

extract from **DRINK-DRIVING ADVERTISING BRIEF, 2014**

APPENDIX 1

WHO ARE THEY, WHAT DO THEY THINK AND FEEL?

Young drinking drivers are a major part of the alcohol crash picture. Over 40% of all alcohol-related crashes each year involve drunk drivers aged under 24 years. In 2012-13, these young drinking driver crashes injured or killed over 1000 people.

The profile of young drinking drivers in crashes shows the highest-risk group is aged between 19 and 23 years, mostly male (82%) with a high proportion of Maori (30%). Rural youth are over-represented - 40% of young drinking drivers in fatal or serious injury crashes in 2013 came from rural areas (vs. population percentage 23%).

Young drunk drivers mostly injure or kill themselves, but also injure or kill a substantial number of other people each year, particularly their own passengers. In 2012-13, they seriously injured or killed:

- 300 of their own passengers (55 killed)
- 113 occupants of other vehicles (15 killed), and
- 19 pedestrians and cyclists (1 killed).

Drink-driving by young drivers, especially males, is commonplace (around 30% admit to driving while at least slightly intoxicated), accepted ("getting drunk is OK as long as it's not every day" [not necessarily driving]), and dangerous (71 people killed, 413 seriously injured).

Although most of New Zealand's population lives in cities (70%), the majority of fatal or serious injury crashes involving young drunk drivers occur in provincial or rural areas (135 per year, compared to 90 per year in the cities). Because of the higher speeds involved, and the isolated nature of many crashes, crashes in rural areas tend to be of higher severity, involving serious injury or death. Most people who are killed or injured in rural drink-driving crashes are locals, people from nearby towns and rural areas.

INFLUENCES ON YOUNG DRINKING DRIVERS

It's apparent that young people have developed some complacency towards road safety. They are more willing to take a chance with driving after drinking, confident that nothing will go wrong or that the Police won't catch them.

The drinking scene itself is an important anchor for social situations as young people reach their late teens. The tendency is to drink at homes or flats rather than "going out". From homes it is easier to go driving after drinking – taxis are less convenient (not an immediate option) and checkpoints are less likely on suburban or rural roads.

Family influence, which might inhibit excessive drinking (at least for some young people), is not always balanced by the influences of mates and friends who are less likely to be as inhibiting. In other words, if the family of the young drunk driver is supportive of safe driving behaviours, this is not enough to change the behaviour as the influence of social pressure from friends to drink and drive is much more powerful.

At the wider community level, high drinking levels are frequently condoned, and young people will be influenced by such wider community attitudes.

In general, youth are hugely concerned with achieving status within their peer group. Excessive drinking behaviours can be used as a form of competition: "I can hold my drink more than you". Losing status, or 'loss of face' are powerful influencers for youth.

In rural communities, pretty much everyone knows everyone else. The right and need to drive are entrenched in rural life from an early age. Rural drivers tend to believe that because they're driving on open, largely empty roads that they're safe to drink and drive, speed, not wear safety belts, etc. Pubs and sports clubs are important venues not only to drink, but to catch up with mates and share stories.