

Keeping up with the times- health research in WA schools

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Vision: Health
Promotion
embedded in the
ethos of Western
Australian schools



30 Years!



Strategy: advocacy
for Health
Promoting Schools
Framework



What was happening in 1989?

- Berlin Wall came down
- Pro-democracy rallies in Tiananmen Square
- Galileo spacecraft left for Jupiter
- The Hawke government ended free university education (introduced HECS)
- The World Wide Web was invented
- West Coast Eagles played their 3rd season
- First episode of The Simpsons
- 43c to post a letter





Changes since 1989 -Technology!

- Personal computers of increasing power and memory, decreasing size
- Email communication
- Computers in schools
- Internet access
- Social media
- Texting
- Phones with cameras



Influenced

- Teaching and learning about health issues
- How individuals, schools and communities interact
- The way we conduct health research in schools



Changes - approaches to health in schools

- Increased focus on mental emotional and social health, as well as physical health
- Harm minimization approaches to alcohol and other drug education
- Frameworks approach to Well-being
- Social, emotional and physical health linked to academic outcomes





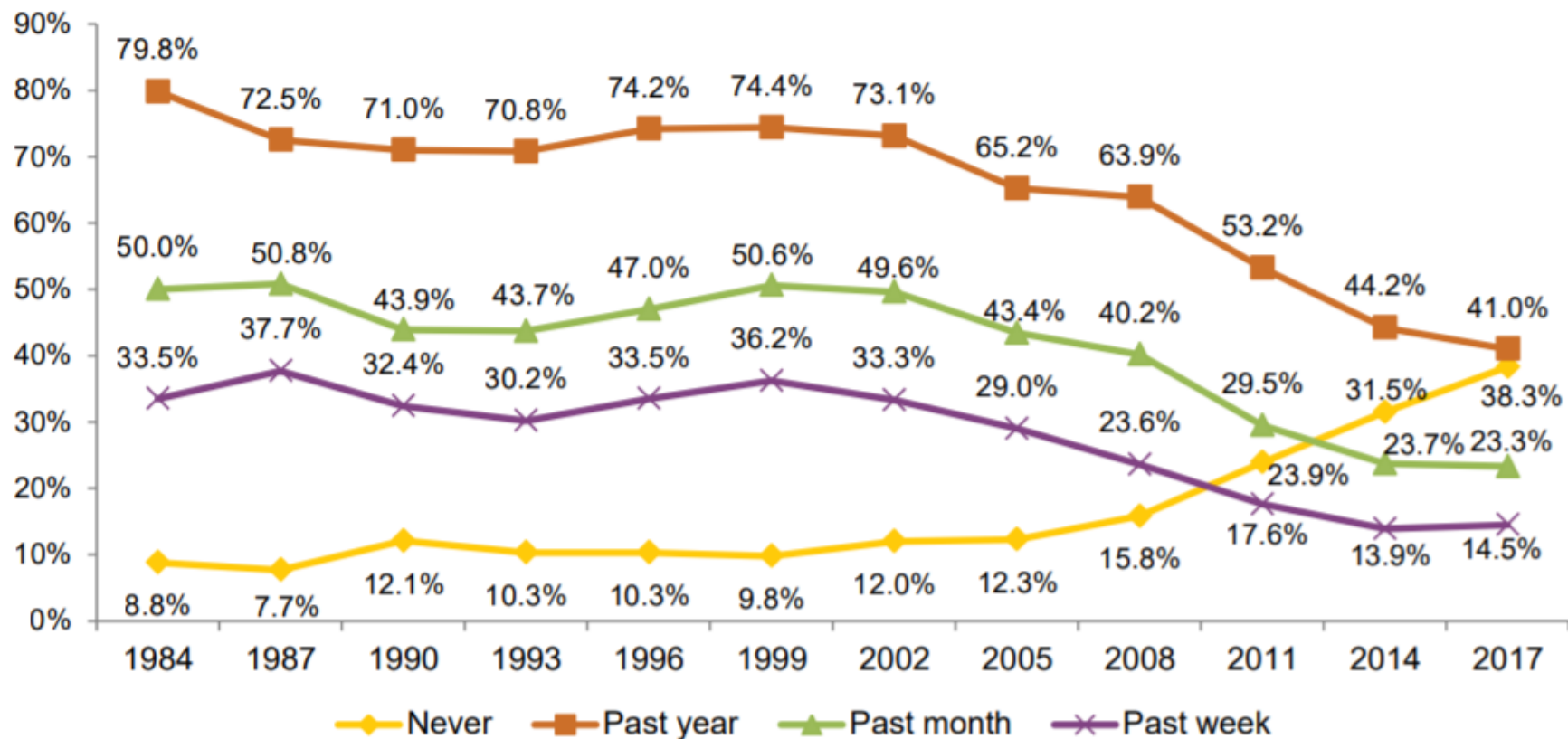
Alcohol and young people

- Earlier and heavier consumption increases young people's risks of alcohol related harms



