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Abstract

Adolescents' risky drinking behavior continues to be a public policy concern and insights into effective messages and behaviors that resonate with adolescents is needed. Evidence points to the potential of tapping into adolescents' need for authenticity. Drawing on authenticity literature and implementing a mixed methods approach using family group interviews, followed by a 1x3 between-subject experiment with adolescents, this research conceptualizes a novel authentic engagement framework for reducing adolescent risky behavior. The findings identify and test that messages about drinking need to acknowledge positive aspects while warning of the negative consequences (i.e. mixed messages) across three dimensions - social, hedonic and safety. Alongside mixed messages, parents need to be honest about past experiences and align their behavior by acting as positive role models. Importantly, adolescents need an environment which enables them to experiment while having clear boundaries. Together this translates into openness and authenticity; critical for trust and the ability for adolescents to be true to themselves. The research has implications for parents and policy makers/marketers engaging with adolescents authentically about risky behavior, by providing information on message type and behaviors for effective training/educational programs and responsible drinking campaigns. The framework can be transferred to other contexts involving risky behavior.

Keywords: Risky drinking behavior, family communication, authenticity, adolescence, mixed method

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Risky behavior related to alcohol consumption is particularly prevalent in many western nations, with approximately a third of adolescents aged 15-19 years reporting heavy episodic drinking (WHO 2018). In the US, seven million adolescents reported drinking alcohol beyond “just a few” sips, putting themselves at risk of alcohol-related incidents including car crashes, falls, drownings, and alcohol poisoning (NIAAA 2021). Beyond the obvious policy-level interventions to reduce alcohol consumption, such as raising taxes on alcohol, maintaining legal drinking ages and enacting zero-tolerance laws; educational programs and social marketing campaigns can also be impactful. SAMHSA, as part of the US Department of Health and Human Services, runs a national prevention campaign called “Talk. They Hear You” that aims to help parents and caregivers talk with their children about the dangers and risks of underage drinking and drug use. It focuses on providing parents with the knowledge and skills to initiate authentic conversations with their children.

Despite these efforts, much work remains to be done to understand the complexities of adolescent risky behavior (Pechman et al. 2019; Tanner and Tanner 2020). Adolescents’ impulsive and self-conscious nature and propensity to experiment makes them particularly vulnerable to risky behavior (Pechmann et al. 2005). Although policies and legal restrictions are important in reducing the harm associated with adolescent risky behavior, scholars have suggested that a participatory perspective may offer an alternative approach (Mason et al. 2013). A participatory perspective is an authentic approach that recognizes risky behavior is socially embedded and acknowledges the balance between having life experiences and weighing up perceived risk (Mason et al. 2013). However, no research to date has empirically investigated the role authenticity plays in directly communicating and engaging with adolescents around risky behavior.

The concept of authenticity has received attention across a range of disciplines (Pérez 2019; Vredenburg et al. 2020). Research points towards authenticity playing a critical role for

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adolescents, in terms of how they see themselves, and how they perceive their relationships with others (Alchin et al. 2023). Authenticity is about an individual's willingness to be self-determined and self-aware and engage in communication and behaviors that are genuine and real (Turner et al. 2020). From an adolescent's perspective, authenticity is fundamentally about a sense of being one's true self and engaging with 'others' (family, friends, teachers) who are perceived as open, genuine, and trustworthy (Alchin et al. 2023; Turner et al. 2020). Openness (willingness to consider/accept a variety of perspectives) is a particularly important aspect of authenticity because it can potentially lead to trust of both 'self' and 'others'. Creating an authentic environment, characterized by openness, enables adolescents to be true to themselves and is more likely to result in adolescents trusting messages about risky behavior, and making good decisions about engaging in risky behavior (Arnett 2014; Kernis and Goldman 2006; Turner et al. 2020).

The primary aim of our research is to examine how and why 'authenticity' in the context of adolescent risky behavior is important in fostering responsible adolescent behavior around alcohol consumption. We use the term 'risky behavior' to denote risky alcohol consumption, such as underage drinking and the overconsumption of alcohol. Our research takes a participatory perspective and draws on authenticity and adolescent risky behavior literature to conceptualize and build theory about 'authenticity and adolescent risky behavior', where we develop four propositions that guide our research, and offer the following conceptualization: *adolescents' thoughts, feelings and behavior regarding risky behavior that enable them to have a sense of being true to 'self', while their engagements with significant 'others' are perceived to be real and genuine, and associated with openness and trust, ultimately enhancing their ability to make 'good' decisions.* In doing so, we identify elements of authentic communication messaging (specific aspects of messages from parents and social marketing initiatives) and determine the behavior of parents (role modeling and being open

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about their own experiences) and adolescents (being given room to experience while having boundaries) that creates an authentic environment, characterized by openness and trust, and adolescents' ability to be true to themselves, which ultimately leads to a reduction in adolescent risky behavior around alcohol consumption.

Our study addresses a call for research in public policy aimed at curbing adolescents' risky behavior (Chaplin and Connell 2015), and "examin[ing] new types of interventions aimed at adolescents" (Pechman et al. 2019, p. 167). Guided by our four propositions, in study 1, we first examine authentic communication and behavior around risky alcohol consumption at a micro level (two-way engagement between parents and adolescents) using a qualitative approach to develop a comprehensive 'authentic engagement framework for reducing adolescent risky behavior' that identifies authentic communication messages and behaviors that adolescents respond to regarding risky behavior. In study 2 we test one proposition related to authentic messaging, relevant to the macro level (one-way communication from policy makers to adolescents), using an experiment, providing evidence that authentic communication is crucial not only for parent-adolescent engagement but also for marketing and policy makers targeting adolescents.

