



Framing and understanding what will address harms from others' drinking

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**VAADA Conference 2025: From Challenges to Solutions –
Responding to a Changing World
Grand Hyatt, Melbourne**

13-14th February 2025

Acknowledgment of Country

- I acknowledge that we are meeting on the unceded lands of the Wurrundjeri Woi Wurrung people and acknowledge them as the Traditional Owners. We pay our respects to the custodians of these lands, to First Nations Elders, past, present, and emerging, especially those who may be here today.

**NATIONAL 2021 NAIDOC WEEK POSTER:
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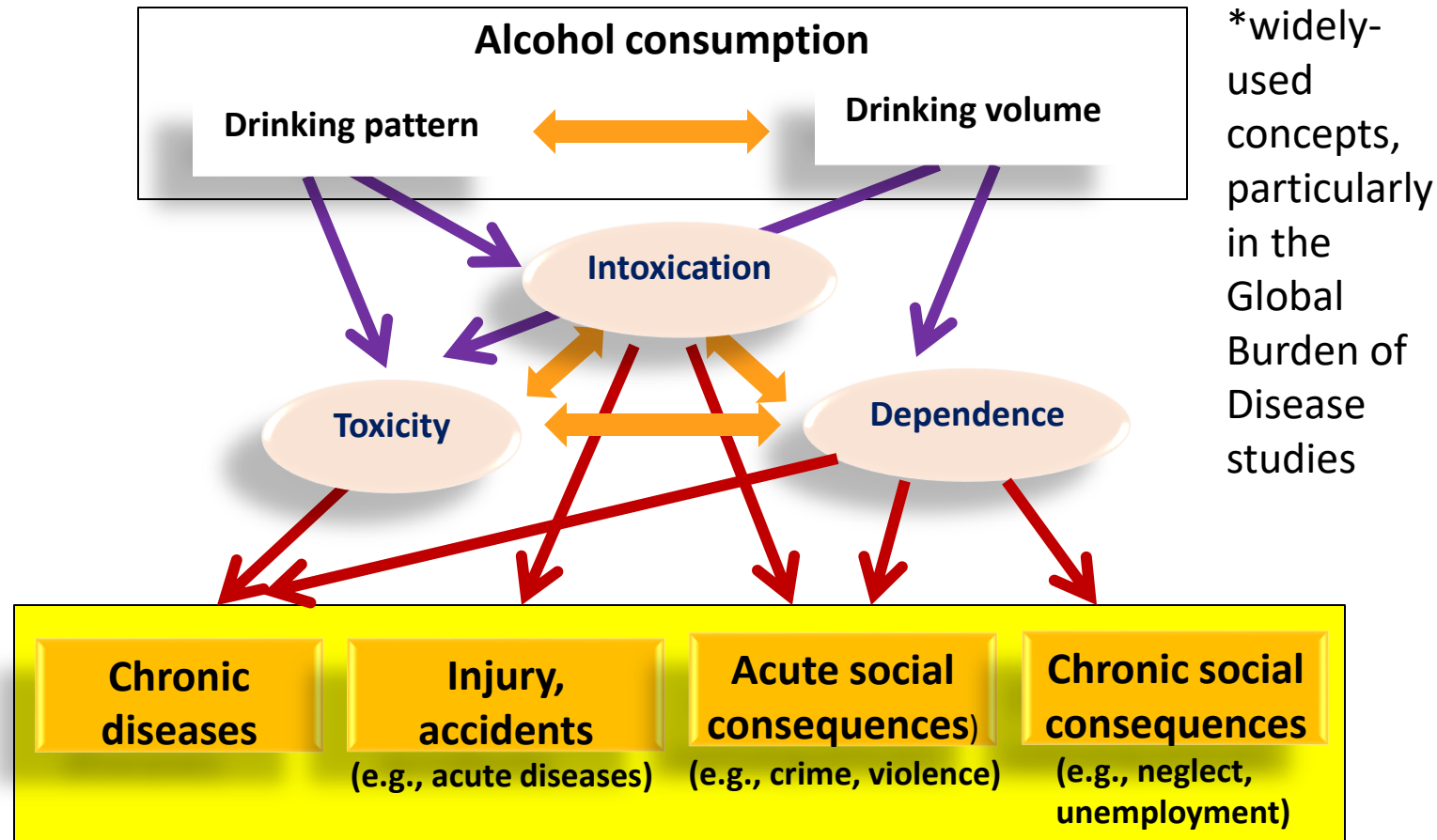


Aims

- To describe existing treatment, psycho-social interventions and policy options for those affected by others' drinking.
- To develop a framework that highlights the concerns of those affected and outlines potential options to reduce and prevent alcohol's harm to others.
- To additionally focus on harms to women and children from men's drinking.



Conceptual model of alcohol-related consequences*



Rehm, Room, Graham, Monteiro, Gmel, & Sempos. (2003). The relationship of average volume of alcohol consumption and patterns of drinking to burden of disease: an overview. *Addiction*, 98(9), 1209-1228.

