



A P R I L 2 0 0 6

EVALUATION FINDINGS

# Evaluation of the Sexual Offence Awareness Program (SOAP)

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## Introduction

### Background to the Sexual Offence Awareness Program (SOAP)

As part of their social, emotional and personal development, many young people engage in experimental behaviour in a variety of areas. This may include parties, alcohol and drug use, and sexual activity. A lack of experience in new settings and with new activities, including alcohol and drug use, can expose young people to situations where they, or others, can not adequately or appropriately control their own behaviour. Inadvertently, young people can increase their potential to become a victim of crime.

An area of particular concern is young (and often inexperienced) people engaged in parties involving alcohol and drug use, which can increase the risk of sexual assault. This potentially dangerous mix has been highlighted as a concern in relation to the annual "Schoolies Week", when thousands of secondary school students converge on the town of Victor Harbour to celebrate the end of the school year, and for many, the end of Year 12. It is also a concern for any parties, whether in houses, parks, the beach, or any other location where young people may gather, and this is exacerbated where alcohol and/or other drugs are consumed by any attendees.

In response to concerns relating to sexual assaults upon young people, police in the past have provided a range of informal sex offence and prevention sessions on an as-needs and ad-hoc basis within schools and other settings. However, prior to SOAP, no specific lesson plans covering this issue have been developed. In order to raise awareness in young people and to promote safe practices amongst young people in various social situations, particularly parties, SOAP was developed as a school-based program. It involves two lesson plans that can be presented by police with teacher support within secondary schools. The SOAP materials were developed by the South Coast Local Service Area (LSA) Drug Action Team and Community Program Section in consultation with a range of SAPOL staff and with particular assistance from representatives of SHINE SA and Yarrow Place Sexual Assault Service.

## Objectives of SOAP

SOAP aims to:

- Raise awareness and knowledge of young people concerning sexual assault and dangerous situations;
- Encourage young people to plan and prepare their social activities to reduce their exposure to potential acts of sexual assault;
- Encourage young people to take responsibility for their own behaviour and safety and also of others around them at events and parties they attend;
- Advise young people of their rights should they become a victim of a sexual assault; and
- Provide guidance in relation to the range of support services available and what responses can be expected from these services.

Whilst the program can be delivered at any time during a school year, Police have a particular interest in presenting the lessons at schools prior to the Summer holidays when parties are more prevalent, and major events such as Schoolies Week occur.

## The SOAP Trial and Evaluation Methodology

The program, comprising two lessons, was delivered by SAPOL staff at a large southern suburbs school. The school and students cooperated with an evaluation of the project with students requested to complete:

- A survey prior to the first lesson;
- A post-lesson survey and feedback in relation to the first lesson;
- A quick quiz pertaining to knowledge of sexual assault (not in relation to incidents) prior to the second lesson;
- A post-lesson quiz and feedback in relation to the second lesson; and
- A post-intervention survey in relation to all information disseminated from the two lessons several months after the lessons were delivered.

The initial evaluation plan also mentioned surveying some school teachers regarding their view of the materials presented. However, this evaluation component was not undertaken.

The responses to these student surveys, feedback and quiz activities were entered into an SPSS data file for analysis. Where possible, statistical analysis was undertaken, particularly in relation to questions that were identical both pre and post certain lesson activity. Generally, the analysis reports upon the frequencies of students' responses to a range of questions.

Whilst the sample of students (73 providing responses across at least one survey component) is small, the research does provide us with some picture of the attitudes, knowledge and practices of young people in this population regarding safety with respect to party attendance, alcohol and drug use at parties, and sexual assault. Whilst we cannot assume that these findings are reflective of the practices, views and knowledge of young people in other schools in the area or young people in general, the findings have the potential to allow police to further refine and appropriately target SOAP to young people in schools. The findings associated with students' most recent party attendance must be viewed with particular caution as these could be distorted if many students from this one trial school attended the same party.

