harm Prevention Project, Sunrise Health Service and Youth of Katherine and the Region.

The project demonstrates the powerful potential of service providers when collaboration takes place.

## **Treatment & Rehabilitation: Refurbishment of Treatment and Rehabilitation Facility**

### *Aborigines and Islanders Alcohol Relief Service*

The Aborigines and Islanders Alcohol Relief Service (AIARS) have provided treatment and rehabilitation services to the community of Cairns for over 21 years. AER provided funding to AIARS to assist with the refurbishment of the Douglas House Alcohol & Drug Rehabilitation Program. The funding was instrumental in the purchase of beds, mattresses, furniture, laundry equipment, recreational facilities and gym equipment for clients. AIARS now provide a fully equipped and effective residential service to clients with alcohol and other drug problems.

It was reported that after the refurbishment 87 clients successfully completed rehabilitation, of which only 4 were readmitted. Many clients were successfully placed into suitable

independent accommodation, returned to home communities or participated in study and work placements. Clients feel they are engaging with a more professional and well resourced support service. Upon the completion of the facility refurbishment, a new positive attitude and outlook is evident amongst those entering and exiting the program.

## **AER Project Management Workshops 2009**

The Alcohol Education & Rehabilitation Foundation (AER) is committed to supporting grantee organisations and stakeholders through the provision of "Project Management" opportunities that directly support the core work of your organisation and staff.

Following the highly successful series of workshops conducted in 2007 and 2008 addressing grant and report writing, financial management and governance, AER has continued to run workshops in 2009. This year, a series of two day project management workshops will be held in Canberra, Melbourne, Cairns, Sydney, Perth, Alice Springs and Adelaide.



*Canberra workshop attendees*

As in our past programs, the two day workshops are facilitated by Don McFeat, who has played a key role as project director in many strategic planning, business planning and organisation-wide change, process reengineering and governance assignments in Australia, Hong Kong and in the development of a National Sports plan for the Philippines.

This AER initiative will provide a unique opportunity for AER recipient organisations to assess contemporary project management tools and methodologies for the better management and governance of education and rehabilitation projects.

Expressions of interest in the workshop can be obtained by emailing the Project Manager Linus Nesbitt at: [linus.nesbitt@aerf.net.au](mailto:linus.nesbitt@aerf.net.au) or calling AER on 02 61228600.



## ABOUT AER:

The Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation Ltd (AER) was established as an independent public company in October 2001 with a \$115 million grant from the Australian Government to address prevention, treatment, research and rehabilitation for the misuse of alcohol as well as paint, petrol and glue sniffing.

The AER mandate is to prevent alcohol and licit substance abuse especially amongst disadvantaged, indigenous and young people; to support evidence-based treatment, research and prevention programs in the Alcohol and other drugs (AOD) sector; and to highlight the dangers of licit substance abuse and promote the responsible consumption of alcohol within the community.

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## Alcohol and Violence Project

*Responding to clients impacted by alcohol-related violence, an integrated approach*

With support from AER, VAADA in collaboration with Odyssey House and UnitingCare Moreland Hall is running a one-day workshop on this issue. Participants will also be asked to attend a follow-up masterclass.

The workshop will introduce a number of practice tools tailored to meet the specific needs of AOD practitioners working with clients impacted on by alcohol-related violence.

Please note there are limited spaces available in each session (Approx 20 persons). To register or for information on workshop times and locations follow the link: <http://www.vaada.org.au/news/items/2009/04/271896-upload-00001.pdf>

## AER Grant Funding for 08/09

AER Foundation's Small Grants Program for 2008/2009 provides funding for:

### Conference Attendance Grants October 2008 to 1 June 2009

Conference Attendance Grants, capped at \$5,000 per conference, with a maximum of 2 persons per organisation receiving assistance.

### Innovative Project Grants October 2008 to 1 June 2009

The Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation Ltd (AER) objectives are to:

- Prevent alcohol and other licit substance abuse, including petrol sniffing, particularly among vulnerable population groups such as indigenous Australians and you;
- Support evidence-based alcohol and other licit substance abuse treatment, rehabilitation, research and prevention programs; and
- Promote community education encouraging responsible consumption of alcohol and highlighting the dangers of licit substance abuse.

Innovative Project grants (capped at \$20,000 per grant) are available for organisations that pursue best-practice goals by developing innovative projects in the alcohol and other drug sector. Organisations need to demonstrate the benefits that will be gained by AER, their

organisation and the broader community.

An application form can be downloaded from the AER website: [www.aerf.com.au/community/about.aspx](http://www.aerf.com.au/community/about.aspx). For more information, or a Microsoft Word version of the application form, send an email to: [gai.atherden@aerf.com.au](mailto:gai.atherden@aerf.com.au). If you would like to be kept up to date with funding availability, please subscribe to the AER mailing list by emailing: [aerf@aerf.com.au](mailto:aerf@aerf.com.au)

## AER Travel Policy for Grantees

If your grant includes airfares and accommodation in the budget, AER prefers to make the travel arrangements for you. When preparing your grant application, contact Pat Ebeling with the details of your travel and a quote will be organised through our travel agent FCM Travel. Ensure that you have specific details such as time and dates of travel. Please note that exact names that appear on drivers' licences or passports for identification at airports are required for booking purposes.

Use this quote in your funding application. Travel expenses can vary so much that it is good to know that the amount that you have put in your application will be enough to cover your travel budget.

If your application is approved AER will then proceed to confirm the quoted travel arrangements with FCM Travel. This relieves the grantee of the administrative burden of making travel arrangements, and simplifies the financial acquittal. Please note it is the grantee's responsibility to register for the conference and book for accommodation.

If you prefer to make your own travel arrangements, please ensure that you book fully flexible economy flights. If the flights are for an overseas destination please allow for travel insurance in your budget.

## Contribute to Our Online Events Calendar

AER welcome you to contribute to our new online events calendar. It's a great platform for organisations and groups from all sectors to promote upcoming events, workshops, conferences and general activity that may be of interest. To view our online events calendar and make a submission, visit: [www.aerf.com.au/showcase/calendar.aspx](http://www.aerf.com.au/showcase/calendar.aspx)