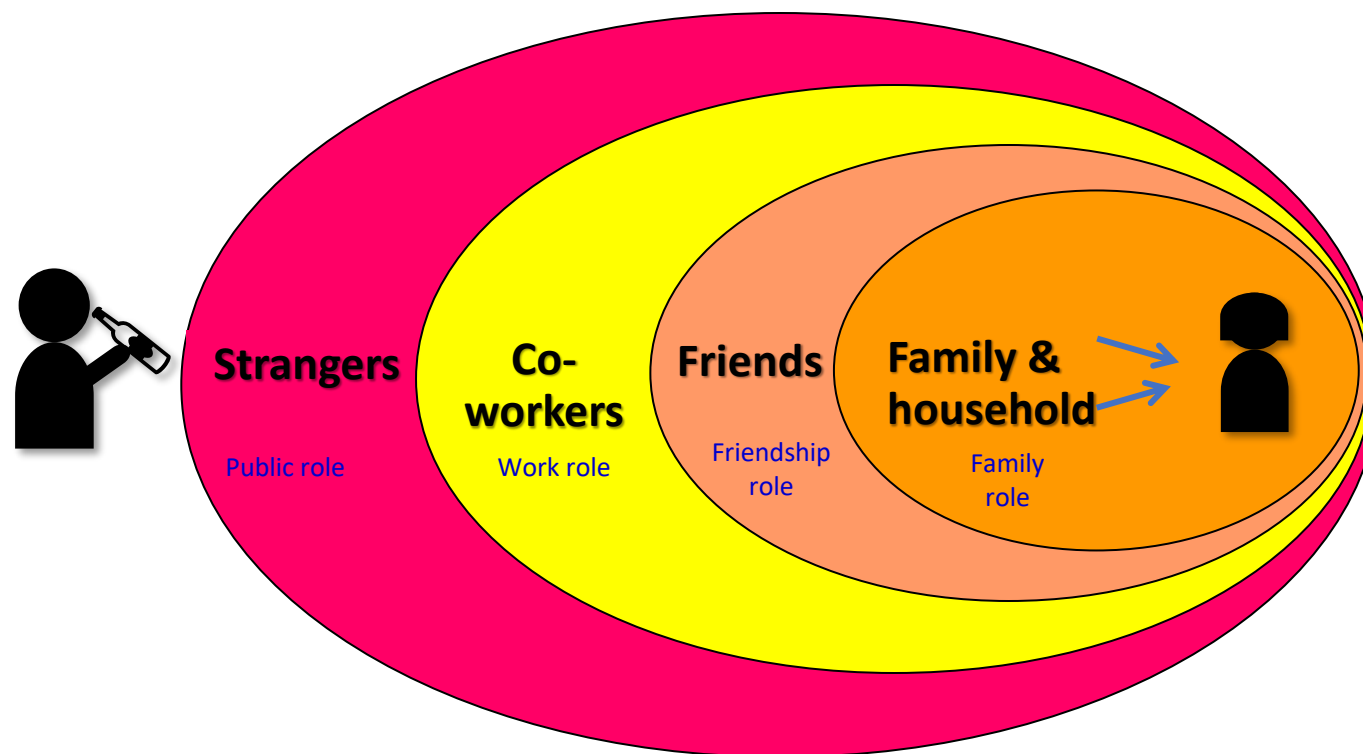
Defining alcohol's harm to others (AHTO)

Alcohol's harm to others can be defined as the adverse impacts from alcohol on individuals from others' drinking (beyond that which occurs to the person drinking).

The effects are experienced by many people across Australia and the world and can be as described by those with lived experience and in surveys, agency records, and via qualitative interviews.

Room, R., Ferris, J., Laslett, A.-M., Livingston, M., Mugavin, J., & Wilkinson, C. (2010). The Drinker's Effect on the Social Environment: A Conceptual Framework for Studying Alcohol's Harm to Others. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 7(4), 1855-1871. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph7041855>

Social environment of people drinking: types of relationships & social roles



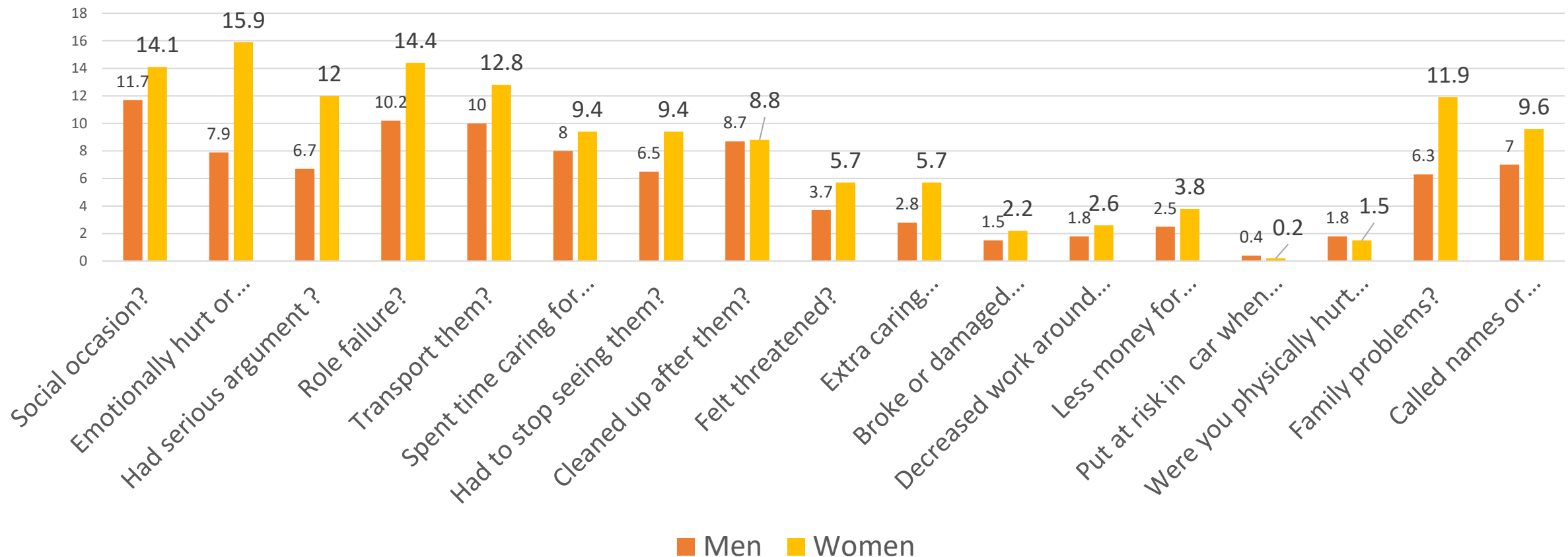
Source: Adapted from (Room et al., 2010)

