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Development of media in the spotlight: A school-based alcohol media literacy program

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Abstract

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DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIA IN THE SPOTLIGHT: A SCHOOL-BASED ALCOHOL MEDIA LITERACY PROGRAM

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Issues: Alcohol media literacy (ML) is an emerging field that aims to address the link between exposure to alcohol advertising and subsequent expectancies and behaviours. The design, rigour and results of alcohol ML programs vary considerably, resulting in a number of unanswered questions about the effectiveness of this approach.

Approach: To provide insight into some of these questions, a systematic literature review of published alcohol ML studies was conducted.

Key Findings: Based on a critical synthesis of nine interventions (published in the period 1997 to May 2014), our findings provide a comprehensive understanding of the descriptive, methodological and outcome characteristics of this small body of significant research. This presentation will outline key considerations for the development of future ML programs based on findings from the review.

Implications: The review highlighted the need to employ an interactive approach, ensure implementation fidelity, conduct interventions in a naturalistic school setting, maintain the relevance of the program in a rapidly changing society, account for gender differences when designing the program, achieve program relevance for an international audience, consider a more holistic approach to program evaluation and include follow-up and longitudinal data.

Conclusion: This review has identified key considerations for the future planning and development of ML programs to address young people's alcohol related cognitions, attitudes and behavioural intentions. The small pool of studies from which this review draws highlights the emerging nature of this research area and the need for more rigorous evaluations of programs to be conducted.