

Substance
Misuse
Limestone
Coast



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DATA FROM PLANET YOUTH TRIAL REVEALED

Detailed insight into drug and alcohol use risk factors among Mount Gambier’s next generation will be revealed at a Planet Youth community information session at City Hall this month.

Mount Gambier is one of five cities in Australia to participate in the pioneering early intervention program, introduced in Iceland in 1998, which has seen youth drug and alcohol use rates drop to among the lowest in Europe.

Around 270 Year-10 students from four schools in the Grant and Mount Gambier council areas participated in an online survey, which saw students asked a range of questions, including drug and alcohol use, time spent outside the home and participation in outside activities and sports.

Substance Misuse Limestone Coast (SMLC) Project Officer Sophie Bouchier encouraged interested community members to come along to the session and hear the survey results for themselves.

“The Planet Youth team from Iceland’s Reykjavik University will be managing the session and talking about the success of the program and announcing our local survey results,” she said.

“These will be incredibly informative and deliver some insight into the mindset of adolescent substance misuse and the factors that may encourage it.”

A closed workshop for stakeholders, including schools, councils and relevant bodies, will also be held in the afternoon.

“There, they will be able to survey the data generated and help guide a blueprint to identify where the gaps are and where efforts and resources can be best directed,” Ms Bouchier said.

Planet Youth has now been adopted in 20 countries, including Ireland, Chile, Spain, France, Italy, Russia, Sweden and Norway.

The Limestone Coast region was selected for the trial by the Alcohol and Drug Foundation because of the ongoing proactive work being undertaken by SMLC, said Ms Bouchier.

“This trial is not happening because Mount Gambier has any bigger problem than any other regional area. Our region is no different from any other region, when it comes to substance misuse,” she said.

“We all need help in better understanding the problem of alcohol and drug use among young people and this is the first step towards a cohesive all-community approach.”

The Planet Youth community workshops will be held at Mount Gambier City Hall on 26 February. Register via Eventbrite at <https://bit.ly/2S3AV9u>

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