Young People's alcohol use in WA¹

Figure 1. Prevalence and recency of alcohol use for students aged 12 to 17 years, 1984 to 2017.

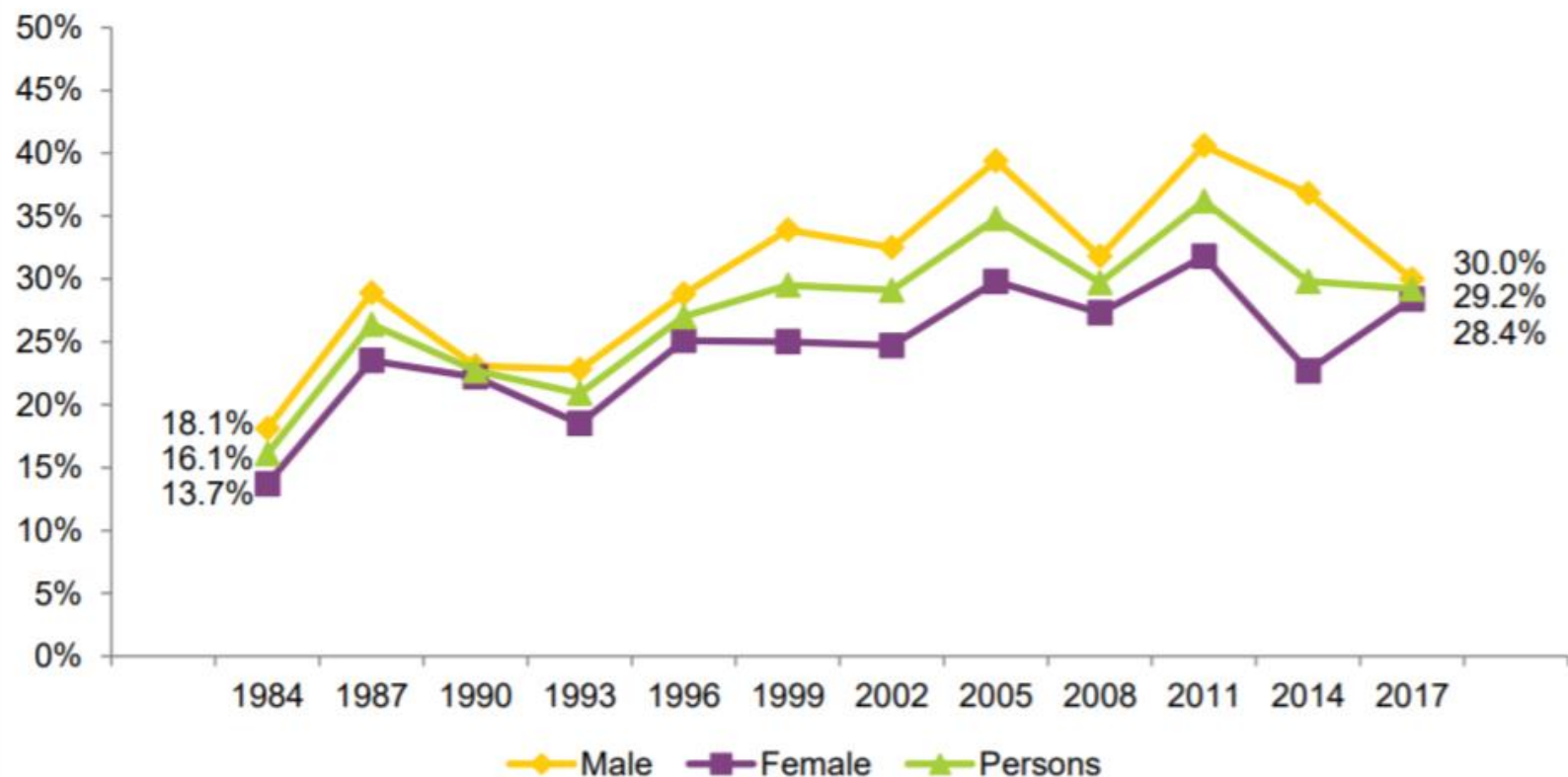


**Please note that 1984 – 2014 figures published in this bulletin may be slightly different to previous years' bulletins as the data has been re-analysed to exclude surveys that are incomplete or have incorrect answers.*