This research makes two key contributions to the literature on adolescent risky behavior (Ryan et al. 2010; Tanner et al. 2008). First, we provide empirical evidence that an authentic and participatory approach is critical to reducing adolescent risky behavior related to alcohol consumption, extending Mason et al.'s (2013) work. Significantly, we find that it is essential to not only highlight the negative consequences of risky behavior, as is commonly done and suggested (Gilligan and Kypri 2012; Ryan et al. 2011), but also to acknowledge the positive aspects (e.g., drinking alcohol is an enjoyable sharing experience). Acknowledging the positive aspects reflects adolescents' implicit and explicit attitudes towards risky behavior that are fundamental to their belief structures/attitudes (Fitzsimons and Moore 2008). We

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show that for a message about risky behavior to be trusted, policy makers, social marketers, and parents need to warn of perceived risks while acknowledging the positive aspects, because this is perceived as open and authentic. We also offer talking points that parents and policy makers can use related to the hedonic, social and safety dimensions of messages in relation to alcohol consumption specifically relating to adolescents.

Second, we provide evidence for the importance of ‘authenticity’ in parent-adolescent engagement as an effective tool to navigate adolescents’ risky behavior, extending previous work (Alchin et al. 2023; Gilligan and Kypri 2012). We show that authentic communication paired with authentic behavior (including giving adolescents room to gain experience within boundaries) create openness, leading to perceived authenticity of others and self. This perceived authenticity makes messages more trustworthy, reducing the likelihood of adolescents engaging in risky behavior. Our findings have implications for public policy, social marketing, parents, and ultimately for adolescents, enabling them to flourish into adulthood.

Background Literature

Adolescents and Risky Behavior

Adolescence is the period of life between childhood and adulthood (ages 10 to 19) and is a fundamental stage of human development, which lays the foundations for good health and life balance (WHO 2022). Adolescence can be viewed from various perspectives that provide insights into risky behavior, including epidemiological/neurological, psychological, political-legal, and participatory sociocultural perspectives. An epidemiological/neurological perspective considers adolescents’ personal characteristics and neurological make-up. Adolescence can be a difficult period, with many facing challenges because of the complex epidemiological and neurological profile of this group (Pechmann et al. 2019). The epidemiological metrics for adolescents suggest there are many risks and life

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factors they need to navigate, such as peer pressure, family circumstances, drug and alcohol use, sex and sexuality, and access to unhealthy food, that can have a major impact on their well-being (Batat and Tanner 2019; Laghi et al. 2019). Along with this, adolescents' brains are wired with a strong desire to engage in risky behavior (Batat 2016; Pechmann et al. 2019).

From a psychosocial perspective, it is also a time when young people are vulnerable due to their perceived lack of control and propensity for being impulsive and self-conscious, which can lead to questionable decisions around risky consumption of alcohol, drugs, and cigarettes (Baker et al. 2016; Hill and Sharma 2020). Adolescents start experimenting with their emerging independence and identity (Erikson 1968). Among the peers they select, adolescents adjust their behaviors and goals that are important to their developing sense of self (Nurmi 2004). Critical to adolescent risky behavior are their positive implicit attitudes (positive associations) and explicit attitudes (expectancies) towards experimenting and experiencing life (Fitzsimons and Moore 2008; Sherman 2008). Positive explicit attitudes related to alcohol consumption start to form during early adolescence, while positive implicit attitudes tend to form once adolescents have begun to experiment with it (Thush and Wiers 2007).

A political-legal perspective takes a protective approach to youth risky behavior, regulating both the behavior of young people and their environment (Andreasen 2006; Mason et al. 2011). One way to safeguard youth is through age-based legal rights for certain consumption activities, such as buying alcohol, tobacco, firearms, and certain forms of birth control. Additionally, age-specific bans on promotions have been enacted, such as those prohibiting tobacco product advertisements targeted at teenagers, near schools, and in PG13 movies. These limitations aim to minimize young people's premature exposure to adult

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activities, as research indicates that adolescents may be particularly attracted to such activities at this stage of their development (Andreasen et al. 2012; Pechmann et al. 2019).

An alternative approach to understanding adolescent risky behavior is a participatory sociocultural perspective (Mason et al. 2013). Developing a deep and contextualized understanding of risk is important for public health responses to young people's risky behavior (Hennell et al. 2021). A participatory perspective recognizes that risky behavior occurs within a sociocultural context in which adolescents are faced with a multitude of life situations and circumstances that create tension between perceived risk and having 'socially accepted' life experiences (Mason et al. 2013). One key socially accepted consumption behavior among young people, often seen as a rite of passage, is risky alcohol consumption, otherwise known as "getting drunk" (Griffin et al. 2009). Excessive drinking is a major concern because it can trigger other behaviors, such as risky sexual behavior or dangerous driving (Cornil et al. 2017). Understanding how parents, other significant adults, and policy makers can engage effectively with this group to reduce risky behavior is critical (Pechmann et al. 2019). Previous research on adolescent risky behavior points to the importance of perceived mutual trust in protecting adolescents from engaging in risky behavior, making them more likely to believe and listen to their parents' advice (Abar et al 2009; Borawski et al. 2003). A potential avenue for engaging effectively involves adopting a participatory approach (Mason et al. 2013), exploring the concept of authenticity (Alchin et al. 2023), and linking this to trust (Borawski et al. 2003) since these aspects are of particular relevance to adolescents (Harter 2002).

Authenticity

The concept of authenticity has been studied in disciplines including philosophy, sociology, and psychology, providing multiple perspectives, all with a common thread: authenticity is about being true to oneself, with actions that reflect the "core-self" (Fritz et al.

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2017). Although the definition of authenticity has been debated (Kernis and Goldman 2006; Ryan and Deci 2002; Wood et al. 2008), there is consensus that authenticity refers to the quality of being true to oneself and others, and is associated with attributes such as genuineness and what is 'real' (Beverland and Farrelly 2010; Molleda 2010). From an adolescent's perspective, authenticity is enhanced by the positive social support and knowledge of significant others (Alchin et al. 2023, p. 32). Our research examines adolescents' experience and perceptions of authenticity related to risky alcohol consumption from multiple angles: parental communication about risky/responsible alcohol consumption; parent and adolescent behavior around alcohol consumption (i.e. two-way engagement at the micro level); and social marketing messaging on responsible alcohol consumption directed towards adolescents (i.e. one-way communication at the macro level). Given these multiple perspectives we consider two key streams of literature on 'authenticity': a psychological view of adolescent authenticity relating to being true to oneself and others (i.e., parents, peers, and other social support), and consumer authenticity relating to marketing messaging.

