

White Ribbon Signal

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National WCTU Mission Statement -

"To promote a drug-free lifestyle and Christian values in the home and community"

What about the Pokies?

Poker machines, commonly known as "Pokies" (and only very loosely based on the actual game of poker) are now one of the most prevalent forms of interactive gambling in Australia. There is no doubt that there is an addictive power to the Pokies with their electronic wizardry and seductive lighting plus the simplicity of use and the ready availability and accessibility. Then there is the clinking of coins being returned and digital music playing whenever wins or sequences occur, constantly reinforcing the possibility of the big win. And after all you are only playing with small change.... or are you?

There is no other country in the world where gambling is available in clubs and pubs! For over fifty years "the pokies" have been available for Australians to lose their money. We have over 200,000 poker machines throughout the nation transferring more than \$10 billion dollars each year from the pockets of gamblers to the wealth of pub owners, club managements and state government coffers. But this gambling comes at a price because statistics show that more than one third of the money swallowed by pokies comes from people who can't control how much they spend. This form of gambling also offers low pay-outs to the player. Many gamblers would agree that there is an addictive nature to the flashing machines that suck money out of their wallets to the tune of the sing-song electronic music!

Problem gambling is not a new phenomenon. The addictive nature of poker machines was discussed before they were legalised in NSW but 50 years later authorities are still avoiding the issue and governments continue to describe poker machines as legitimate forms of entertainment while people who have used fraud to feed gambling habits serve time behind bars.

The NSW Government has recently commissioned more research "to get information around what a problem gambler is" This Government points to harm minimisation strategies but NSW has 10% of the world's poker machines with 100,000 machines in operation.

In Victoria, recent statistics show that with in excess of 30,000 poker machines spread throughout Victoria, \$2.5 billion is lost by gamblers each year with the State Government gouging \$1.55 billion in tax. In plain terms Victorian players alone lose \$7 million every day. The gambling giant Tatts has suggested that Victoria's growing population needs more poker machines backed up by a naive statement that machines are neither harmful or addictive! However, the Brumby Government gave a swift response to this proposal and ruled out any increase.

In Tasmania poker machine playing is skyrocketing. This form of gaming has increased by 55% although the machines had increased by only 5% since 1997. There are also concerns that the cap on the upper betting limit has been removed.

While profits roll in there is little motivation for pokie holders or governments to act decisively but congratulations to the South Sydney Leagues Club in Redfern, where Russell Crowe and Peter Holmes a Court, convinced the Board of Directors last December that the 80 Poker Machines be removed and that the \$2.5 million revenue be found from other sources!

Experts are calling for wide reform of the gambling industry including setting serious conditions on new licences and removing ATM's from venues.



Let's not pretend that these machines are just "light entertainment"
Judge Roland Williams of the County Court stated "how could a so-called civilised society allow and offer the mindless operation of poker machines to witless members of the public under the euphemism of gaming and entertainment"

The first recorded instance of caffeine drinking in history was the consumption of tea by Chinese emperor Shen Nung in 2737, apparently after some leaves accidentally fell in a pot of boiling water. China has remained a big fan of the drink, with tea production growing by around 90,000 tonnes per year (according to China's Tea Market Annual Report 2004-2005). Coffee originated in Africa around 2500 years ago, where it was used for drinking and as money.

How much Caffeine?

	Amount	Caffeine
Fresh coffee	200ml cup	60-200mg
Instant coffee	200ml cup	60-100mg
Decaf coffee	200ml cup	2-4mg
Tea	200ml cup	30-100mg
Choc. Drink	200ml cup	10-15mg
Energy drink	250ml can	80-90mg
Cola drink	375ml can	35-50mg
Milk chocolate	100g bar	20-30mg
Dark chocolate	100g bar	70-90mg

If you ate an entire 200g block of chocolate, you'd consume about 550 of combined methylxathines (caffeine and other stimulants). A 30g bar has between 20 to 60 mg caffeine – something that's worth considering when you calculate your daily caffeine intake, or think about how much the kids are consuming.