Analytical framework of alcohol's harm to others



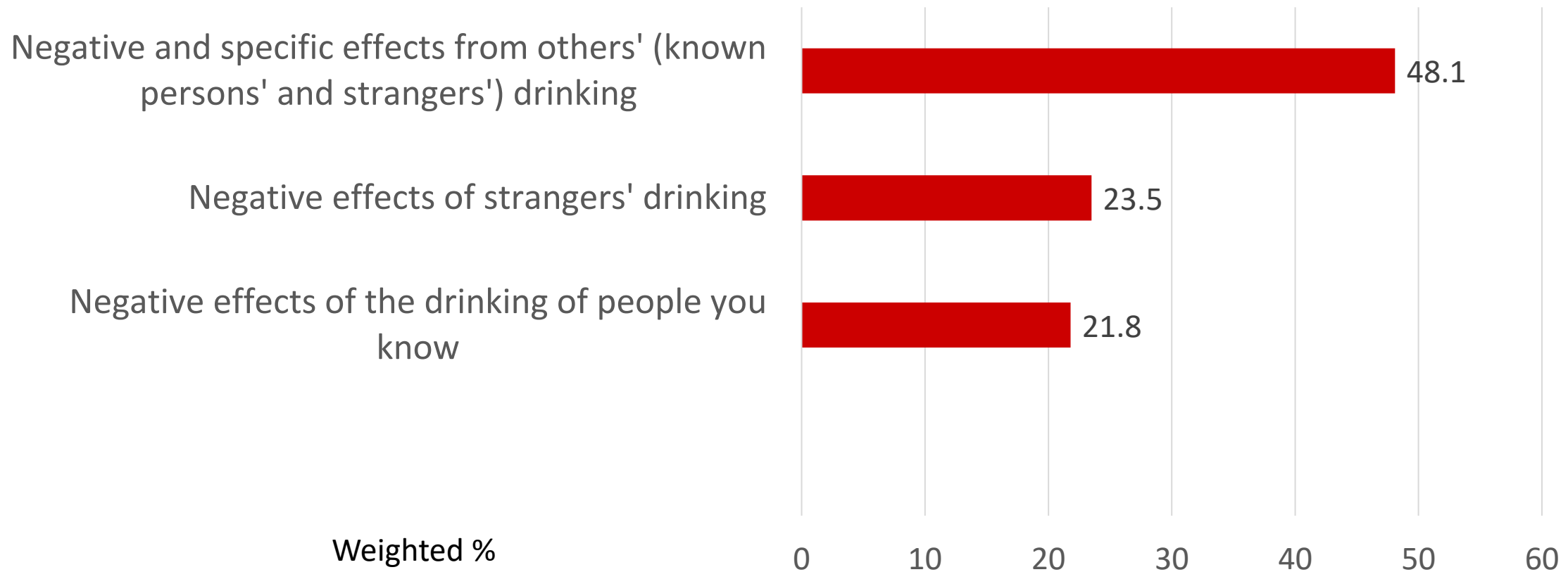
Types of harm from others' drinking

Due to someone's drinking...



Alcohol's harm to others in Australia 2021

Presence of drinker and adverse effects of others' drinking (Weighted %)



Alcohol-related harms to children

Variable	n	Weighted %
Harmed in any way (854)	146	15.70%
Harm type specified		
Unsupervised/unsafe situation	19	2.55%
Verbal abuse	52	5.98%
Physically hurt	8	1.01%
Witness serious violence	17	2.23%
Child protection called	7	0.58%
Financially harmed	36	4.12%
Any harm type specified (854)	88	10.10%

From: Hopkins, C., et al. (In press in Addiction) Harm to children from others' drinking: A survey of caregivers in Australia.

Who seeks help?

12.4% accessed a **service or support** due to AHTO
10% accessed **formal care** due to others' drinking

Family / friend
support



8.6%

More likely...

- Harmed by known other
- Harmed "a lot"
- Women

Police

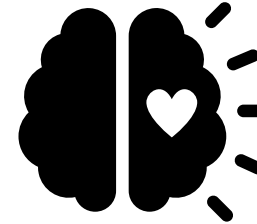


5.4%

More likely...

- Harmed by stranger
- Harmed "a lot"
- Financially stressed
- Have tertiary education

Counselling

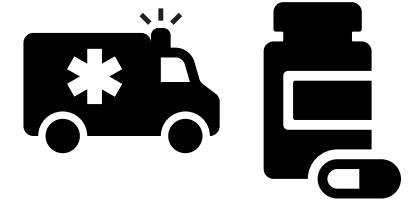


2.8%

More likely...

- Harmed "a lot"
- Women
- Financially stressed
- Have tertiary education

ED attendance /
Medical treatment



1.8%

Stigma

- Family members experience substantial stigma that can prevent them from seeking support (Paige Webb, APSAD)
- In-depth studies describe the situation of affected others and the stigma they experience.
 - Anxious, worried, helpless, low depressed, guilty, devalued, angry resentful, hatred, frightened, alone, very sad, ashamed (Pauline Stewart, APSAD)

Methods

- Simple review of recent reviews
- Description of interventions that seek to reduce harm to others including:
 - Treatment
 - Psychosocial interventions
 - Peer support (Al-Anon, SMART Family and Friends)
 - Policy (Affordability, Availability, Marketing, Education, Drink-driving, Modifying context, Treatment)
- Analyse and draw from harms affecting women and children

Key reviews

TREATMENT GUIDELINES

- Haber, P. S., Riordan, B. C., Winter, D. T., Barrett, L., Saunders, J., Hides, L., ... & Morley, K. C. (2021). New Australian guidelines for the treatment of alcohol problems: an overview of recommendations. *Medical Journal of Australia*, 215, S3-S32.

PSYCHO-SOCIAL INTERVENTIONS

- McGovern, R., Smart, D., Alderson, H., Araújo-Soares, V., Brown, J., Buykx, P., ... & Kaner, E. (2021). Psychosocial interventions to improve psychological, social and physical wellbeing in family members affected by an adult relative's substance use: A systematic search and review of the evidence. *International Journal of Environmental Research & Public Health*, 18(4), 1793.
- Shorter, Gillian W., et al. "Few interventions support the affected other on their own: A systematic review of individual level psychosocial interventions to support those harmed by others' alcohol use." *International Journal of Mental Health & Addiction* 22.6 (2024): 3538-3558.

Peer support for family members: Australian alcohol treatment guidelines

- “...the most widely established form of peer support is the 12-step based Al-Anon program,
- Operates Australia-wide and in more than 115 countries.
- Views alcohol problems as a disease
- There is limited research into the effectiveness of Al-Anon, although a United States study found that ongoing attendance can enhance problem-solving skills, increase wellbeing and functioning, and improve relationships with affected family members.⁵⁸
- Other support groups exist for family and significant others in Australia (e.g., Family & Friends, a program offered by SMART Recovery) but their effectiveness is yet to be established by empirical research.” (S18)

Haber, P. S., Riordan, B. C., Winter, D. T., Barrett, L., Saunders, J., Hides, L., ... & Morley, K. C. (2021). New Australian guidelines for the treatment of alcohol problems: an overview of recommendations. *Medical Journal of Australia*, 215, S3-S32. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.5694/mja2.51254>

National Alcohol Strategy 2019-2028

- Alcohol a priority substance in **National Drug Strategy** because of alcohol's role in family violence, child neglect, road trauma, community amenity, FASD i.e., harm to others
- **National Alcohol Strategy** places families up front in their aims, but does not identify strategies that will specifically prevent harm to them. And rarely mentions them in their goals.

