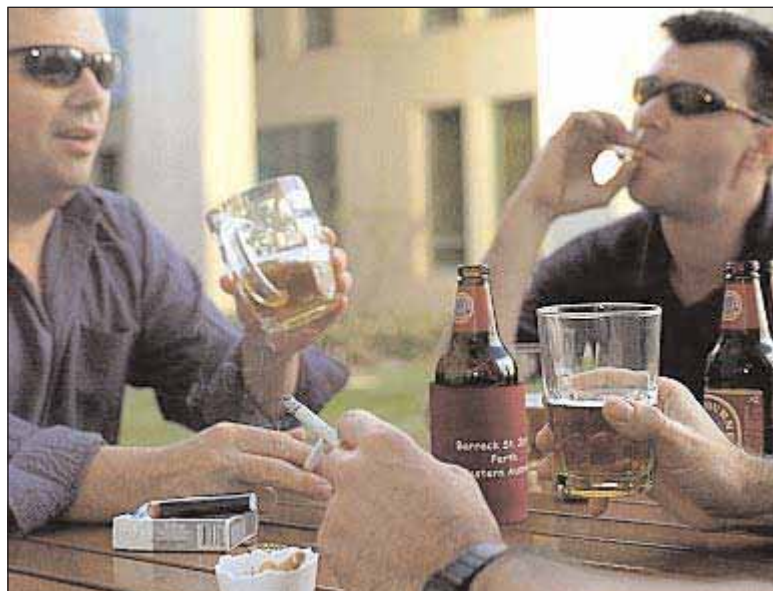


Aussies drinking more than ever: Salvos

Bombarded by media messages, feeling lonely and with more money than self-esteem, Australians are drinking more than ever, the Salvation Army says.



Releasing new figures which show one in four Australians say alcohol has had a negative impact on them or their family, the Salvation Army implored the public to think about how they drank.

And they have asked the government to reduce alcohol advertising.

The figures from a Roy Morgan Research sample survey last month found more than one in four of the 653 Australian adults surveyed said alcohol had had a negative impact on their lives.

More than 20 per cent said they or their family had arguments or threats as a result of drinking and more than 12 per cent said they or their family

had experienced physical fights because of alcohol.

More than 12 per cent also said family drinking had embarrassed or scared children in the family.

Salvation Army drug and alcohol services Victoria coordinator Kathryn Wright said the figures revealed how what was sometimes considered socially acceptable drinking

could still cause problems with families.

"It seems it's quite, almost normal, to become drunk in front of your children or to become drunk at family functions, or to abandon some of your values when you are intoxicated," she said.

Ms Wright urged Australians to review their drinking.

Some could control their problems without help, while others might need low-form intervention, education or brief counselling.

Some people needed "something very drastic", like long-term residential rehabilitation.

David Cuffe, 65, and Glenn Collis, 38, both now non-drinkers, spoke of how their extreme drinking had affected their families.

Mr Collis was barred from seeing his eight-year-old daughter, because he was unable to look after himself, let alone her, while Mr Cuffe made his family's life "hell on earth".

Mr Collis said there was no need for alcohol to be advertised everywhere.

"I didn't notice how much advertising there was until I became sober," he said.

"Now I have to walk around with blinkers on."

The survey found more than 49 per cent wanted alcohol advertising reduced and more

than 21 per cent wanted it banned.

Salvation Army spokesman Brad Halse said alcohol was part of life, but had "got way out of balance", given financial interests in it.

"You'd have to assume in the first place there are some very strong commercial interests from the producers and businesses involved," he said.

"You'd have to assume also there's sadly a strong vested interest from the government in terms of taxes available to it from the alcohol consumption industry. So they're part of the reasons."

He said values, such as concern for others, may not be taught or modelled as strongly as once, leading to people acting dangerously toward themselves and others while binge drinking. Parents were struggling to teach alternatives.

"You can't easily teach your children one thing if you're practising something different."