Did you know that -

- smoking will no longer be depicted in Disney-branded movies?
- 1 in 3 road deaths in Australia involve the use of illicit drugs?
- three primary school children from south coast NSW were rushed to hospital after ingesting ecstasy tablets they thought were lollies?
- the main drugs tested with a saliva test are Cannabis, ICE and ecstasy
- in California you can purchase a "Pocket Shot" a miniature soft-sided bottle containing 50 ml of 80% proof alcohol designed for the convenience of "today's mobile lifestyle"?
- in the Antarctic a drunken Christmas punch-up ended with an emergency medical evacuation to New Zealand costing thousands of dollars?
- Adelaide shops were selling a board game "Pass-out" supposedly the world's best selling adult drinking game which invites players to drink until they become unconscious. It directs players to recite tongue twisters and smoke and drink their way around a board.
- wine producers in the UK are being urged to cut the levels of alcohol in their wine because the new generation of drinkers regard high alcohol levels as "uncool"?
- restaurateurs are getting around Germany's new smoking laws by cutting holes in the wall so people can stick their heads out, legally enjoying a cigarette without having to leave the restaurant!
- at the Narooma Festival, NSW Jim Beam advertising lanyards were handed out to children?
- Australian Rugby Union Chairman has stood down following an accusation that he was intoxicated at the World Cup in France?
- World Road Safety Expert has called for alcohol detection systems to be used in all Australian vehicles to eradicate drink-driving?



"Now, kids, don't look until you're twenty-one."



ADULTS BEHAVING BADLY?

GUARANA -

This rain forest vine grows naturally in Brazil and has been cultivated because of its caffeine-rich fruits. Its name "Guarana" comes from the Guarani tribe that lives in Brazil. Guarana plays a very important role in their culture and is believed to be magical, a cure for bowel complaints and a way to regain strength. The taste of guarana is distinctive and unique, and the main reason for its success in Brazil as a soft drink. The main ingredient is guaranine which is chemically identical to caffeine but 4 times as strong. It has been used as an ancient remedy for a variety of ailments, sold at various times as a fortifier, stimulant, tonic, antidote to fever, a preventative against hardening of the arteries, treatment of migraines and treating diarrhea. But as with any product, overindulgence can trigger problems. Over two centuries ago, Francisco Xavier Ribeiro de Sampaio, a Brazilian judge, warned that excessive drinking of guarana can lead to insomnia and in the middle of the 18th Century the fourth Bishop of Belem, greatly appreciated guarana but warned that excessive consumption could lead to insomnia or dizziness.

Guarana is grown as a small crop or alongside other crops. The bright red fruits are picked individually and then placed in a basket. The black seeds are extracted and dried in the sun or roasted. In factories the roasted beans are ground with machinery similar to that used for processing coffee.

With the traditional drink, it is grated into a powder which falls into water in a calabash bowl. Some locals have the drink every morning. Back in 1909 Guarana Soda was sold mainly in Brazil and locals began making their own, "Bahia". Guarana 'pushups' became popular among poorer folk in urban areas.

In the last decade or so guarana carts have begun appearing in street markets in the Brazilian Amazon. Such carts sell guarana beverages prepared in a blender with crushed ice. Often also with nuts, sometimes fruit, avocado or raw quail eggs. 'Guarana Smoothies' are also sold in some cafes. One company has a concoction of 'love herbs' claimed to have aphrodisiac qualities.



Guarana Berries

(pictured) are a bright red colour and carry the myth of a 'Divine Child' killed by a serpent whose eyes gave birth to this plant. (The berries look like human eyes when ripe).

MEDICAL CONCERNS -

Guarana powder contains negligible calories but is bitter. Most people who consume guarana products outside the traditional area of consumption are drinking highly sugared caffeinated beverages.

In Australia, we can find drinks on the supermarket shelf containing guarana. They are in sleek cans with modern graphics designed to appeal to young people as ENERGY DRINKS advertised as a "pick-me-up", recovery drink, or to stay awake for a long night. It may be found with names like "Dirty Dog", "Dr Jolt", "Overdrive", "Speed Freak" etc. Read the ingredient labels and you will find amounts of caffeine plus an amount of guarana often giving the equivalent of an extra dose of caffeine. Caffeine speeds up the central nervous system and high levels of caffeine can dehydrate your body, speed up your heart and raise your blood pressure. It is particularly dangerous to children, pregnant women or those taking some medications.

It is important not to confuse these energy drinks with sports drinks that are designed to help athletes rehydrate and replenish electrolytes and carbohydrates.

Energy drinks are NOT the alternative to aiding rehydration.

Of particular concern is the mixing of energy drinks with alcohol. "The stimulation from caffeine-heavy energy drinks can make a person feel less intoxicated leading them to more risky behaviour. As caffeine dehydrates the body, alcohol becomes harder to absorb. Fatigue is one way the body signals you've had enough to drink so these stimulants can fool you into thinking you not as intoxicated as you may be but it will not alter your actual level of alcohol. Drinker beware!