Source: ¹ Mental Health Commission. 2017. Alcohol Trends in Western Australia: Australian School Students Alcohol and Drug Survey. <https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/media/2672/2017-assad-alcohol-bulletin.pdf>

Young People's alcohol use in WA¹

Figure 4. Trends in single occasion risky drinking for students who drank in the past week by gender, 12 to 17 years, 1984 to 2017.



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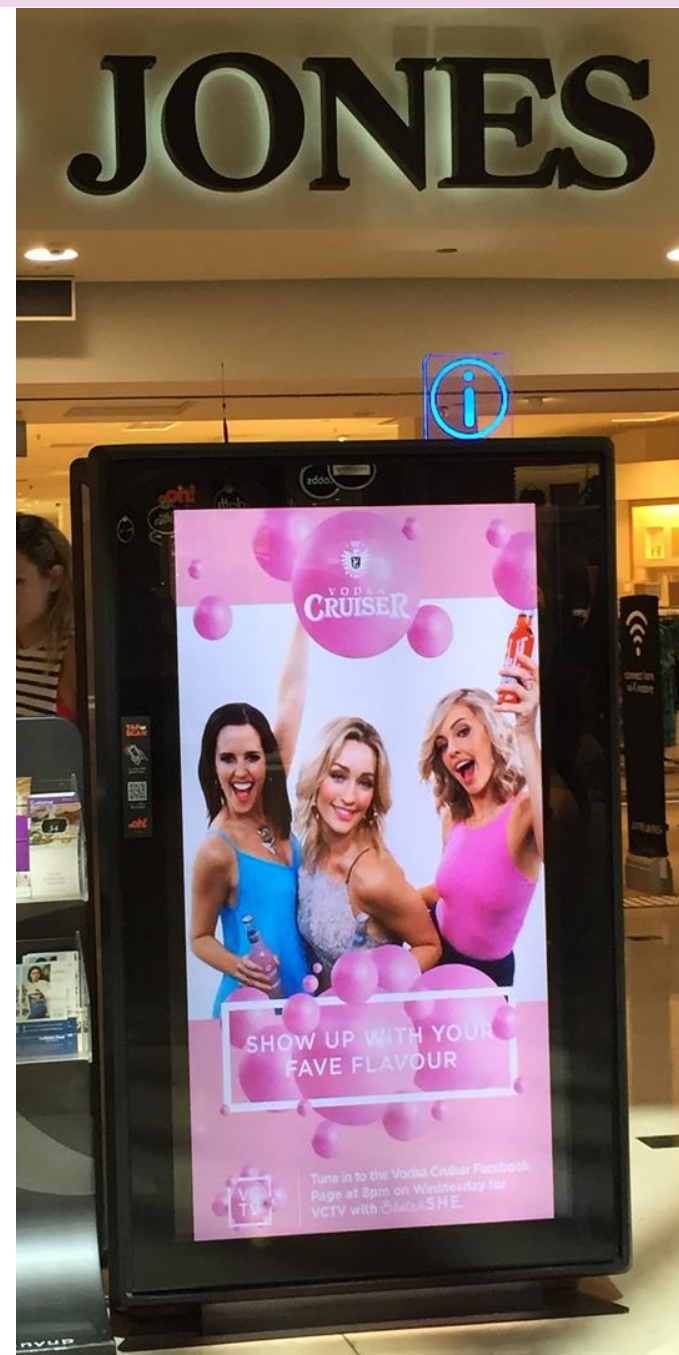
Young People's alcohol use in WA¹

- Most students usually drink premixed spirits (39.1%), ordinary beer (35.8%) and spirits (33.9%)
- One in three students sourced alcohol from **friends** aged 18+ years (33.6%) and one quarter from **parents** (22.7%)

Source: ¹ Mental Health Commission. 2017. Alcohol Trends in Western Australia: Australian School Students Alcohol and Drug Survey.
<https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/media/2672/2017-assad-alcohol-bulletin.pdf>



Young people's
exposure to
alcohol
advertising is
frequent



Even on school buses



...but, change is possible



Public Transport
Authority

About us

Our services

Our system

Projects

NEWS > MEDIA STATEMENTS

Media statements

Friday, June 29, 2018 / Categories: PTA News

End in sight for alcohol advertising on public transport

Alcohol advertising is set to start disappearing from public transport, in line with a McGowan Government election commitment.