Adolescent authenticity – related to 'oneself' and 'others' (family)

Authenticity is particularly important during adolescence because of young people's need to function autonomously and engage with opportunities (Arnett 2014; Harter 2002). Adolescents are striving for authenticity (both 'self' and from 'others') and knowledge of authenticity is a key pathway for healthy development (Alchin et al. 2023; Thomaes et al. 2017). According to Alchin et al. (2023) adolescent authenticity involves thoughts, feelings, awareness, and a sense of being one's true self, and is context-driven according to close social relationships with 'others' (parents, friends, classmates).

Authenticity related to 'oneself' refers to "one's willingness to be self-determined, be conscious and aware of one's feelings and experiences and engage in behaviors that are genuine" (Turner et al. 2020, p. 501). Being authentic allows adolescents to align their

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behavior and decisions with their true selves, rather than conforming to societal or peer pressure (Pechmann et al. 2019). Adolescence is a time when individuals are trying to establish their sense of identity and self-concept, by exploring different roles and identities (Pechmann et al. 2019). Parents can have a positive impact on adolescents' experiences and perceived authenticity, especially if they facilitate adolescents' independence and need for experimentation (Alchin et al. 2023). Parental relationships during this developmental stage can either enhance or hinder a sense of authenticity, with controlling (helicopter) parents hindering, and parental-adolescent relationships built around autonomy and mutual understanding fostering authenticity and trust (Turner et al. 2020). Adolescents who experience less authenticity, particularly in their relationships with parents, are more likely to experience symptoms of depression (McCormick et al. 2015; Turner et al. 2020) and be more inclined to make poor decisions with regard to risky behavior (Mikeska et al. 2017; Pechmann et al. 2019). Inauthentic behavior can lead to stress and anxiety, as adolescents may feel they are not being true to themselves. In contrast, being authentic can lead to greater resilience and coping skills, as individuals are better able to navigate challenges by drawing on their own inner resources. Authenticity can help adolescents build positive relationships with others by allowing them to express themselves honestly and openly (Kernis and Goldman 2006). Interestingly, adolescents who experience authenticity tend to act in line with desired behavior; for example, listening to parents' advice and conforming with school procedures and discipline (Gueta and Berkovich 2022). Studies have shown that developing a sense of authenticity in adolescence aids good decision making and reduces risky behavior (Arnett 2014; Sutton 2020, Alchin et al. 2023).

Authenticity in terms of 'others' refers to how authenticity can impact on close relationships with regard to how 'others' see and respond to the adolescent, and in turn, how the adolescent perceives the authenticity of others (Alchin et al. 2023). Importantly, others

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who are perceived as being authentic tend to be trusted and this trust means that adolescents are more willing to believe information and knowledge from these supportive sources (Alchin et al. 2023; Borawski et al. 2003). Critical to adolescent authenticity around risky behavior is authentic communication around sensitive topics and the perceived authenticity of the source (Harter 2002). Therefore, this is likely to be an important consideration for public policy and marketing, such as targeted educational initiatives or social marketing campaigns.

Consumer and marketing authenticity – ‘other’

Authenticity has become critical in marketing because consumers are demanding that organizations be genuine, transparent, and honest (Cinelli and LeBoeuf 2020). Hence, authenticity is considered essential for successful marketing and communication because it improves message and source credibility by reducing consumer skepticism and enhancing trustworthiness, while the indirect benefits include loyalty and advocacy behaviors (Beverland and Farrelly 2010; Moulard et al. 2016; Pérez 2019; Becker et al. 2019). From a marketing and public policy perspective, research has started to acknowledge the importance of adopting authentic messaging and behaviours with marginalized and potentially vulnerable individuals (Ciszek and Pounders 2020). Marketing, advertising and brand authenticity literature can provide fruitful insights that can be applied to social marketing messaging around risky behavior (Ciszek and Pounders 2020).

Despite its importance, there has been a lack of a shared definition of authenticity across advertising, branding, and social media marketing (Nunes et al. 2021). Various marketing scholars have attempted to provide definitions, with many taking a brand perspective, such as Morhart et al. (2015), who define authenticity as the extent to which consumers perceive a brand to be faithful and true towards itself and its consumers, and to support consumers being true to themselves; and Moulard et al. (2021), who define authenticity as “the degree to which an entity in one’s environment (e.g., object, person,

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performance) is perceived to be true to or match up with something else.” (p. 99). Other scholars consider authenticity as a process; for example, Newman and Dhar (2014, p. 372) state that “authenticity describes a verification process—the evaluation of some truth or fact.” Critical to our study is a consumer perspective. Nunes et al. (2021) offer a reconceptualization of authenticity in marketing, describing it as “a holistic consumer assessment determined by six component judgements (accuracy, connectedness, integrity, legitimacy, originality, and proficiency) whereby the role of each component can change according to the consumption context” (p. 2).

Authenticity is a multi-faceted concept that is subjective and therefore should be studied contextually (Shoenberger et al. 2021). In brand marketing, authenticity is linked to alignment: Vredenburg et al. (2020) define brand authenticity as the alignment of a brand’s explicit purpose and values with its marketing messaging and prosocial corporate practice. Authentic brands that are characterised by a positive alignment of purpose, messages and corporate practice can potentially lead to social change (Bulmer et al. 2024). In a marketing communications context, advertising can play a role in reinforcing aspects of authenticity through executional tactics and cues (Beverland et al. 2008). An authentic ad is one that is genuine, real, and true with regard to its executional elements: consumers’ assessment of alignment between brand image and ad as an important determinant of advertising effectiveness is critical (Becker et al. 2019). Interestingly, Lee and Johnson (2022) found that executional elements such as two-sided messages contributed to the perceived authenticity of the source.

