



**Sharon Grierson MP**  
Federal Member for Newcastle

**Media Release**  
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## **Problem Drinking Study Demonstrates Importance of Newcastle Crime Prevention Projects**

Sharon Grierson MP, Federal Member for Newcastle, said that a study released yesterday into problem drinking demonstrates the importance of recent Federal Government funding for crime prevention projects in Newcastle.

Yesterday, the Australian Institute of Criminology released a new study that shows alcohol is a major contributor to offences committed on weekends.

"The study proves what we all know, that alcohol abuse is a major factor in assaults committed over weekends in Australian cities," Ms Grierson said.

"For example, the study found that the median number of standard drinks consumed by assault offenders was 14 – about ten bottles of full-strength beer. Its no wonder that binge drinking at this level often leads to violent crime."

The release of the study followed a decision last month by the Federal Labor Government to provide \$149,000 funding to reduce anti-social behaviour and potential criminal activity in Newcastle. The funding is being provided to the Mercy Community Services for its McCauley Turning Lives Around (Restoring Hope and Choice) Project, based in Tighes Hill.

"This project will steer those who have already had a brush with the law away from crime, by helping them to improve their life skills, return to education and employment, and better engage with their communities," Ms Grierson said. "I congratulate Mercy Community Services for running this program and securing this funding."

"The Federal Labor Government is doing what it can to discourage binge drinking and anti-social behaviour in Newcastle," Ms Grierson said.

"But in the end its up to the community and individuals themselves to start taking more responsibility for problem drinking."

Further information about the Australian Institute of Criminology Study is available at [www.aic.gov.au](http://www.aic.gov.au)

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