The changes will be phased in over this term of government, beginning with rail and digital billboard advertising, which is now in effect.

Alcohol advertising on train infrastructure has now stopped, while it will be phased out from buses in March 2019.

The changes will be phased in as agreed between the Public Transport Authority (PTA) and APN Outdoor, which holds two existing contracts covering the sale of advertising space on buses, trains and related infrastructure. Both



Alcohol prevention programs in schools

- Universal school-based alcohol prevention programs can effectively reduce alcohol and other drug use ¹

¹Teeson, M., et.al. Drug & Alc. Rev., 2012 31; 731–736.



Parent Engagement – Why its Important

- Programs which combine both student and parent components have demonstrated positive effects on adolescent alcohol & other drug use.
- Parents remain a key influence on adolescents' alcohol-related attitudes and behaviours, even into young adulthood.
- The development of positive social norms.
- Support for classroom interventions and school policies



Research Supporting parents to delay and reduce adolescent alcohol use

The Role of Schools



Supporting Parents to Support Youth



Supporting Family Conversations





Study one: The role of schools

- To explore the feasibility of delivering intervention for parents through schools
- Interviews with:
 - Community stakeholders (n=11)
 - School staff members (n=13)
 - Parents of 12-16 year olds (n=28)



The Role of Schools Study

Results

- Schools
 - Saw the value in providing information for parents on alcohol and adolescents
 - Hindered by a lack of time & resources
 - Link parents with external resources but not run programs themselves
- Parents
 - Not the school's responsibility – but it would be useful to receive info from schools
- Stakeholders
 - Both parents and schools indicated a need for alcohol information



Study 2: Supporting Parents to Support Youth

Students and Parents

- Sequential mixed-methods design over 18 months.
- Online cross-sectional surveys n=823
- Year 7, Year 10 and Year 12 students non-government schools (n=5)
- 298 parents of these students
- Focus groups and interviews (n=41 parents)



SUPPORTING PARENTS
TO SUPPORT YOUTH





Supporting Parents to Support Youth intervention recommendations



1. Content should reflect the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Alcohol Guidelines¹ for Young People.
2. Focus on adolescents' health and educational outcomes, rather than on improving parenting. Empower parents.
3. Practical examples and demonstrations of effective strategies for parents. A range of brief, simple, practical age-appropriate ideas.

¹ <https://nhmrc.gov.au/health-advice/alcohol>

Study 3: Supporting parents to delay and reduce adolescent alcohol use


- Intervention group: Alcohol & cybersafety (13 schools)
- Comparison group: Cybersafety (13 schools)
- Intervention:
 - Parent-child event facilitated by SDERA
 - Online & hard copy parent resources (website and tip sheet)
 - 4 x teacher-led SDERA classroom lessons on alcohol
 - Pre-post parent surveys
 - Trial being conducted in 2019



Objectives of the SFC project



- Increase number of Year 7 parents who set clear **rules & expectations** around alcohol and digital technology use
- Increase parent-child **communication**
- Increase parent **self-efficacy**
- Increase number of parents who **do not supply** alcohol to their children / take positive steps to mediate their child's use of digital technology



Why alcohol and cybersafety?

- Year 7 is a transition year for children
- At 13, children are able to use social media platforms, and cybersafety becomes more of a concern for parents.
- Alcohol can also start to be offered in their environment – from parents (sips), friends and others
- Use of alcohol and cyber behaviours are also linked, e.g., sharing images and bullying



FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

Every Child. Everywhere. feels Safe. Prevent Bullying in your school.