This notion of ‘aligning’ is reflected in the conceptual feature of authenticity for adolescents, including (a) congruency of thoughts, feelings, and awareness with the true self; and (b) self-consistency, which reflects the self as consistent across or within contexts, situations and roles (for a review see Alchin et al. 2023). Despite a reasonable amount of

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research on authenticity and authentic messaging from organizations and brands (Campagna et al. 2023) and given the significance of authenticity to adolescent behaviour (Alchin et al. 2023), there has been little research and no conceptualization on authentic communication messaging around adolescent risky behaviour.

Conceptualizing 'Authenticity and Adolescent Risky Behavior'

Given that extant research considers authenticity to be socially constructed (Beverland and Farrelly 2010; Molleda 2010), we took a participatory approach that accepts that risky adolescent behavior is socially embedded and endorses acknowledging adolescents' need for life experiences and experimenting while providing boundaries (Mason et al. 2013). Applying a participatory approach and authenticity to the context of communication and engagement with adolescents around risky alcohol consumption, we conceptualized 'authenticity related to adolescent risky behavior' via four propositions that guided our empirical work. The four propositions relate to authentic communication messages (i.e., what messages adolescents perceive to be authentic); parental behavior (i.e., authenticity of 'others' as a message source); behavior of adolescents (i.e., authenticity of 'self'); and their association with an adolescent's perceived sense of openness, authenticity, and trust. Previous research points towards an association between openness, authenticity, and trust (Kernis and Goldman 2006; Hoffman, 1993; Shen and Kim 2012). There is further indication that 'openness' is associated with greater authenticity (Alchin et al. 2023), while authenticity is associated with trust (Portal et al. 2019; Vredenburg et al. 2020), highlighting the potential of 'openness' in creating authenticity and trust for adolescents. Adapting Price et al.'s (2015) definition of open-minded cognition, we defined openness as 'the willingness to consider/accept (including behaving and communicating) a variety of perspectives including values, opinions, beliefs and behavior—even those that contradict one's own opinion'.

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Authentic Communication Messages

Previous research on communicating risky behavior to adolescents consistently highlights the need to warn of negative consequences, using fear-based messages to reduce adolescents' risky behaviors (Esrick et al. 2019; Gilligan and Kypri 2012; Ryan et al. 2010). However, this negative approach is potentially less effective (Fitzsimons and Moore 2008). Adolescents develop both implicit and explicit attitudes around risky behavior in general, being drawn to risk due to their biophysical and psychosocial characteristics, which are often in contrast to parental and adult norms (Baker et al. 2016; Fitzsimons and Moore 2008). Messages that only focus on the negative consequences of risky behavior (health, accidents), without considering the positive aspects (belonging, socializing), do not align with this implicit attitude of adolescents, potentially undermining the authenticity of the message.

Communicating both the negative consequences and the positive aspects of risky behavior (which aligns with adolescents' implicit attitudes towards risk) also reflects 'openness' in terms of considering a variety of perspectives (Price et al. 2015). Two-sided messages have the potential to enhance authenticity (Lee and Johnson 2022). Similarly, Xu and Petty (2022) highlight the importance of two-sided messages in promoting 'openness', particularly with regard to morally based attitudes, which seems particularly important in the context of risky behavior. Further, scattered evidence points towards an association of openness with authenticity (Kernis and Goldman, 2006), while authenticity is also linked with trust (Portal et al. 2019; Vredenburg et al. 2020). Based on the literature on trust, authenticity and openness, combined with evidence that adolescents have negative and positive attitudes towards risky behavior (Fitzsimons and Moore 2008; Vredenburg et al. 2020) we proposed the following:

PI: Messages about risky behavior that acknowledge the positive aspects while warning about the negative consequences (i.e. mixed messages) are more likely to

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create a perceived sense of openness, authenticity and trust than just warning about the negative consequences (i.e. negative messages).

Authentic Behavior - Parents

Previous research has identified positive parental role-modeling (i.e., parental behavior), that aligns with the negative consequences of risky behavior as a successful strategy to discourage adolescents' risky behavior (e.g., Abar et al. 2009; Ryan et al. 2010). However, the alignment between parents' role modeling behavior and subsequent communication messaging on adolescents' response to the message has not been studied extensively. Therefore, we suggested investigating how parents' authentic messaging (P1) aligns with their behavior in two ways: first, with how open parents are about their own previous risky behavior (i.e., experience with drinking); and second, their current drinking behavior and the subsequent impact on adolescents' risky behavior. We argue that by relating and aligning parents' previous experience with risky behavior (i.e., revealing stories from their youth about previous real and true behavior) including both positive and negative messaging, creates openness that establishes authenticity, making the message more trustworthy and ultimately effective. We proposed the following:

P2: Parents' open communication about their previous behavior (i.e. experiences with drinking) which aligns with the messages about risky behavior (positive and negative), is more likely to create authenticity and trust than not communicating previous behavior (i.e., denial/secretcy).

In line with this proposition, information that is perceived to come from an authentic source (e.g., parents being open about personal experiences) plays a critical role in the persuasiveness of messages related to risky behavior (Guilamo-Ramos et al. 2006). Alongside being open about past experiences (both positive and negative experiences of drinking alcohol), current parental behavior needs to model the behavior expected of

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adolescents (i.e., responsible behavior). As highlighted in the authenticity literature, messaging needs to be aligned to the behavior of the source (Vredenburg et al. 2020). Applying the authenticity literature of alignment, we argue that the message (i.e., acknowledging the positive aspects while warning of the negative consequences) and the behavior of the source (i.e. parents/brand), need to align to be considered authentic and trustworthy. Therefore, we proposed the following:

P3: Parents' current behavior that aligns with messaging about positive aspects and negative consequences (i.e., responsible drinking) is more likely to create authenticity and trust than not aligning with behavior (i.e., heavy drinking).