Goal: Facilitating access to appropriate treatment, information and support services.

- **Strengthen partnerships and communication between services** to support early identification of problems and ensure treatment and ongoing care, including between alcohol treatment, child protection and family violence services; and detoxification and rehabilitation and aftercare services.
- **Speaks of implement parenting support programs** (such as the positive parenting program and nursing mother home visit programs) and developing information and support services for alcohol-dependent parents, especially of new-borns, to reduce parental alcohol consumption and improve child development prospects.
- But does not outline strategies for primary or secondary prevention of alcohol's harms to others.
- Does not include indicators that might be monitored over time in evaluation of harms to others.

Types of psycho-social interventions

Merkouris (2021) describes (a-c) how interventions involving *affected others* focus on:

- a) improving the **relationship** between the person using/drinking and the affected other/s – working conjointly, using family systems interventions, e.g. couples therapy, family therapy, parenting skills;
- b) the **person drinking** but include involvement and support of affected other/s in treatment of the person drinking, e.g., family-involved interventions;
- c) addressing **the concerns of the affected others** and do not require involvement of affected person, i.e., affected other-delivered interventions

Individual-level psycho-social interventions for family members

- Earlier review by Edwards and Steinglass (1995) also showed that **family therapy** (including family members) improved treatment outcomes for the **person drinking**.
- McGovern and colleagues (2021) studied 65 trials related to alcohol and/or other drugs that “**included family members in the intervention**” (**conjoint delivery**) and found that involving both family members could improve outcomes **for the affected others**, but their adversities were rarely addressed effectively. Affected others may receive psychological benefit from additional independent intervention (McGovern et al., 2021a). Limited effects on physical outcomes, e.g., IPV. Psychosocial interventions with parents need to focus on parenting and substance use McGovern et al, (2021b).
- Merkouris et al. (2022): in 22 RCT papers of psycho-social interventions across different addictions (alcohol, substances, gambling or gaming) targeting affected others (that did not involve the person with any of these addictions) resulted in short term positive effects for them in depressive symptoms, life satisfaction, coping style, addicted person treatment entry, and relationship functioning but that none of these were sustained at 4-11 months post-treatment.

***Increasing the engagement of the person
drinking may not benefit the affected other
(McGovern et al., 2021)***

Individual-level psycho-social interventions for family members

- Shorter et al., (2024), focused only on alcohol-related affected others (without seeking change to person drinking).
- Studied pre-post quantitative interventions (n=7) that used guided imagery, cognitive behavioural therapy, motivational interviewing and anger management to reduce adverse impacts. [Included a range of program types and frequencies: 3-24 sessions, up to 6x a day in one study]
- Found these interventions could ease suffering independent of the drinking family member.
- But there was a lack of quality evidence and underpinning theory.

Peer support, continuing evaluation, APSAD 2024

- Al-Anon (rely on other people, group dynamics for benefit), back to Australian Treatment guidelines (2021) which recommend Al-Anon but note that there is limited evidence of its effectiveness. (Lived experience, APSAD 2024)
- SMART Family and Friends (Sally Boardman) “While supporting someone with addictive behaviour...”, focusing on affected others
- Family Drug Support 5-step Method NZ (Pauline Stewart)
- Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT) and Online counselling for family and friends (Heidi Gray)
- New studies (not reviews) showing effectiveness, e.g., Rushton et al., (2024) for methamphetamines.

What works best for people who are affected others?

What interventions do you use in your practice?

Key reviews

REVIEWS OF POLICY

- Babor, T. F., Casswell, S., Graham, K., Huckle, T., Livingston, M., Rehm, J., ... & Sornpaisarn, B. (2022). Alcohol: No Ordinary Commodity—a summary of the third edition. *Addiction*, 117(12), 3024-3036.

REVIEWS OF POLICY THAT ADDRESS GENDER

- Karriker-Jaffe, K. J., Blackburn, N., Graham, K., Walker, M. J., Room, R., Wilson, I. M., ... & Laslett, A. M. (2023). Can alcohol policy prevent harms to women and children from men's alcohol consumption? An overview of existing literature and suggested ways forward. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 119, 104148.

WHO SAFER: the 5 most effective & cost-effective alcohol intervention in reducing alcohol harms



Strengthen restrictions on **alcohol availability**



Advance and enforce **drink-driving countermeasures**



Facilitate access to **screening, brief interventions & treatment**



Enforce bans or comprehensive restrictions on **advertising, sponsorship & promotion**



Raise prices on alcohol through **excise taxes & pricing policies**

Implement

- Political strategy
- Legislative actions
- Operational programmes
- Institutional readiness
- Multisectoral collaboration
- Sustained financing
- Robust enforcement

Protect

- Evidence-based policymaking
- Protect policymaking from industry interests

Monitor

- Track implementation
- Monitor & evaluate key indicators
- Report on implementation and impacts

Limiting physical availability

- Reducing availability where affected others are located
- Off-premise purchases (limited/no controls on how much is drunk in home)
- Hours of sale
- Home delivery
- Licence density
- Dry areas
- **Family violence, child neglect and other harms**