# Lesson One

## Nature of Lesson One

Lesson One aimed to create a general rapport between the LSA presenter and the students by presenting issues of a general nature that would be familiar to many students. These included safe partying, drink spiking, drinking alcohol, laws relating to alcohol use and first aid. The lesson took the form of a PowerPoint presentation and included interactive components allowing students to discuss and voice their opinions, and to answer questions. Dangers involving sexual assault in party and alcohol/drug consumption settings were referred to at numerous points in the session to increase familiarity with the topic. At the conclusion of the lesson, the presenter gave students a brief summary of the second session dealing with sexual assault and the reporting process.

## Pre-Lesson Survey

### Nature of the Pre-Lesson Survey

The pre-lesson survey aimed to identify the party-related activities of young people. Particular focus was given to questions concerning safety around party attendance, including where the party was held, who the students arrived with, how they travelled to and home from the party, and the extent to which this activity was planned in advance. Further questions sought information concerning the presence and use of alcohol and other drugs at the most recent party attended by students, consumption of alcohol and drugs, and care relating to alcohol and drug use. Only one question was targeted specifically at sexual assault, as this was to be closely addressed as part of Lesson Two and its accompanying survey activity.

### Findings from the Pre-Lesson Survey

#### *Party Attendance and Location*

All but one of the 53 respondents indicated that they had attended a party in the past. Half of the respondents (27 of 53 students, or 51%) indicated that they had attended a party within the previous two weeks, whilst nine students (17%) had attended a party in the last two weeks to a month. Of the remaining students, 10 (19%) had attended a party in the last three months, and six (11%) had attended a party more than six months ago.

The most recent party attended by these students was generally held at a friend's house (45 of 52 responses, or 87%). Several parties were held at reception halls (4 responses, or 8%), whilst only one student indicated attending their last party in a public location, such as a park or a beach. The majority of students (39 of 51 students, or 76%) indicated that the party was typical of the type of parties that they usually attend, whilst 12 students (24%) indicated that the party was not typical.

#### *Knowledge of the party and Attendees*

Approximately half of students were personally invited to the most recent party attended (28 of 52 students, or 54%). A further 16 students (31%) attended with friends who were

invited or with an acquaintance who was invited, whilst several students were invited by their family (2 students) or held a party at their home (2 students). No students indicated that they were not invited by anyone. However, this response option was only indirectly available via an “other” category.

A large proportion of students expected to know most (26 of 51 students, or 51%), or all (14 of 51 students, or 27%) of the attendees at the most recent party they attended. Ten students (20%) expected to know some attendees whilst only one student indicated that they would only know the person they were attending the party with.

Students were asked to indicate which people they informed or had knowledge of their attendance at the party. Students could indicate multiple categories of people informed. Across 53 respondents to this question, 121 responses were provided. Students most commonly informed their parents or family of their attendance (38 responses from 53 students, or 72%), followed by siblings (29 responses, or 55% of all students), a close friend (28 responses, or 53% of all students), a partner (12 responses, or 23% of all students), or another family member (10 responses, or 19% of all students). Only one student indicated that they did not inform anyone of their attendance at the party.

### *Travel Plans to and from the Party*

The majority of students arrived at their most recently attended party with a friend or partner (33 of 52 students, or 63%). Eleven students (21%) indicated that they came to the party on their own, all of whom were driven to the party by parents or family. Two students indicated that they attended the party with people they had only met that particular day or evening.

The majority of students were driven to the last party they attended, particularly by their own parents or family (16 of 52 students, or 31%), a friend or friend’s parents (14 of 52 students, or 27%), or their partner (6 of 52 students, or 12%). Twelve students (23%) indicated that they walked to the most recent party that they attended. Of these 12 students that walked to the party, nine arrived with a friend, family or partner, with only one student walking and also arriving alone and one student walking and arriving with people that they had met that day or evening.

Most students planned their method of travelling home prior to the party (40 of 51 students, or 78%). The remainder did not plan (7 of 51 students, or 14%) or could not remember if they planned a method home in advance (4 of 51 students, or 8%). Most students ultimately travelled home via the planned method (36 of 51 students, or 71%), whilst nine students (18%) did not travel home via the method planned. A further six students (12%) could not recall whether they travelled home via a prior planned method.