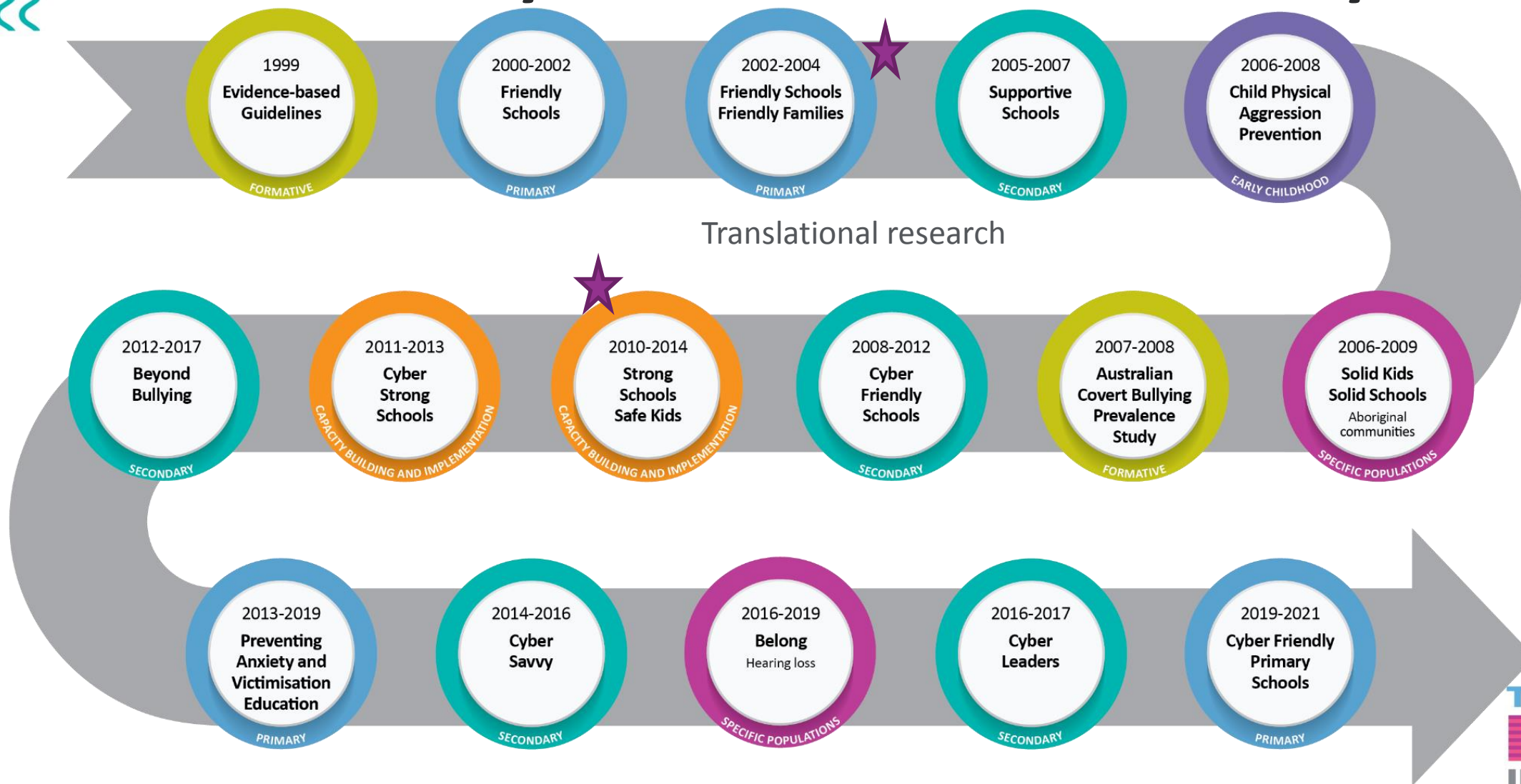



Friendly Schools

Friendly Schools is a multi-component, universal social and emotional skills development and bullying prevention resource

- uses a whole-school system-based approach
- Policy, practice and professional development

Friendly Schools Research Journey





Partnerships are key to successful implementation and sustainability !



Partnerships are Key

- Intervention program delivered by SDERA
- Exploring sustainability beyond life of research project
- Links to existing CHAT schools
- Regional consultants to extend program reach in WA
- Existing source of online support for parents/schools





Partnerships are key





Here's to the next 30 years...

*Continuity gives us roots;
change gives us branches,
letting us stretch and grow
and reach new heights.*

Pauline R. Kezer (U.S. Politician and teacher)