Controlling affordability: pricing and taxation strategies

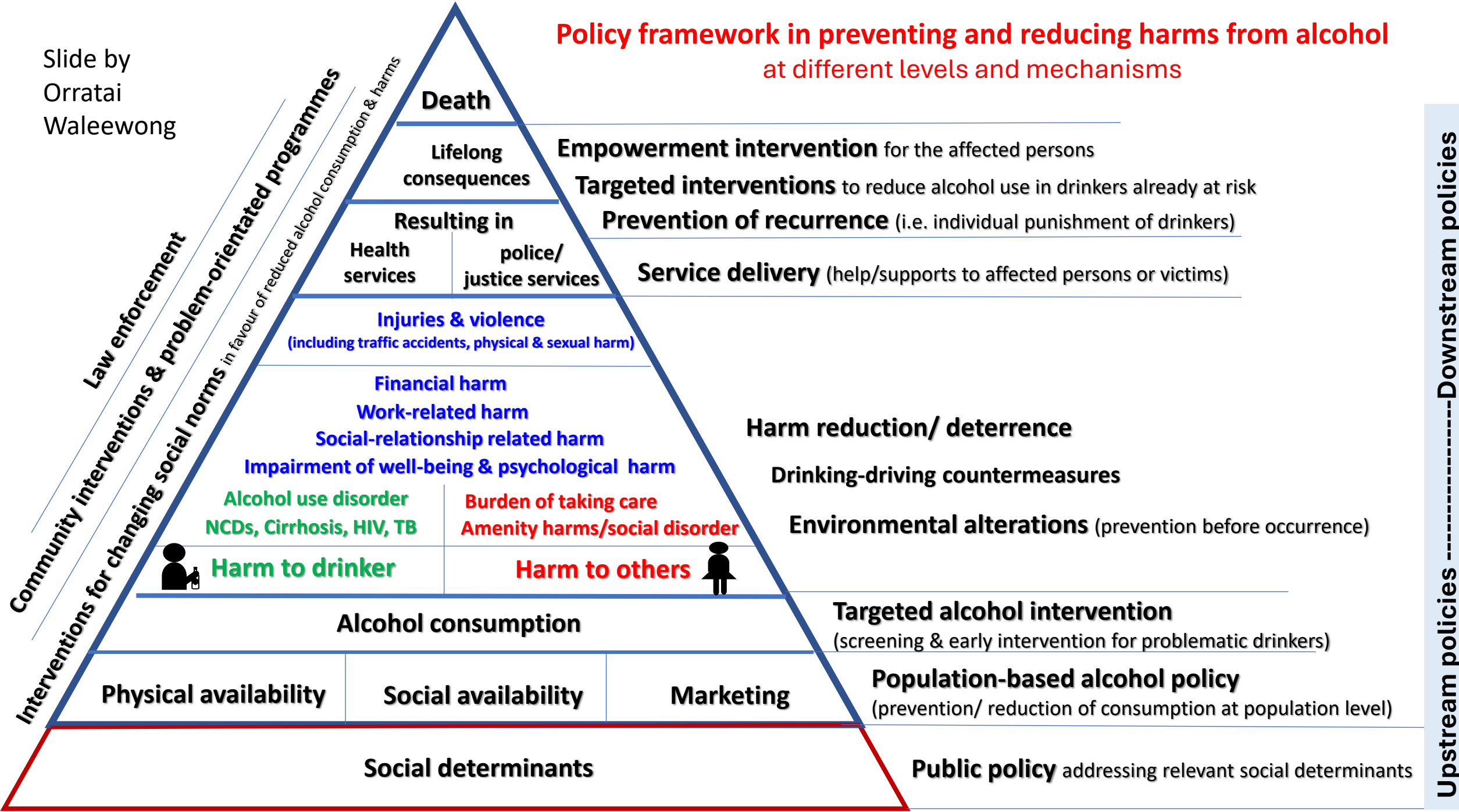
- Decrease purchasing amongst younger, less socio-economically advantaged and heavier drinkers.
- Will this result in net reductions in harms to affected others?
- What are the financial impacts for families of people who are alcohol-dependent or continue to drink heavily?
- Again, indicators of harm not identified beyond the person drinking.

Changing the drinking context

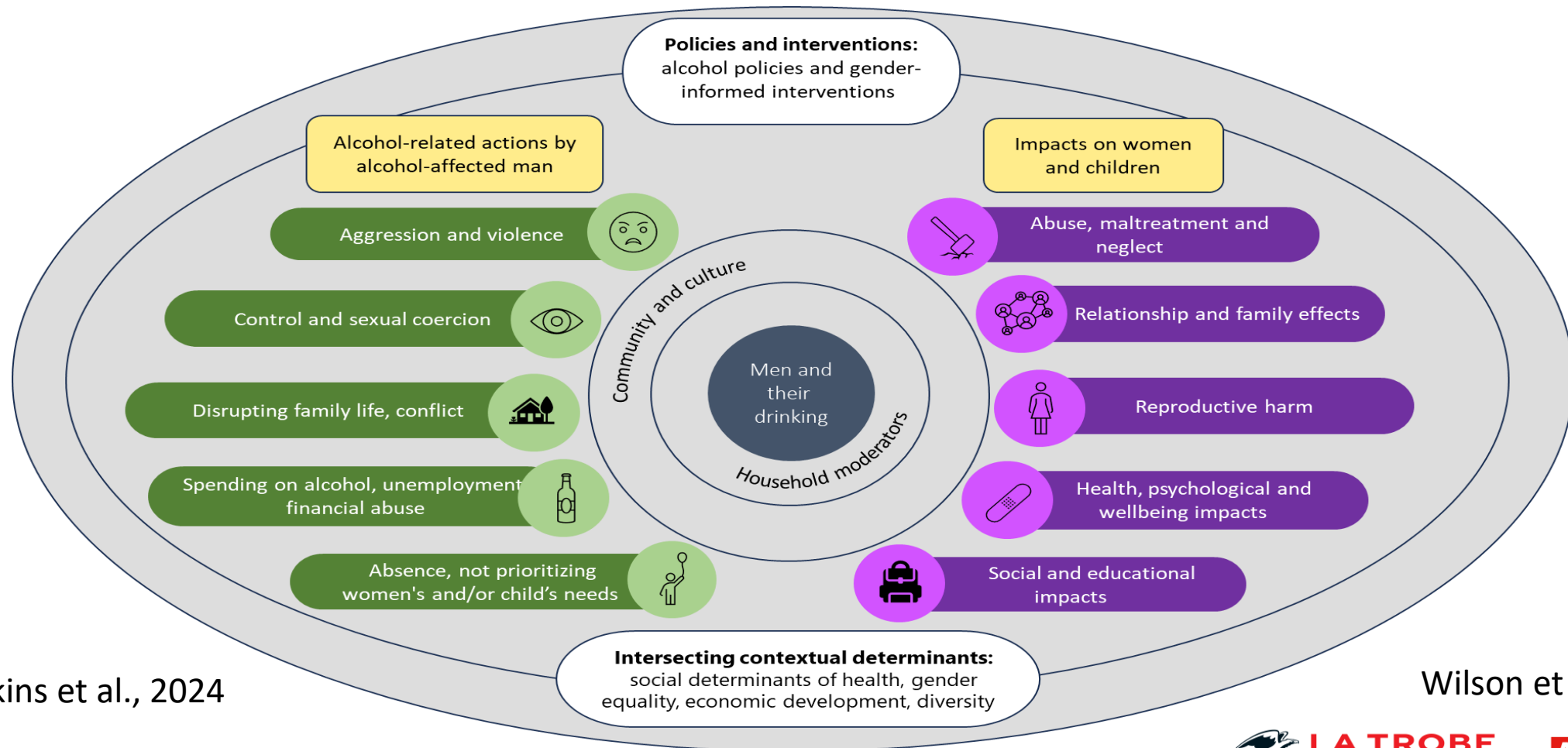
- Peer support and bystander programs
- Assistance as leaving licensed premises
- Venue-focused interventions (responsible service, aggression management)