### *Alcohol Presence and Consumption at the Party*

Most students indicated that alcohol was present at the most recent party they attended (43 of 52 students, or 83%), with only 8 respondents (15%) indicating that no alcohol was present. Of those students attending parties where alcohol was present, 33 of 43 students (77%) consumed alcohol.

Of those 33 students consuming alcohol, 14 students (42%) indicated that the alcohol was purchased by a friend or partner, nine students (27%) indicated that alcohol was purchased by the party host, six students (18%) indicated that they had purchased the alcohol, whilst three students each obtained alcohol via a friend’s house (9%) or via their parent’s house (9%).

Of those students that consumed alcohol at the most recent party that they had attended, most considered that they did not drink too much alcohol (19 of 32 students, or 59%), whilst

13 students considered that they had consumed too much alcohol (13 of 32 students, or 41%).

Students were asked questions relevant to drink spiking concerning the preparation of their drinks and their attention to their drink. Most students prepared their own drink all of the time (17 of 33 students, or 52%), whilst other students prepared their drink most of the time (7 of 33 students, or 21%) or some of the time (6 of 33 students, or 18%). Three students (9%) indicated that they never prepared their own drinks. It is possible that this question may have caused some confusion for students who did not drink alcohol that required pre-mixing or preparation, such as bottled beer or cider, and UDL mixes.

Most students who drank alcohol at their most recent party indicated that they never left their drink unattended (24 of 33 students, or 73%), whilst eight students (24%) sometimes left their drink unattended. One student suggested that their drink was mostly unattended.

### *Illicit Drug Presence and Consumption at the Party*

Approximately half of the students indicated that, to their knowledge, there were no illicit drugs present at the most recent party they attended (25 of 51 students, or 49%). Twenty-one students (41%) indicated that illicit drugs were present at the party, whilst 5 students (10%) were unsure. Of those students indicating that illicit drugs were present,<sup>1</sup> all 19 mentioned cannabis, whilst one of these students also suggested that trips (Lysergic acid diethylamide) and speed (amphetamine) were present. Of those students attending a party where illicit drugs were present, seven of 21 (33%) indicated that they had consumed an illicit drug at the party.

### *Sexual Offences Known to have Occurred at the Party*

The survey provided students with a brief definition of what a sexual offence may comprise (i.e. touching another person or having sex with a person where that person did not, or was unable to, properly consent). Forty of 51 respondents (78%) were not aware of any sexual offence occurring at the party, whilst a further four students were unsure. Seven students indicated that they were aware of a sexual offence occurring at the party that they had attended. In interpreting this result, it must be remembered that the sample students were from the one school and many students may have attended the same party. As a result many students may know of a particular incident.

## Post-Lesson Survey

### **Nature of the Post-Lesson Survey**

The post-lesson survey essentially aimed to receive student feedback about the useful and less useful aspects of the session. It also aimed to encourage students to think of issues relating to safe practices when attending parties.

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<sup>1</sup> Of the 21 students indicating that illicit drugs were present at the party, two did not indicate which drug(s) were present

## Findings from the Pre-Lesson Survey

### *Improving Safety by Planning*

Students were asked to suggest three things that should be considered in assisting their safety at the next party that they attend. Fifty-six students provided 166 responses in total. The free-form responses provided by students were categorised into measures of improving safety. A summary of these responses is provided in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Safety Considerations in Planning to Attend a Party**

Improving Safety	Frequency	Percent
Planning how to get to and from the party	72	43%
Limiting alcohol/drinking responsibly	22	13%
Knowing who else will be at the party	20	12%
Knowing who you are going with	16	10%
Telling a significant other where you are going	12	7%
Staying with your friends/looking after one another	9	5%
Knowing who will be supervising or responsible at the party	5	3%
Making arrangements to stay the night	4	3%
Buying or purchasing of alcohol	2	1%
First Aid	1	1%
Other	3	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>100</b>

Students were most likely to consider their means of travelling to and from the party. Amongst these 72 responses, students suggested travel to/travel from, and travel to and from the party in relatively even proportions. Other important considerations frequently raised by students concerned alcohol usage, knowing others at the party and who to attend with, and informing family or significant others of their attendance at the party.