Authentic Behavior -Adolescents

In the context of adolescent risky behavior, alignment of behavior and message is not only relevant from the perspective of others: just as critical is the perception of adolescents' self-authenticity and a sense of being true to one's self (Alchin et al. 2023). Previous research consistently emphasizes restricting adolescent engagement in risky behavior (Esrick et al. 2019; Gilligan and Kypri 2012), as opposed to giving adolescents room to experience, and providing them with the knowledge and awareness needed to make their own decisions and shape their own social context (Alchin et al. 2023; Mason et al. 2013). Therefore, enabling adolescents to align their own behavior with their explicit and implicit attitudes and propensity towards risk (Pechman et al. 2019), while setting boundaries through authentic messaging (positive and negative) from 'others', will contribute to an open, authentic environment (where a variety of perspectives, both positive and negative, including beliefs and behaviors are accepted), allowing them to be true to themselves. We proposed the following:

P4: Giving adolescents room to experience (i.e., allowing them to align their own behavior around risky behavior in terms of their own attitudes towards risk), while

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being given boundaries through authentic communication messaging (i.e. positive aspects and negative consequences) is more likely to create openness, authenticity, trust, and a sense of being true to themselves, compared to not giving them room to experience.

Previous research has separately investigated various elements of parental-adolescent engagement with regard to mitigating risky behavior related to alcohol; for example, communication messages that warn of the negative consequences (Esrick et al. 2019; Gilligan and Kypri 2012); behavioral aspects such as parental role modelling (Abar et al. 2009; Taylor and Bonner 2003); and restricting and/or providing boundaries around risky behavior (Bourdeau et al. 2012). Research has also indicated the importance of adolescents being given the room to experience (Moore et al. 2010); creating openness and trust (Miller-Day 2008); and enabling adolescents to be true to themselves (Alchin et al. 2023), as key success factors in navigating adolescent risky behavior (Abar et al. 2009). However, despite this, the literature on adolescent risky behavior does not give specific advice on how openness, trust and being true to oneself is created and how it relates to authentic messaging and behavior. Guided by our four propositions we conducted two studies – a qualitative study that explored adolescent and parent communication and behavior around risky alcohol consumption (examining all four propositions P1 to P4), followed by an experiment to test potential intervention (i.e. authentic communication messaging related to P1) in a social advertising context, as outlined in the following section.

Overview of Methodology

This research adopted a mixed methods approach, including an interpretive qualitative methodology and quantitative experimental design, following a two-study process as outlined in Figure 1. We chose a mixed methodology to provide broader and more complete insights into the problem (Almeida 2018). Because of the complex nature of studying adolescent risky

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behavior and wanting to understand the implications for marketing and public policy, a mixed method was deemed appropriate.

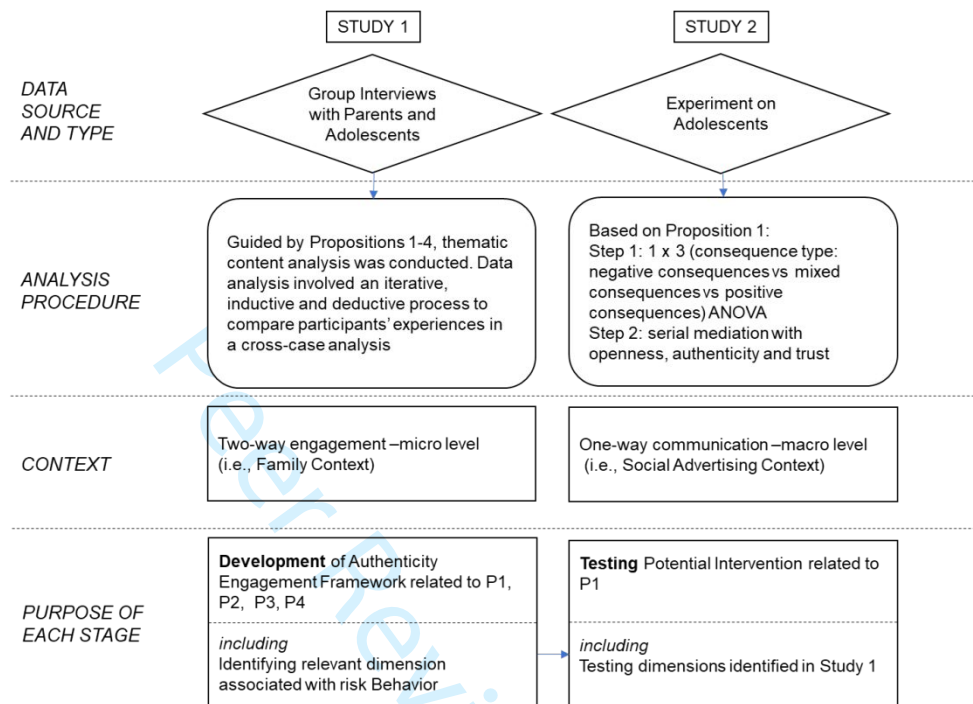


Figure 1. Research Design and Analytical Approach.

We used a 'complementary approach', where different but complementary aspects of the same phenomenon are examined (Davis et al. 2011). The overall purpose was to advance marketing and public policy on authenticity and adolescent risky behavior about the most effective way for parents to engage with adolescents around risky behavior such as binge drinking and excessive alcohol consumption. The aim of the first qualitative study, guided by P1 to P4, was to generate insights to help build theory and develop a framework related to a two-way engagement (i.e., micro level, in a family context). The aim of the second study, an experiment, was to test part of the phenomenon (P1) that is relevant to one-way communication (i.e., macro level, in a social advertising context), to test a potential intervention related to effective communication messaging.

Study 1: Qualitative Approach- Framework Development

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The purpose of study 1 was to develop a framework by gaining insights into parental-adolescent engagement around risky and responsible alcohol consumption in relation to our conceptualization of ‘authenticity and adolescent risky behavior’ and associated propositions. In addition, the aim of this study was to uncover authentic communication dimensions that are relevant to adolescents in relation to risky behavior.