VERY INTERESTING STUFF

- In the 1400's a law was set forth in England that a man was allowed to beat his wife with a stick no thicker than his thumb. Hence we have 'the rule of thumb'
- Many years ago in Scotland, a new game was invented. It was ruled 'Gentlemen Only...Ladies Forbidden'...and thus the word GOLF entered into the English language.
- The first couple to be shown in bed together on prime time TV were Fred and Wilma Flintstone.
- Every day more money is printed for Monopoly than the U.S. Treasury.
- Men can read smaller print than women can; women can hear better.
- Coca-Cola was originally green.
- It is impossible to lick your elbow.
- The State with the highest percentage of people who walk to work: Alaska
- The cost of raising a medium-size dog to the age of eleven: \$ 16,400
- The average number of people airborne over the U.S. in any given hour: 61,000
- Intelligent people have more zinc and copper in their hair.
- The first novel ever written on a typewriter: Tom Sawyer.
- The San Francisco Cable cars are the only mobile National Monuments.
- Each king in a deck of playing cards represents a great king from history: Spades - King David
Hearts - Charlemagne
Clubs - Alexander, the Great
Diamonds - Julius Caesar
- If a statue in the park of a person on a horse has both front legs in the air, the person died in battle. If the horse has one front leg in the air the person died as a result of wounds received in battle. If the horse has all four legs on the ground, the person died of natural causes.
- Only two people signed the Declaration of Independence on July 4th, John Hancock and Charles Thomson. Most of the rest signed on August 2, but the last signature wasn't added until 5 years later.

windshield wipers, and laser printers all have in common?

- A. All were invented by women.
- Q. What is the only food that doesn't spoil?
A. Honey
- In Shakespeare's time, mattresses were secured on bed frames by ropes.

When you pulled on the ropes the mattress tightened, making the bed firmer to sleep on. Hence the phrase..... 'goodnight, sleep tight.'

- It was the accepted practice in Babylon 4,000 years ago that for a month after the wedding, the bride's father would supply his son-in-law with all the mead he could drink. Mead is a honey beer and because their calendar was lunar based, this period was called the honey month, which we know today as the honeymoon.
- YOU KNOW YOU ARE LIVING IN 2008 when...

1. You accidentally enter your PIN on the microwave.
2. You haven't played solitaire with real cards in years.
3. You have a list of 15 phone numbers to reach your family of three.
4. You e-mail the person who works at the desk next to you.
5. Your reason for not staying in touch with friends and family is that they don't have e-mail addresses.
6. You pull up in your own driveway and use your cell phone to see if anyone is home to help you carry in the groceries.
7. Every commercial on television has a web site at the bottom of the screen
8. Leaving the house without your cell phone, which you didn't even have the first 20 or 30 (or 60) years of your life, is now a cause for panic and you turn around to go and get it.
10. You get up in the morning and go on line before getting your coffee.
11. You start tilting your head sideways to smile)
12. You're reading this and nodding and laughing.
14. You are too busy to notice there was no #9 on this list.
15. You actually scrolled back up to check that there wasn't a #9 on this

Have a good day

Greek tourist body sees rocky 2009 as slowdown hits

ATHENS, Oct 20 (Reuters) - The number of foreign tourists arriving at Greek airports fell 1.2 percent in the first nine months of 2008 and next year is likely to be significantly worse as a global downturn bites, an industry body said on Monday.

Greece's Touristic Research Institute (ITEP) said the number of tourists fell by 4.8 percent in September -- normally a strong month for tourist arrivals -- suggesting that figures for the rest of the year would remain negative.

Tourism accounts for roughly 18 percent of Greece's 240 billion euro economy, and employs a fifth of the workforce.

'Tourism is one of the victims of the financial crisis,' said the ITEP report. 'No-one can predict the duration and intensity of the current crisis, but we can say with certainty 2009 will be a significantly worse year than 2008.'

ITEP said 10.5 million foreign tourists visited Greece between January and September, versus 10.7 million a year earlier. In September, the number of visitors slipped to 1.7 million, versus 1.8 million the previous year.

All of Greece's main tourist destinations showed a decrease in airport arrivals in September, with the worst-hit being the Dodecanese archipelago with a plunge of 7 percent year-on-year.

The Bank of Greece has said that although tourist numbers fell, expenditure had increased by around 5 percent in the first seven months of the year. Economists, however, say this figure is notoriously difficult to estimate.

The conservative government, which faces mounting union protests over its liberal economic reforms, has predicted economic growth of 3.0 percent next year but economists have said this could be overly optimistic.

The government has lowered its 2008 growth forecasts for Greece's tourism- and shipping-reliant economy to 3.4 percent, from 4.0 percent in 2007.