Policy framework in preventing and reducing harms from alcohol at different levels and mechanisms

Slide by
Orratai
Waleewong



A model for understanding harms affecting women and children from men's alcohol use

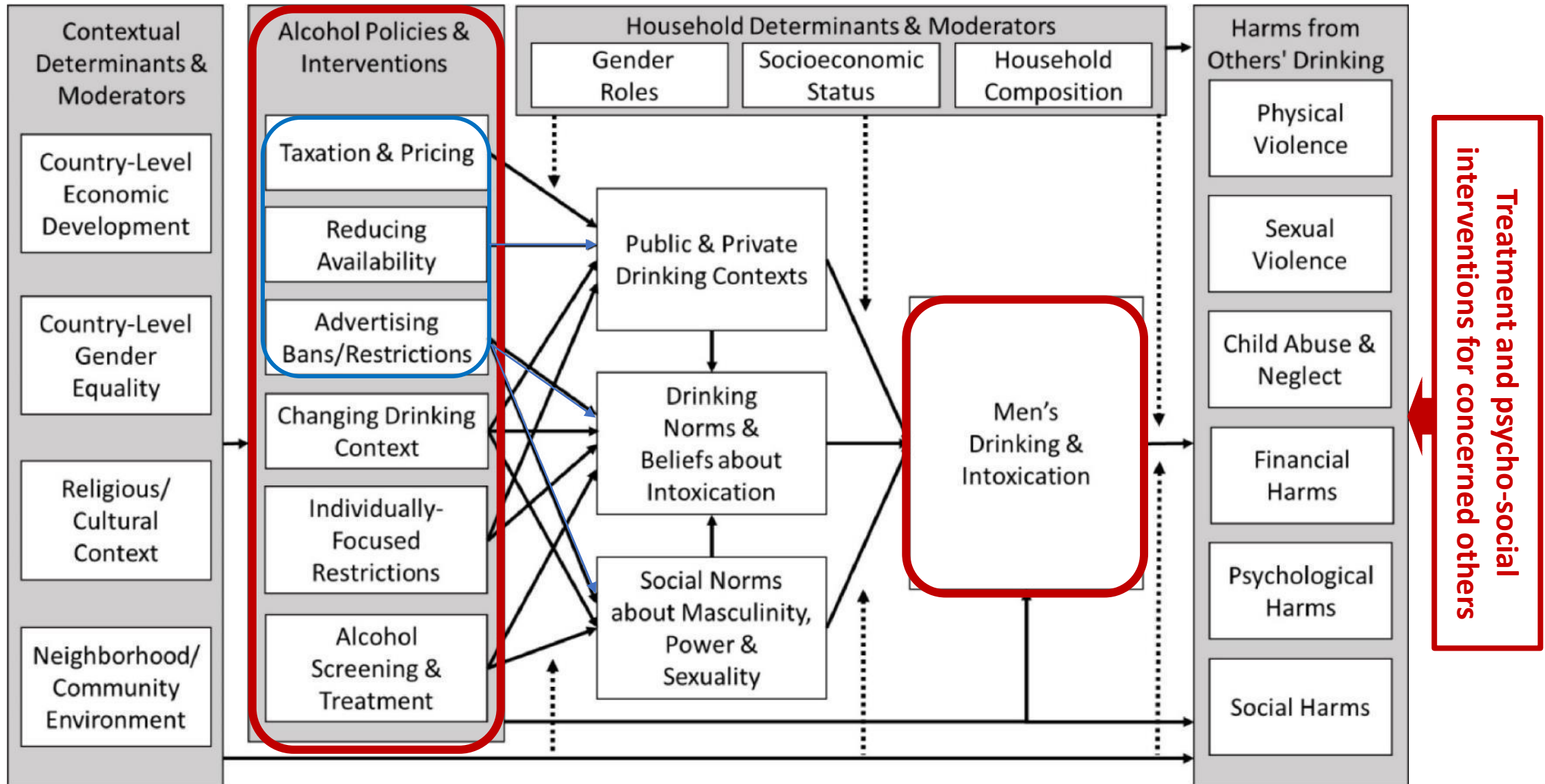


Hopkins et al., 2024

Wilson et al., 2024

Conceptual model linking alcohol policies to harms to women & children

as guiding framework for advancing policy implementation



Karriker-Jaffe et al. (2023)

Existing policy frameworks & responses to alcohol's harm to others

WHO policy packages: policies targeting at different factors, different levels, and different mechanisms, including risk factors related to alcohol

Alcohol related
harms

- **SAFER**
- **WHO Global Strategy to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol 2010**
- **WHO Global Action Plan 2022-2030**

Road safety

- **Save LIVES**

Violence against
women

- **RESPECT women**

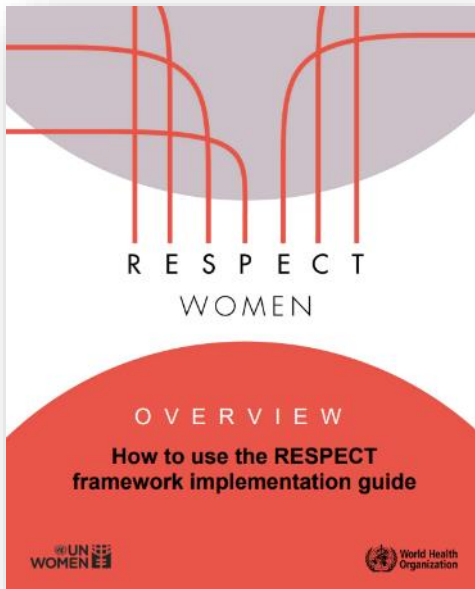
Violence

- **WHO global plan of action to strengthen the role of the health system within a national multisectoral response to address **interpersonal violence**, in particular **against women and girls, and against children** 2016**

