



SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION  
(SOUTH AUSTRALIA) INC**

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**Schoolies Week 2009: Be Safe**

AMA(SA) President Dr Andrew Lavender has urged young people who will be celebrating Schoolies Week to stay safe and look out for their friends.

Schoolies Week provides an opportunity for school leavers around Australia to celebrate the end of exams, and the end of their school careers. Unfortunately, though, these celebrations can have their down side.

'While Schoolies Week is meant to be all about celebrating, too many young people walk away from it with regrets,' said AMA(SA) President Dr Andrew Lavender.

'From embarrassment – and even injury – as a result of binge drinking, to bad experiences from experimenting with illicit drugs, to third degree sunburn, to unsafe sex, to incidents in which young people are preyed upon by unscrupulous adults, there are unfortunately many things that can go wrong, and do go wrong, for young people who are celebrating Schoolies Week,' he stated.

'Have fun, by all means, but make sure you stay safe – and keep your friends nearby. And if something does go wrong, for you or a friend, don't be too embarrassed to seek help – whether that means going to hospital, visiting a GP, talking to a trusted adult or, if it's an emergency, dialling 000.

'If you are going away, make sure you have your Medicare card with you, to help you access medical care if you need it, and remember that you can discuss issues such as safe sex and the effects of drugs and alcohol with your doctor, and get advice. It is also a good idea to pack a first aid kit for the group, if you are staying away with friends.

'Too many young people walk away from Schoolies Week with bad memories, rather than good ones.

'Leaving school is an important part of making the transition towards being an adult – don't start your grown-up career with stupid mistakes with alcohol and drugs – or even a bad sunburn! Be safe, and help your friends to be safe, too,' he stated.

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**20 November 2009**

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