Method

To gain insights into how adolescents and parents engage with communication around risky behavior we used a group interviewing technique that consisted of adolescents and their parents (or primary caregiver/s). As outlined in the literature, parental-adolescent communication is fundamental to how adolescents navigate risky behavior (Pechmann et al. 2019). Previous research has also noted inconsistent responses when parents’ and/or adolescents’ perspectives are taken alone (Cohen and Rice 1997; Chassin et al. 2005). For these reasons, we chose to interview parents and adolescents together as a family group to provide insights into how parents and adolescents communicate, enabling a deeper understanding of what messaging adolescents deem to be effective. We acknowledge that family interviewing can sometimes create desirability bias and pressures. In this case, the potential was for adolescents to not disclose true risky behaviors and attitudes about alcohol with their parents present. We recognize that adolescents are prone to conforming in terms of what they believe their parent/s expect as appropriate behavior and/or that some may experience heightened anxiety due to possible chastisement, penalty or disciplining by the parent for revealing inappropriate behavior. Therefore, the adolescent participants in our study may not have fully disclosed their true drinking behavior. We highlight these limitations, yet also believe using family group interviews was most appropriate. Given this study was focused primarily on how parents communicate about alcohol and risky alcohol behaviors and how adolescents respond to such messaging, having both parties in the

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interview was important to enable us to observe and record the interplay of communication. One of the main advantages of the group interviewing technique, particularly with family groups, is the opportunity for all participants to share their experiences and knowledge on a particular issue or phenomenon, without feeling intimidated or dominated by others in the group (Dodds and Hess 2021). Please refer to Web Appendix A for further information.

Recruitment

Eleven New Zealand (NZ) families and 12 French families, involving 48 young people aged 12 to 21 years of age and 39 parents, totaling 87 participants, participated in the study. We chose to interview French and NZ families for convenience; however, these countries also represent 'typical' youth alcohol consumption in Western countries (WHO, 2022). Also, both countries have similar family structures and are culturally similar with regard to drinking behavior, with minor differences in wine consumption (Mouret et al. 2013). It is important to note that this study was interested in 'typical' adolescents' experience of alcohol and not adolescents (or families) that had some known level of risky alcohol consumption.

A convenience sampling method was used. Family groups were recruited via the snowballing technique (Parker et al. 2019). Initially, families were recruited through the researchers' personal contacts, then each family interviewed was asked to recommend other families. This convenience sampling method was implemented primarily due to the difficulty of recruiting adolescents and family groups, which is a common reason for using snowballing (Parker et al. 2019). Adolescents, particularly those under 18, are often hard to access and difficult to engage in research (Flanagan and Hancock 2010; Hepi et al. 2017); therefore, recruitment strategies that ensure these groups are accessible and that alleviate distrust or discomfort about the research process are needed (Batat 2016; Batat and Tanner 2019). Although this method has limitations with regard to selection bias and representativeness,

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care was taken to ensure a reasonable spread of gender and age in the participating adolescents, and varying family structures. Two criteria were used to select families. The first criterion was that the family group had adolescents between the ages of 12 and 19 years. Adolescence has been classified by the World Health Organization (2022) as the phase of life between childhood and adulthood (ages 10 to 19); however, we did not recruit younger than 12 for ethical reasons and included a few participants who were 20 and 21 year old. These slightly older participants were often siblings of younger participants and provided great insights by being able to reflect on their entire adolescence. The second criterion was that parents had been or were currently social drinkers and that their adolescent/s had been exposed to alcohol either via family gatherings and/or going to parties (older adolescents). A comprehensive and rigorous human ethics application was gained for this research through Massey University. See Web Appendix A for details of the recruitment process and participants detail across the New Zealand and French sample.

Data collection

Group interviews with each family were primarily conducted online due to COVID-19 preventing face-to-face group interviews. Nine (out of 11) New Zealand interviews and 10 (out of 12) French interviews were conducted online using a video conference platform. In retrospect, moving the group interviews online provided some advantages; for example, the interviews were less intrusive and enabled a safe environment for discussion because participants were in their own homes without the interviewer in their space. This setup enabled the interviews to be more engaging and convenient for both participants and researchers (Dodds and Hess 2021). A semi-structured interview guide was used to ensure consistency across the New Zealand and French interviews; however, both interviewers (second and fourth authors) are experienced qualitative researchers and therefore allowed the interviews to flow like a conversation. The group interview lasted on average around 60-75

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minutes, with the smaller groups around 60 minutes and the larger groups upwards of 75 minutes (details of different groups can be found in Appendix A). The French interviews were conducted in French and then the transcriptions were translated to English. Each family and participant were given a pseudonym to protect their identity.

Participants were asked questions related to four key areas: experience of alcohol consumption, family communication around alcohol, effective communication around alcohol consumption, and responsible alcohol consumption. The key focus of the group interview was on family communication and effective communication. Specific questions around family communication were directed at parents/care givers and adolescents. The younger participants, particularly those aged 12-15, were also encouraged by their parent/s. This was a significant advantage of using family groups and enlisting parents as co-facilitators (Dodds and Hess 2021). The interviewers ensured each member of the family had an opportunity to talk about their experiences openly, and where appropriate each member was probed to discuss further the points they had made, to gain a deeper understanding. See Web Appendix B for the full interview guide.

Data analysis

All the family group interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim, resulting in 269 pages of data. The data analysis was guided by P1-P4. Data analysis involved an iterative, inductive, and deductive process where comparisons were made in a cross-case analysis of our participants' experiences, to uncover common patterns and themes (Azungah 2018). The process of analysis involved five key steps. Step 1 involved the first, second and fourth authors reading through the transcripts separately and creating loosely derived first order themes (and codes) around alcohol consumption, family communication and communication messaging and responsible alcohol consumption. In Step 2 the three researchers discussed patterns and insights, creating second order themes (and codes); for

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example, under alcohol consumption, themes relating to amount and frequency, type of alcohol, and situations where alcohol was consumed were identified. Under family communication, themes such as open communication, trust, and education were found. Associated with responsible alcohol consumption, ideas around social, hedonic, and safety aspects emerged. Step 3 involved enlisting one of the young participants (a 20-year-old) to review the initial codes and to anonymously read through the transcripts to cross-check and ensure the voices of the young participants were accurately represented. Member checking is common in qualitative research to ensure the correct portrayal of participant voices by allowing participants the opportunity to comment on the accuracy and interpretations of data (Candela 2019). Minor refinements were made to the initial codes. Step 4 employed an independent researcher to upload the transcriptions and code and re-code the data in Excel, ensuring the data was robust. These initial insights were discussed within the entire research team; and the researchers compared the existing literature and our emerging understanding to clarify our theoretical insights (Arnold and Fischer 1994). Step 5 was the production of a final set of themes and subthemes, resulting in the development of a framework. In this step, illustrative quotes that represented each theme were identified.