Violence against
children

- **INSPIRE**

WHO RESPECT Women: a comprehensive framework on how to prevent violence against women (VAW)



can be done
through
implementing
alcohol control
interventions

- R Relationship skills strengthened:** strategies to improve skills in interpersonal communication, conflict management and shared decision-making.
- E Empowerment of women:** economic and social empowerment strategies including those that build skills in self-efficacy, assertiveness, negotiation, and self-confidence.
- S Services ensured:** ensuring a range of services including health, police, legal, and social services for survivors of violence.
- P Poverty reduced:** strategies targeted to women or the household, whose primary aim is to alleviate poverty.
- E Environments made safe:** efforts to create safe schools, public spaces and work environments, among others.
- C Child and adolescent abuse prevented:** strategies that establish gender equitable and nurturing relationships by parents, educators and others working with children. This strategy demonstrates the overlap between violence against children and violence against women.
- T Transformed attitudes, beliefs and norms:** strategies that challenge harmful gender attitudes, beliefs, norms and stereotypes.

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-RHR-18.19>

WHO Global plan of action to strengthen the role of the health system within a national multisectoral response to address interpersonal violence, in particular against women & girls and against children (2016)



GLOBAL PLAN OF ACTION

to strengthen the role of the health system
within a national multisectoral response
to address interpersonal violence, in particular
against women and girls, and against children



Strategic direction

- 1: Strengthen health system leadership & governance
- 2: Strengthen health service delivery & health workers'/providers' capacity to respond
- 3: Strengthen programming to prevent interpersonal violence
- 4: Improve information and evidence

Evidence-based violence prevention programmes within the health system and with other sectors in order to address common risk factors.

- **gender inequality**
- **norms concerning masculinity**
- **unemployment**
- **poverty and economic inequality**
- **high rates of crime in the community**
- **firearm availability**
- **ease of access to alcohol**
- **drug dealing**
- **inadequate enforcement of laws**

can be done through
implementing alcohol
control interventions

WHO INSPIRE: Seven strategies for Ending Violence Against Children 2016



	Implementation and enforcement of laws	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laws banning violent punishment of children by parents, teachers or other caregivers • Laws criminalizing sexual abuse and exploitation of children • Laws that prevent alcohol misuse • Laws limiting youth access to firearms and other weapons 	Justice
	Norms and values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing adherence to restrictive and harmful gender and social norms • Community mobilization programmes • Bystander interventions 	Health, Education, Social Welfare
	Safe environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing violence by addressing "hotspots" • Interrupting the spread of violence • Improving the built environment 	Interior, Planning

can be done through implementing alcohol control interventions

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241565356>

	caregiver support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered in groups in community settings • Delivered through comprehensive programmes 	Welfare Health
	Income and economic strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash transfers • Group saving and loans combined with gender equity training • Microfinance combined with gender norm training 	Finance Labour
	Response and support services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling and therapeutic approaches • Screening combined with interventions • Treatment programmes for juvenile offenders in the criminal justice system • Foster care interventions involving social welfare services 	Health, Justice Social Welfare
	Education and life skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase enrolment in pre-school, primary and secondary schools • Establish a safe and enabling school environment • Improve children's knowledge about sexual abuse and how to protect themselves against it • Life and social skills training • Adolescent intimate partner violence prevention programmes 	Educational

Need evidence-based, theory-informed multi-level impactful alcohol policies:

- Change the drinking context, e.g., bystander training, at sporting events, home delivery; dry zones
- Modify drinking norms, e.g., gendered advertising codes
- Address elements of power, e.g., bystander interventions, advertising, cultural change
- Individual-focused policy interventions, e.g., access to specialized treatment such as alcohol, IPV and parenting programs
- Comprehensive (multi-pronged) community and policy interventions

Recommendations for prevention of harms to drinkers and harms to others

Short term 1-2 years

- **Evidence & database:** Data on “alcohol-related variables of drinkers and affected persons” in relevant agency data that are relevant to harms from drinking (health, police, justice, social welfare).
- **Advocacy:** Using evidence to inform policy, countries should communicate more about roles of government in developing alcohol control policies to prevent harms to others (focusing on a right-based approach) as well as specify industries’ responsibilities to manage externalities of harms to affected persons.
- **Response system:** Countries should develop/strengthen systems, programme & services in response to HTO including screening & helpline, treatment and support and links with an informal sectors.

Longer term

- **Legislation:** Together with legislation of rights of affected persons, countries should develop/implement high-impact population-based alcohol policies (Best Buys). Protecting policy process from vested interests, as well as supporting civil society to counter industry interferences.

**What would a more comprehensive
framework look like?
Which interventions?
Which policies?
What is missing?**

Acknowledgements

- CAPR Alcohol's Harm to Others (AHTO) team
- Australian National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC GNT1065610; GNT2016706)
- Australian Research Council Linkage Project (LP190100698)
- World Health Organization
- International Health Policy Program, Thai Health, Thailand
- U.S. National Institutes of Health, National Institute in Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (R01 AA023870)



Questions

- Anne-Marie Laslett
- a.laslett@latrobe.edu.au



Key reviews

FAMILY-BASED INTERVENTIONS

- Villanueva-Blasco, V. J., Marmolejo, I. P., & Folgar, M. I. (2024). Systematic Review of Family Drug Prevention Programs: Efficacy and Indexing in Best Practice Portals. *International Journal of Mental Health & Addiction*, 1-38.
- Cassidy, A., & Poon, A. W. C. (2019). A scoping review of family-based interventions in drug and alcohol services: Implications for social work practice. *Journal of Social Work Practice in the Addictions*, 19(4), 345-367.
- Gethin, A., Trimingham, T., Chang, T., Farrell, M., & Ross, J. (2016). Coping with problematic drug use in the family: An evaluation of the Stepping Stones program. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 35(4), 470-476.
- Copello, A. G., Velleman, R. D., & Templeton, L. J. (2005). Family interventions in the treatment of alcohol and drug problems. *Drug and alcohol review*, 24(4), 369-385.

COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTIONS

- Krakouer, J., Savaglio, M., Taylor, K., & Skouteris, H. (2022). Community-based models of alcohol and other drug support for First Nations peoples in Australia: A systematic review. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 41(6), 1418-1427..

