

What does 'having a drink' mean to the average Aussie?

October 7 2016, by Robyn Mills

Drinking alcohol is seen as part of the national culture, but what is the real significance of "having a drink" for the average middle-aged Australian?

New research being conducted at the University of Adelaide is looking to fill a gap in research about drinking in Australia, by hearing first hand from middle-aged social drinkers and their [social groups](#).

"There is a significant lack of knowledge about drinking in Australia as it relates to middle-aged people who just like to have a drink," says PhD student Emma Muhlack from the University of Adelaide's School of Public Health.

"We know a lot about young drinkers, we know a lot about people who are addicted to alcohol, but for a country that seems to place value on social drinking, the experiences of this group of people have largely gone unresearched."

Because drinking is a social activity, Mrs Muhlack is organising [focus groups](#) of middle-aged people who already know each other, and who have a drink together.

"By speaking with groups, we're hoping to get a much clearer picture of the social interaction that occurs for middle-aged drinkers, and the value they place on drinking as part of that activity," she says.

"We're also hoping to gain an understanding of what drinking choices they make, the reasons for doing so, and what influences their decision-making as a social group.

"Our ultimate aim is to have more information about social drinking that will help to inform government policies in areas such as drinking and health."

This project aims to talk with people aged between 40-65 years old who drink alcohol together socially, such as friendship groups, sports teams, and community groups.

More information: To take part in the study, please call Emma Muhlack on 08 8313 1329 or email: emma.muhlack@adelaide.edu.au

Provided by University of Adelaide

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