Findings

Our findings are presented according to relevant insights identified for each of the four propositions – authentic communication messaging (P1), authentic parent behavior (P2 and P3), and authentic adolescent behavior (P4) – and its association with openness and trust.

Authentic Communication Messaging

Our analysis of effective authentic communication messaging about risky alcohol consumption provides evidence for P1. We found in our family group interviews that adolescents responded well to messages that *acknowledge the positive aspects* of alcohol consumption, such as accepting adolescents' need for socializing and having pleasurable

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experiences (i.e., implicit and explicit attitudes), while *warning of the negative consequences*.

Further analysis identified three key message dimensions for both positive and negative aspects: *social, hedonic and safety*. We discuss the findings related to each dimension and provide a summary table highlighting and describing the sub-dimensions of each, with illustrative quotes, as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Authentic Communication Messaging

Social Dimension		
Social sub-dimensions	Positive messaging (acknowledging)	Illustrative Quotes
<i>Social acceptance</i>	Acknowledging the importance for adolescents of fitting into the norm and that navigating alcohol is part of learning to socialize	<i>I think it's a particular stage in these kids' lives, they're seeking an identity (French family 5, parent)</i> <i>You fit into that norm of yeah, let's go out, have a few drinks, have fun. You know, if you're drinking, you know, in some situations you fit in a bit easier (NZ family 5, adolescent, F)</i>
<i>Belonging and sharing</i>	Acknowledging the importance of sharing a drink with friends and family providing a sense of belonging	<i>For me, it's also about sharing. I don't see myself drinking on my own. I prefer having a glass, even of orange juice, with friends. The best reason for opening a bottle is to share it. (French family 6, adolescent, F)</i> <i>It's all about enjoying whatever you want to drink, but it's all about the people and the experiences and the relationships... building relationships (NZ Family 9, parent)</i>
	Negative messaging (warning)	
<i>Peer pressure</i>	Warning about the pressure on adolescents to drink, communicating to them to have boundaries, and giving them the confidence to say no	<i>Peer pressure does start to have a major part to play. And when it's going out and socializing at friends' houses... it can change pretty quick. So, it's just a matter of always knowing that she can call me if she is in a situation where she wants to get out (NZ family 6, parent)</i> <i>I tell them ...not be forced into anything by your smart alec friends. I mean, that will probably happen one day. But they can't say that we didn't warn them (French family 1, parent)</i>
<i>Embarrassing behavior</i>	Warning about the negative consequences of drinking too much causing embarrassing behaviors, such as losing control, vomiting, taking inappropriate photos	<i>It can lead to drunkenness... throwing up and things like that, which if you think about it, kinda ruins the evening... [and] taking stupid photos or videos! (French family 1, parent)</i> <i>I don't often like to drink to lose control. I just think you make yourself look silly sometimes, or you just get yourself into a bad social situation or embarrass yourself, so I'm not really into that. (NZ family 5, adolescent, F)</i>
Hedonic Dimension		
Hedonic sub-dimensions	Positive messaging (acknowledging)	Illustrative Quotes
<i>Enjoyment</i>	Acknowledging the enjoyment of drinking alcohol but in moderation	<i>The main idea was to show them that it must be enjoyed. The goal was not to demonize or ban it, to completely prohibit it, because we thought that would probably be the best way of making them want to start drinking (French family 7, parent)</i> <i>I like to have a drink, it's fun and sociable... have fun with it but just don't abuse it... enjoy it (NZ family 9, adolescent, F)</i>
<i>Sensory pleasure</i>	Acknowledging the pleasure of tasting alcohol, particularly wine, with the goal of learning to appreciate qualities and flavors	<i>We'd drink a mouthful, but the focus was still on the taste, we wouldn't have any more than that because it's not a good thing if you haven't finished developing... I'd say that the focus was still preventative although they started to bring in the idea of enjoying what we were drinking (French family 7, adolescent, F).</i>

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		<i>Even when the kids were young and they wanted to come and have a drink of wine or whatever we were drinking, they wanted to have a sip, that was fine, let them have a sip. Let them taste the alcohol, let them taste it (NZ family 9, parent)</i>
	Negative messaging (warning)	
Overindulgence	Warning about the impacts of overindulging, such as feeling sick and the awfulness of hangovers	<i>The first thing is that it can make you sick. Puking and not being able to stand on your own two feet is still one of the main after-effects of drinking (French family 11, parent)</i> <i>That first time I didn't know anything really about alcohol. So, I just drank and then it kind of all hit me and I was sick. But after that they [parents] explained it pretty well. Just, you know, don't have too much (NZ family 7, adolescent, M)</i>
Sensory displeasure	Using the genuine dislike of the taste of alcohol when young, to warn of the risks and to teach adolescents to be aware of themselves, their likes and dislikes	<i>It was horrible. It tasted horrible (French family 1, young person, F)</i> <i>So, if I don't like it I'm just not gonna drink it for the sake of drinking it (NZ family 1, adolescent, M)</i>
Safety Dimension		
Sub-dimensions	Positive messaging	Illustrative Quotes
Outlining limits	Acknowledging self-responsibility and telling adolescents to "know their limits" and informing them about the amount of alcohol that is considered reasonable	<i>Alcohol, yes, it's not taboo or something that has to be banned but you need to know its limits. And the term responsible does convey a sense of moderation, that's how we experience it and feel about it (French family 7, parent)</i> <i>It all comes down to you knowing yourself and knowing your tendencies on, like how you're going to react to that certain drink and whether it's going to affect anyone else or yourself (NZ family 11, adolescent, M)</i>
Looking out for others	Acknowledging the importance of friendships and being responsible for others (friends) when out drinking and socializing	<i>Looking out for your mates and keeping safe, and always being in a group and keeping together (NZ family 11, parent)</i> <i>The first thing is to pay attention to your own behavior. But also to what your friends are doing because there will automatically be one or two... it's happened to all of us. There's always one who thinks they're stronger than everyone else and gets themselves into trouble! You'll have to manage the situation (French family 1, parent)</i>
	Negative messaging	
Health risk	Warning about the health risk of drinking, ranging from alcohol poisoning, the effects on brain development and the liver, to psychological issues, addiction, and death.	<i>Not drinking beyond a level of which you lose control, or you make things unsafe for yourself. And also, which endanger your physical/mental health and well-being... My big concern is the long-term impacts of alcohol from, you know, in terms of brain development and all those sorts of things (NZ family 10, parent)</i> <i>I told them about alcohol poisoning, that you can die from it, that you shouldn't drink alcohol like... Around us, there are always stories of kids who get alcohol poisoning and end up in hospital (French family 5, parent)</i>
Associated risk	Warnings about the associated risks of drinking to excess, for example, drinking and driving, sexual assault and spiking of drinks.	<i>Road safety messages, where we've seen accidents on TV, or even deaths almost. It's very shocking and the most effective message is surely to say that today you have to choose between drinking and driving (French family 11, parent)</i> <i>Absolutely no drinking and driving. It's an absolute no-no (NZ family 11, parent)</i> <i>Concerns were about keeping physically safe, and also for [daughter], keeping herself safe from sexual assault and those sorts of things. So, it was more staying in control (NZ family 10, parent)</i>