### *Safety in Attending Most Recent Party*

Students were asked to consider the extent to which they considered their safety when planning for the party they most recently attended. The majority said that they somewhat considered their safety (25 of 56 students, or 45%), whilst 13 (23%) students stated that they considered their safety a lot. Thirteen students (23%) indicated that they considered their safety only a little, whilst five students (9%) suggested that they did not consider their safety at all in relation to the last party that they attended.

### *Preventing Drink Spiking*

Students were asked to identify two things that they could do to prevent their drink from being spiked. Student responses were categorised and are summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Preventing Drink Spiking

Method to Prevent Drink Spiking	Frequency	Percent
Keeping the drink with you / Watching your drink	62	57%
Buying / Pouring own drinks	36	33%
If drink is unattended, get a new one	6	6%
Give drink to a friend to mind	2	2%
Do not take drinks from others	1	1%
Stay with people that you know	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100</b>

The two most common responses from students were the need to keep the drink on their person and to buy or pour their own drinks.

### *Student Critique of the Lesson*

#### Useful Aspects

When asked to identify what they found to be the most useful aspect of the session, just over one quarter of students suggested that all of the information was useful (15 of 54 students, or 28%). Other aspects of the lesson found most useful by other students included considerations of safety and minimising risks, particularly in relation to planning (15 of 54 students, or 28%), and preventing drink spiking (9 of 54 students, or 17%). Other comments referred to improved knowledge of laws relating to drinking, whilst a more general comment mentioned by two students was that the approach taken in the lesson did not judge young people.

#### Less Useful Aspects

Students provided more comment in relation to the most useful rather than the least useful aspects of the lesson. Ten of 44 respondents to this question (23%) could not identify any aspects of the lesson that were not useful. Some students suggested that they knew most or all of the lesson material (10 of 44 students, or 23%). Of those students criticising a particular aspect of the lesson, the most commonly mentioned criticism was the discussion on the danger of drugs and alcohol (7 of 44 students, or 16%), with several students suggesting they already know of the dangers and do not need to be told not to take drugs. Other aspects referred to as less than useful by two or three students each included the first aid information, legal information, and drink spiking information. It should be noted that some of these features criticised were also identified as very useful by other students.

#### Preparedness to Recommend Lesson to a Friend

The majority of students responding to this question suggested that they would be likely (24 of 56 students, or 43%) or very likely (6 of 56 students, or 11%) to recommend the lesson to their friends if given the opportunity. Many students indicated that they were unsure whether they would recommend the lesson (20 of 56 students, or 36%), whilst few students suggested that they would be either unlikely (2 of 56 students, or 4%) or highly unlikely (4 of 56 students, or 7%) to recommend the lesson. The question did not prompt students to indicate why they would or would not recommend the lesson.

# Lesson Two

## Nature of Lesson Two

Building upon the references to sexual assault mentioned in Lesson One, Lesson Two specifically focused upon sexual assault. Topics addressed included the nature and definition of sexual assault, facts about sexual assault and rape, the reporting process, support agencies, rights of the victim, and impacts upon both the victim and the offender. The lesson took the form of a PowerPoint presentation and included interactive components allowing students to discuss and voice their opinions, and to answer questions. At the conclusion of the lesson, the presenter provided contact details of important agencies mentioned in the presentation and also invited students to speak directly to him/her or their school counsellor regarding any issues or questions that they may not have been comfortable raising in front of their class.

## Pre-Lesson Quiz

### Nature of the Pre-Lesson Quiz

The pre-lesson quiz aimed to elicit student knowledge of what constitutes sexual assault and the law relating to sexual assault. Five questions were asked of students, all of which were repeated in the post-lesson quiz in order to identify any immediate improvements in student knowledge.

### Findings from the Pre-Lesson Quiz

#### The Nature of Sexual Assault

The majority of students were aware that the touching of bare skin was not required for a sexual assault to have taken place (35 of 46 respondents, or 76%). All remaining students considered that physical contact with the skin was required (24%), with no respondents indicating that they were unsure.

All 46 students demonstrated an awareness that both males and females could be victims of sexual assault.

The majority of students (37 of 46 students, or 81%) were also aware that silence does not equate to sexual consent. Eight respondents were unsure (17%), whilst only one student considered that silence did constitute consent.