Pictured is KIDS' BEER from Japan. It is in a bottle shaped and coloured like adult beer and is a guarana beverage. The motto of the company is - 'Even kids cannot stand life unless they have a beer'

May 2008 be a special year for you, leading you on to a road less travelled but -

"May the feet of God walk with you,
And His hand hold you tight.
May the eye of God rest on you,
And His ear hear your cry.
May the smile of God be for you,
And His breath give you life.
May the Child of God grow in you,
And His love bring you home."

Words Aubrey Podlich, Music Robin Mann



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Varieties available:

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G Patritti & Co Pty Ltd
13-23 Clacton Rd, Dover Gardens SA 5048
Ph. 08 8296 8261 Fax. 08 8296 5088
Email. wines@patritti.com.au

Dates to Remember 2008 and plan for

A new Date of Interest - February has been designated "Febfast" encouraging drinkers to sign up for an alcohol free month
(see website febfast.com.au)

State Conventions -

Queensland - *to be advised*
New South Wales - Luncheon 7 April
Victoria - 4 March
South Australia - 28 March
Dedication of Building 30 March
Tasmania - *to be advised*
Western Australia - mid August

World Day of Prayer - Friday 7 March at a venue near you.

International Women's Day - 8 March

National Youth Tobacco Free Day - 9 March
There is a terrific interactive website promoting non-smoking for kids <www.oxygen.org.au>
This is a collaboration between all State Quit agencies.

Drug Action Week - 22 - 28 June
Initiate some function during this week perhaps in co-operation with another organization.

FAS Day - 9th September at 9.09 am

WCTU World Day of Prayer - 28 September

Universal Children's Day - 22 October
An opportunity to promote the plight of children around the world in line with the World WCTU Resolution to do with Child Labour.

Women's Suffrage in Victoria - 18 women's suffrage bills were rejected between 1889 and 1908 and at last in **November**, the 19th was passed. Victoria was the last State - why so long? At that stage more than half of the adult population in Victoria were female and men were scared of a take-over!



Below - a section of the display of literature etc at the Cocktail Parties



In the last few months **Victoria** has organized "Cocktail Parties" for Crossways Baptist Churches - non-al, of course. The main party was held on Crossways premises in Burwood, Melbourne with over 300 young women guests who dressed as for the special occasion. Drinks and literature were appreciated. A much smaller gathering was held in the Northcote Town Hall just prior to Christmas with appropriate program and decorations. Small Christmas Gift Bags containing WCTU literature were given to guests.

Black Spot -

'Schoolies' partying at Lorne, Vic and on the Gold Coast Qld, have admitted to downing 24 standard drinks a day with many a drinkfest starting at noon!



SOUTH AUSTRALIA

A Christmas Luncheon was held at Brighton South Australia and **CHELSEA TEAGAN SUDRON** just 2 weeks old was enrolled as a "Little White Ribboner" by the Union President, Mrs Dawn Giddings. Note the white ribbon tied on Chelsea's wrist in the photo below.

Members contributed to the Christmas Hamper and gifts to full time carers of 11 children with FAS or FAE. Clothes, toys etc were given to a pregnancy group.

(pictured oldest member, 94 year old Brigadier Yarnold holding youngest member Chelsea Teagan Sudron)

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All Welcome -

New Members *please complete this slip and forward to your State Office with membership annual fee of \$10 (includes 'White Ribbon Signal')*

Membership PROMISE -

"I hereby solemnly promise, with the help of God, to abstain from **all** intoxicating liquors, and all other harmful drugs, and to employ all proper means to discourage the use of, and traffic in, the same".

Signed.....

My Name is

.....

Of

.....

Postcode

RESOLUTION on Gambling carried unanimously at World Convention

WHEREAS the beginning of the 21st century has seen the rapid growth of gambling all over the world; and

WHEREAS studies have shown that gambling has contributed to an increase in the number of suicides, broken families and homes, and destruction of careers; and

WHEREAS evidence shows that taxpayers are subsidizing the gambling industry;

BE IT RESOLVED that the WWCTU, through its unions, petition governments to take steps to stop this plague



Do you know someone who needs help with problems associated with gambling?
(keep this list for future reference)

Gamblers Help Line
QLD 1800 222 050
NSW 1800 633 635
ACT 02 6247 0655
VIC 1800 156 789
TAS 1800 000 973
SA 1800 060 757
WA 1800 622 112 or

LIFE LINE (Nationally) 13 11 14