



Media Statement

24 August 2011

PARTY changes 5000 lives

Mazenod College student Ben Whitfed says his life changed forever when he stood by the hospital bed of a footballer whose life had been shattered by a car crash.

The 15 year old from Lesmurdie, said he would never be the same again after attending Royal Perth Hospital's PARTY (Preventing Alcohol Related Trauma in Youth) program – he would certainly stop and think the next time anyone encouraged him to do something risky.

He said it was thought provoking to see patients.

“I can really relate to someone like that because I play football too and it opened my eyes to how much I have and that it could all be taken away from me,” Ben said.

“Coming to PARTY helps your decision making and shows you that one decision can change your whole life.”

The program has just had its 5000th participants through its doors since it started running five years ago with an overwhelming 85 per cent of participants said that “everyone” should attend the program.

The educational intervention program shows young people the effect that risk-taking behaviour such as drunkenness has on their brains, and the ways in which accidents impact people's bodies, their whole lives, and even the lives of others.

Visiting the Emergency Department, and the Intensive Care and Trauma Units, participants meet with current and past patients whose lives have been devastated by injury.

State Trauma Director Sudhakar Rao said Royal Perth Hospital started the program because data from Canada, where it was created, showed that participants were later found to have less involvement in road traffic offences such as speeding and seat belt offences.

“Participants give feedback at the beginning and the end of the day, and there is a huge difference in their attitude to risk taking behaviour after participating,” he said.

“This is their response straight after the event, but we are now starting to analyse the long term effect on participants from past years.

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Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**
South Metropolitan Area Health Service



**Royal Perth
Hospital**

“Preliminary data shows us that PARTY is indeed effective in changing their behaviour in the long-term.”

Royal Perth Hospital was the first hospital in Australia to run the program, and was even instrumental in the establishment of Europe’s first PARTY program in Cologne,

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