The majority of students (37 of 46 students, or 81%) were aware that the victim did not need to fight off the attack for there to be a lack of consent to the assault. Only six students (13%) considered that defence or fighting off the attacker was necessary to demonstrate a lack of consent, whilst a further three students were unsure (6%).

#### Reporting of a Sexual Offence

Students were asked whether they could report a sexual offence to police and later change their mind and choose not to proceed with court action. Students were relatively evenly split between whether this was (21 of 46 students, or 46%) or was not possible (19 of 46 students,

or 41%). Six students (13%) indicated that they were not sure whether a matter reported could later be retracted.

## Post-Lesson Quiz

### Nature of the Post-Lesson Quiz

The post-lesson quiz aimed to measure student knowledge of what may constitute sexual assault and the law relating to sexual assault. The same five questions that were asked of students in the pre-lesson quiz were repeated in order to identify any immediate improvements in the students' knowledge.

### Findings from the Post-Lesson Quiz

#### The Nature of Sexual Assault

In providing a direct comparison of results across both the pre and post-Lesson Two quizzes, only those 40 students who completed both quizzes were included in our analyses.<sup>2</sup>

In undertaking a statistical analysis of the students' responses to each question, the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test was used.<sup>3</sup> Across each of five questions presented as part of both the pre and post-lesson quizzes, students had three response options. One response was correct and another incorrect, whilst a response option of unsure was also provided. The inclusion of the "unsure" category had the potential to confound the results of the Wilcoxon test. To overcome this, all unsure responses were categorised as incorrect, to ensure that our analyses were sensitive to students improving from an incorrect to correct response (and vice-versa) and from an unsure (incorrect) to a correct result (and vice-versa). Our analyses with the Wilcoxon test were not sensitive to changes from an incorrect result to a response option of unsure (and vice-versa).

Table 3 summarises the improvement from incorrect responses to correct responses across the 40 students who completed these questions as part of both the pre and post-lesson quizzes. The table also provides information on whether the change is statistically significant according to the Wilcoxon test.

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<sup>2</sup> The pre-lesson quiz was in fact completed by 46 students whilst the post-lesson quiz was completed by 47 students, but only 40 students completed both quizzes.

<sup>3</sup> This test essentially measures the number of sign changes in one direction (i.e. negative sign to positive sign, or in our case, changes from an incorrect answer in the pre-lesson quiz to a correct answer in the post-lesson quiz).

Table 3: Summary of Student Responses to Pre and Post-Lesson Quiz Questions

Questions asked of Students	Pre-Lesson Quiz		Post-Lesson Quiz		Wilcoxon Test Result
	✓	✗	✓	✗	
Does a sexual assault necessarily involve touching the victim's bare flesh?	29	11	33	7	Z = -2.00, p = .046 Significant Change
Who are the victims of sexual assault	40	0	40	0	No change - sum of negative ranks equals sum of positive ranks
Does silence equate to sexual consent?	33	7	39	1	Z = -2.449, p = .014 Significant Change
Does a victim need to physically fight off the perpetrator to demonstrate that they do not consent to having sex?	33	7	37	3	Z = -1.633, p = .102 No Significant Change
If you report a sexual offence to police can you later change your mind and choose not to have it go to court?	18	22	36	4	Z = -4.243, p < .001 Significant Change

When asked whether an offence of sexual assault requires the touching of bare flesh, four of 40 students changed their answer from an incorrect response in the pre-lesson quiz, to a correct response in the post-lesson quiz. This difference between the pre and post lesson knowledge was statistically significant ( $Z = -2.00$ ,  $p = .046$ ).

All 40 students completing both the pre and post-lesson quiz correctly identified that both males and females can be the victims of sexual assault.

When asked whether silence equates to consent to sexual intercourse, six of 40 students changed their answer from an incorrect response in the pre-lesson quiz, to a correct response in the post-lesson quiz. This difference was statistically significant ( $Z = -2.449$ ,  $p = .014$ ).