Key reviews

INTERVENTIONS, PROGRAMS AND POLICIES FOR ALCOHOL-RELATED INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

- Nguyen, V., Kertesz, M., Davidson, J., Humphreys, C., & Laslett, A.-M. (2023). Programme responses for men who perpetrate intimate partner violence in the context of alcohol or other drugs: A scoping review. *Advances in Dual Diagnosis*, 16(1), 24–53. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ADD-07-2022-0021>
- Wilson, I. M., Graham, K., & Taft, A. (2014). Alcohol interventions, alcohol policy and intimate partner violence: a systematic review. *BMC public health*, 14, 1-11.

RESPONSES THAT ADDRESS CHILDREN

- Battams, S., & Roche, A. (2011). Child wellbeing and protection concerns and the response of the alcohol and other drugs sector in Australia. *Advances in Mental Health*, 10(1), 62-71.
- Doab, A., Fowler, C., & Dawson, A. (2015). Factors that influence mother–child reunification for mothers with a history of substance use: A systematic review of the evidence to inform policy and practice in Australia. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 26(9), 820-831.

Key reviews

RESPONSES THAT ADDRESS CHILDREN (AND THEIR PARENTS)

- McGovern, R., Newham, J., Addison, M., Hickman, M., & Kaner, E. (2022). The effectiveness of psychosocial interventions at reducing the frequency of alcohol and drug use in parents: findings of a Cochrane Review and meta-analyses. *Addiction*, 117(10), 2571-2582.
- Doab, A., Fowler, C., & Dawson, A. (2015). Factors that influence mother–child reunification for mothers with a history of substance use: A systematic review of the evidence to inform policy and practice in Australia. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 26(9), 820-831.
- Battams, S., & Roche, A. (2011). Child wellbeing and protection concerns and the response of the alcohol and other drugs sector in Australia. *Advances in Mental Health*, 10(1), 62-71.

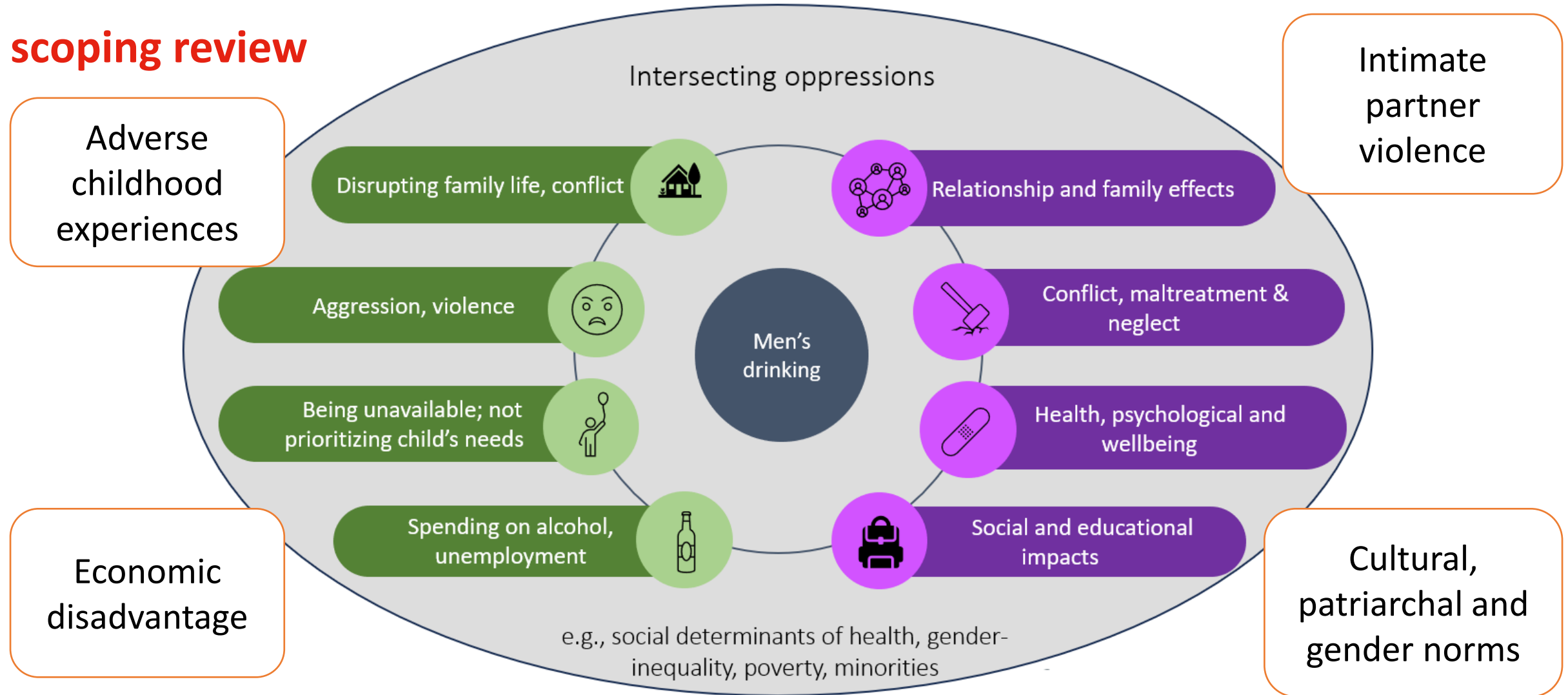


Thank

you

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Hopkins et al. (2024) Harms to children from men's heavy drinking: a scoping review



Hopkins, C., Håvås Haugland, S., Greenfield, T. K., Tamutiene, I., Hettige, S., Laslett, A.-M. Harms to children from men's heavy drinking: a scoping review (2024). *International Journal of Alcohol and Drug Research*, 12(2), 85–100. <https://doi.org/10.7895/ijadr.523>.

Wilson et al. (2024) A global review of the impact on women from men's alcohol drinking: The need for responding with a gendered lens.

Themes

1. Alcohol-related actions by the alcohol-affected man
2. Impacts on women
3. Framing of alcohol's role in harms

Wilson, I.M., Willoughby, B., Tanyos, A. Graham, K., Walker, M. & Laslett, A.-M. & Ramsoomar, L. (2024) A global review of the impact on women from men's alcohol drinking: The need for responding with a gendered lens. *Global Health Action*, 17(1), 2341522. DOI: 10.1080/16549716.2024.2341522