

The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test – (AUDIT)

As many of the parents we work with are having difficulty with managing their alcohol use we have added a measure that is quick and very reliable. This measure was developed by the World Health Organisation and has gone extensive testing. There are three short questions and the scoring and interpretation are very straightforward.

1. Description

The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) is a widely used measure developed by the World Health Organisation to help identify people who may be drinking in a manner that is potentially harmful to their health that includes hazardous or risk alcohol use; harmful alcohol use (ICD-10) or alcohol abuse (DSM IV – TR) and alcohol dependence.

The original AUDIT is ten items. However a number of studies have investigated the psychometric properties of shorter versions of the AUDIT and found that the information obtained using fewer items is both reliable and sensitive to the presence of alcohol problems. The PuP program has selected the AUDIT-C which comprises the first three questions from the full 10-item version.

2. Administration

The AUDIT-C is a pencil and paper, self-report questionnaire that takes approximately 3 minutes to complete. Parents are asked to use a 5 point scale provide some indication of their recent drinking.

At TIME 1 – assessment – people will be asked to rate their alcohol for the last 6 months.

At TIME 2 – mid treatment – this will be for a much shorter time frame. For example, if your PuP program runs for 6 months then you may ask the Parent to complete the TIME 2 AUDIT-C at 2 months. So you will be looking to see if there has been change since the start of treatment.

At TIME 3 – end of treatment – you will be asking parents to rate their alcohol use for the time between now and TIME 2.

3. Scoring

A total score is calculated by summing the scores for the relevant items. It is best to use the online scoring system for the AUDIT-C available on the PuP database although it is very simple to add up the numbers.

4. Interpretation

These three questions are general screening questions that are used to help people think about their alcohol use. It is easy when under pressure to let alcohol use slowly increase and sometimes when people have a chance to stop and reflect they can be quite surprised at just how much they are drinking.

It is important to emphasise that current recommendations are that women who are pregnant do not drink any alcohol at all.