Improvement in student knowledge was also achieved in relation to whether physical defence or fighting off the perpetrator is necessary for a sexual assault to have occurred. Five students provided a correct answer at the post-lesson quiz having earlier provided an incorrect answer. However, one student reversed their correct answer to an incorrect answer at the post-lesson quiz, which ensured that the overall difference between the pre and post-lesson quiz was not significant.

#### Reporting of a Sexual Offence

The most marked improvement in student knowledge from the pre-lesson to post-lesson quiz occurred in relation to whether a victim who reports a sexual offence to police can later choose not to have the matter proceed to court. Prior to the lesson 22 of the 40 students gave an incorrect answer. Following the lesson, 18 of these 22 students changed their answer to the correct option. This substantial change was significant ( $Z = -4.243$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

#### Knowledge of Sexual Assault Support Services

Students were asked to identify up to three services that provide support to victims of sexual assault. Because this question was not asked as part of the pre-lesson quiz, it is not possible

to identify the extent of knowledge of students prior to the lessons, or whether this knowledge was enhanced as a result of the session.

Students most commonly identified the Police Sexual Offence Unit, Second Story, Shine SA, Kid's Help Line and Yarrow Place.

## Overall Lesson Two Comments

Overall, Lesson Two comments were also provided by students following the quiz questions in the post-lesson survey. An overview is provided below.

### *Student Critique of Lesson Two*

#### Useful Aspects

When asked to identify the most useful aspects of Lesson Two, 46 students provided responses. Most commonly students mentioned that all of the information was useful (20 of 46 students, or 43%). Other useful aspects of the lesson commonly mentioned included the contact numbers provided and avenues of assistance/support available (10 of 46 students, or 22%), and knowledge of the various forms of sexual assault and abuse (11 of 46 students, or 24%). Several students elaborated by showing an enlightenment that sexual assault is not just rape or sexual intercourse.

#### Less Useful Aspects

When asked about the less useful aspects of the lesson, fewer students provided responses. The majority of the 36 respondents suggested that everything in the lesson was useful (20 of 36 students, or 56%). This is substantially higher than the 10 of 44 respondents (23%) who suggested that everything was useful in the first lesson. Only five of 36 respondents (14%) indicated that some or all of the material was already known, compared to 10 of 44 respondents (23%) indicating that material from Lesson One was partly or largely known.

It would seem that Lesson Two contained material that was less well known to students and, as a result, they found the information more useful compared to the information presented in Lesson One. This finding does not necessarily reflect on a lack of relevance of Lesson One, as the presenter intended to present material that was more familiar in order to develop rapport with the students prior to dealing with a subject matter (sexual assault) in Lesson Two that may be confronting for some students to discuss.

#### Preparedness to Recommend Lesson to a Friend

The majority of students responding to this question suggested that, if given the opportunity, they would be likely (18 of 47 students, or 38%) or very likely (13 of 47 students, or 28%) to recommend the session to their friends. Of the remainder, most were unsure whether they would recommend the session (12 of 47 students, or 26%), whilst few suggested that they would be either unlikely or highly unlikely (4 of 47 students, or 9%) to recommend the session.

The preparedness to recommend Lesson Two to a friend is similar to the level found in the Post-Lesson One Survey with respect to Lesson One. The main difference is in those students who would be very likely to recommend Lesson Two (28%) as opposed to Lesson One (11%).

# Post Intervention Survey

## Nature of the Post-Intervention Survey

The Post-Intervention Survey was designed to replicate many questions contained in the Pre-Lesson One Survey. The intention was to identify improvements in knowledge, and changes in attitudes and behaviour by comparing student responses prior to attending the two lessons and following the Summer interval which, for many students would include a range of party activities.

However, only nine students completed the Post-Intervention Survey. Moreover, due to students incorrectly filling in a coded identity (for linking pre and post survey responses to the one respondent), only five of these students could be linked to their earlier survey and quiz responses. As such, the analysis provided of the Post-Intervention Survey is limited to a brief reporting of frequencies of responses across the nine respondents, rather than any detailed comparison with the findings of previous survey and quiz activity. Only frequencies that may be of some interest are reported.

## Findings from the Post-Intervention Survey

### Party Attendance, Transport, and Alcohol Consumption

As already stated, the findings here are based only upon nine students that completed the Post-Intervention Survey. As such, even findings of potential interest must be treated with extreme caution. All nine students completing the survey had attended a party since attending the SOAP classes. All but one of these students informed their parents of their attendance at the party. Only three of the eight students who responded to this particular question indicated that they had planned how they would travel home, compared to 40 of 51 students prior to SOAP. Six of the eight students drank alcohol at the party and all said that they consumed too much alcohol. This is compared to only 13 of 32 students who indicated that they consumed too much alcohol at the last party attended prior to the SOAP lessons.

### Knowledge of Sexual Assault

The questions relating to the nature of sexual assault that were asked of students in the pre and post-Lesson Two quiz were again presented to students. Whilst the small group of nine students cannot be taken to be representative of all students who completed the earlier surveys associated with the evaluation, the results suggest a lack of retention of knowledge in some students.

The nine students showed good knowledge in that sexual assault did not require the touching of bare flesh (eight of nine students correct) and that both males and females can be victims of sexual assault (all nine students correct). If the response option of unsure is categorised to incorrect, as was done for earlier analyses, only four of eight students correctly identified that silence cannot be equated to sexual consent. This compares unfavourably with the 39 of 40 students that identified the correct response in the Post-Lesson Two Quiz. Six of eight students were able to correctly identify that a victim does not need to fight the perpetrator in order to demonstrate their lack of consent, which compares unfavourably with the 37 of 40 students who correctly identified this in the Post-Lesson Two Quiz. Finally, only three of nine students were able to correctly identify that a victim can report a sexual assault to police

and later choose to not proceed with court action. Following Lesson Two, 36 of 40 students were able to correctly identify this.

This decline in performance on some questions may reflect students' superior recall immediately following Lesson Two. However, as stated earlier, the relevance of these findings (as a result of sample issues) must be treated cautiously.

## **Discussion of the SOAP Lessons with other People**

Students were asked whether they had discussed any of the issues raised in the SOAP lessons with other people, and if so, who. All nine students indicated that they had not discussed any issues raised by the SOAP lessons, nor had any of the nine students used, or had the need to use, the information either personally or to provide advice to another person.

## **Influence of SOAP**

### **Influence upon Understanding**

Six of nine students believed that SOAP had increased their understanding of sexual offence indicators, whilst the remaining three students felt that SOAP had not increased their understanding. Six of nine students also believed that SOAP had increased their understanding of safe drinking practices.

Seven of nine students each agreed that SOAP had increased their understanding of safe practices when attending a party and their understanding of what is involved in reporting sexual offences. Two students believed that their understanding had not been enhanced in each of these areas.

### **Influence upon Behaviour**

Students were asked whether the SOAP lessons had influenced them to behave differently or would influence them to behave differently in certain situations. The "double-barrelled" nature of this question confuses whether the students' answers represent an actual behaviour change or only a potential behaviour change if the opportunity arises. Only three of nine students suggested that SOAP had influenced (or would influence) their planning activities in relation to travel to and from parties.

Four of nine students indicated that SOAP had influenced or would influence their drinking and drug taking practices. Six of nine students each indicated that SOAP had influenced or would influence their behaviour in being able to identify sexual offences and in their ability to report sexual offences.

### **Influence upon Confidence in Dealing with Situations**

Students were asked to rate their confidence (ranging from not at all confident, through slightly confident, quite confident and very confident) according to a series of sexual offence related questions. No students expressed a lack of confidence in identifying a sexual offence, with most students either quite confident or very confident in this area. With respect to reporting a sexual offence, eight of nine students were quite confident or very confident in being able to do this, with one student not at all confident.

When asked to recognise situations that might lead to a sexual offence involving themselves or someone else, all nine students ranged between slightly and very confident, with no student expressing no confidence at all.

# Synthesis of Findings and Future Considerations

## Limitations in Interpreting Findings

Prior to outlining the main findings, key learnings and future considerations deriving from the evaluation of SOAP, it is prudent to provide some mention of the constraints and limitations of the data collected so that necessary caution is applied in any interpretation.

The most fundamental constraint is the small and potentially unrepresentative sample of students, all of which came from the one school. The difficulty in obtaining responses from the same set of students across each survey component was also a challenge, which was particularly evident with the very small number of responses obtained in the post-intervention survey.

## Main Findings

In presenting the main findings of the SOAP evaluation, it should be stressed that these can not be generalised beyond the sample analysed.

With respect to party activity, it appeared that the majority of students:

- had attended a party in the last month;
- were personally invited to the party or attended with friends who were invited;
- informed their parents or another family member of their attendance;
- were driven to the party by their parents or the parents of a friend, and arrived at the party with other friends or a partner; and
- planned their method of travelling home prior to attending the party and ultimately travelled home via their pre-arranged method.

With respect to alcohol and drug use at the most recent party attended, the majority of students indicated that:

- alcohol but not illicit drugs was present at the party'
- where alcohol was present at the party, they were likely to have drunk alcohol, but where illicit drugs were present, they were less likely to have consumed these;
- they generally prepared their own drinks and did not leave drinks unattended, but some students still adopted very risky practices that relied on trusting others.

As a whole, it was clear that most students were adopting safe practices in relation to their partying activity, but that areas for improvement existed.

Student knowledge of sexual offences was tested as part of the pre and post-Lesson Two Quiz. Students showed significant improvements in knowledge concerning the following questions:

- Does a sexual assault necessarily involve touching the victim's bare flesh?
- Does silence equate to sexual consent?
- If you report a sexual offence to police can you later change your mind and choose not to have it go to court?

In the small sample of students completing the Post Intervention Survey, retention of these knowledge gains many not have been maintained.

Students were generally highly satisfied with the material presented as part of the lessons. However, students did indicate that Lesson Two contained more useful information and less material that they already knew than compared to Lesson One.

## Key Learnings from the Evaluation and Future Considerations

### Safe Practices in Relation to Party Attendances

As a whole, it was clear that most students adopted safe practices in relation to party attendance. This was particularly the case in relation to accompaniment to the party, travel to and from the party, and informing others of their attendance. Less safe practices were undertaken in relation to the consumption of alcohol, and care and attendance with drinks at parties. This would appear to be an area where improvement in student behaviour can be targeted.

### Knowledge Improvements in relation to Sexual Offences

Of the five sexual offence questions asked of students in both the pre and post Lesson Two Quiz, students showed a significant improvement in three of four questions (a fifth question was answered correctly by all students on both occasions). Clearly the lesson improved at least the short term knowledge of students. Whilst only a small selection of students completed the Post Intervention Survey, the results indicated a potential lack of retention of this knowledge. Consideration should be given to methods that assist students to retain knowledge from the lessons. Possible approaches may include a follow-up visit by the SAPOL presenter, the provision of a lesson plan for teachers to conduct without SAPOL assistance, or follow-up activities associated with the visit.

### Lesson Content

Students found that Lesson Two was more relevant and contained more new information than the material presented in Lesson One. The main premise for Lesson One was to develop rapport with students prior to addressing more sensitive issues. If it is considered that the more familiar material of Lesson One is essential to develop this rapport between the presenter and students, this lesson could be maintained, but consideration may be given to the potential streamlining of Lesson One. Having said this, the lessons must be amenable to adapting to changing circumstances over time, the preferences of the individuals involved (i.e. SAPOL presenters and classroom teachers), issues pertinent to the schools and issues

pertinent to students. Also necessary for consideration are the resources required of SAPOL, including SAPOL officer time in relation to the delivery of the program.

## **The Nature of the Evaluation**

The evaluation was constrained by the use of a sample of students derived from just one school. The efforts to evaluate at both pre and post-lesson stages and post-intervention were appropriate, but small numbers of participants in the Post Intervention Survey limited the usefulness of this data and its interpretation.

Whilst it is acknowledged that future detailed evaluation may be difficult due to time and funding issues, incorporating some form of evaluation and monitoring into the delivery of the program is likely to be worthwhile. Such monitoring could potentially include the use of survey materials already developed for this evaluation. The administration of such surveys could be arranged with the teacher and administered via the presenter or teacher with minimal extra resources. The data entry and interpretation of such data would require additional resources. If the program is delivered across multiple schools, a more representative sample of young people could be gathered for the purposes of evaluation.