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		You're likely to incur other risks as well, relating to drugs and even sexual abuse. There are many things that can happen (French family 7, parent)
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Social Dimension. Our data indicate that communication messaging about the social dimension of alcohol consumption relates to *acknowledging* the positive aspects of socializing with friends, including *social acceptance*, and a *sense of belonging and sharing*; while *warning* adolescents of the potential negative social consequences, such as *peer pressure* and potentially putting themselves in a situation that involves *embarrassing or dangerous behavior*.

Hedonic dimension. The hedonic dimension relates primarily to *acknowledging* the *enjoyment* and *sensory pleasure* of drinking alcohol while *warning* about *overindulging* and using *sensory displeasure*, adolescents' genuine dislike of the taste, to dissuade them (see Table 1). Central to an authentic message is acknowledging the enjoyment of drinking, without prohibiting or demonizing it, but warning of the risks. Interestingly, this was the only dimension where some cultural differences were identified. Although the enjoyment aspect of drinking alcohol was relatively similar across the two cultures, the sensory pleasure of taste was particularly prevalent with French families, where wine drinking is fundamental to their cultural identity (Mouret et al. 2013). It was also a dimension where the younger adolescents (12-16 years old) voiced their dislike for the taste of alcohol. This dislike at a younger age could be used to teach young people to be aware of themselves, their likes and dislikes, to instill confidence.

Safety dimension. The safety dimension revolves around messaging that *acknowledges* adolescents know their *limits* and encourages them to *look out for others*, while *warning* them about the *health* and *associated safety risks* (see Table 1). One of the strongest messages that parents give their adolescents is to drink responsibly by knowing their limits, to avoid the health and associated risks of drinking too much alcohol, such as alcohol

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poisoning, detrimental effects on brain development and the liver, psychological issues, drinking and driving, and being at risk of assault (particularly sexual assault). Most of the young people we interviewed understood the amount that was considered ‘responsible’ and those who were going out and drinking with friends knew their limits and were conscious of looking out for each other. Looking after friends while out socializing is a key message that resonates with adolescents, who want to be seen as behaving as a good friend.

Authentic Behavior

The behavioral aspects we identified from our data capture the importance of both parents and adolescents displaying *authentic behavior* around alcohol consumption, providing evidence for P2, P3 and P4. Importantly we found that parents who *align their messages* with appropriate behavior and who are *open about their own experiences* of alcohol are perceived more authentic. Authentic adolescent behavior revolved around adolescents *experiencing alcohol and related social events* while understanding and *accepting boundaries* given by parents. That is, parents behaving consistently with the communication messages they give, and both parents and adolescents behaving according to their beliefs, attitudes, and values around responsible alcohol consumption is critical to parental-adolescent engagement. See Table 2 for an overview of the key authentic behaviors of parents and adolescents important for establishing authentic engagement.

Table 2. Authentic Behavior

Authentic behavior	Description of authentic behavior	Illustrative Quotes
<i>Parent or significant adult behavior</i>		
<i>Aligning messages with appropriate behavior</i>	Messages given to adolescents about responsible alcohol consumption must align with adult behavior- Role modeling	<i>As the girls get older, I've found that they're more conscious of it [alcohol] and I'm more conscious, I can't really remember [the last time I drank alcohol]. (NZ Family 5, parent)</i> <i>[We do] not [drink] that often...Now that we have children, we can't really let our guard down too much because they're always there (French family 3, parent)</i>
<i>Open about own experiences</i>	Acknowledging own past behaviors both positive and negative around alcohol consumption	<i>We were open about our own youth and the stories of, I mean, you know, we had too much and had a few drinks. (NZ family, 11, parent)</i> <i>If she [mum] asks me a question, I will answer it honestly to a certain degree (NZ Family 7, young person, F)</i>

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		<i>Whereas when I was younger, I probably would have carried on probably a bit similar to Sam today, to have fun and enjoy the feeling of feeling actually a bit drunk. (NZ family, 7, parent)</i>
<i>Adolescent behavior</i>		
Experiencing alcohol and related social events	Experiencing alcohol and social events with alcohol on their own terms	<i>For me, it's also about sharing. I don't see myself drinking on my own. I prefer having a glass, even of orange juice, with friends (French family 6, adolescent, F)</i> <i>I also thought that, like I had to find my own limits, like they're not going to be able to teach me what I can drink and not. So you've got to, you've got to do it cautiously, in the right environment. (NZ Family 11, adolescent, M)</i>
Accepting boundaries	Adolescents understanding and accepting the boundaries given by parents.	<i>For us, it's always just been about communication. Because I mean we understand, you know, you're a young person, you want to be trying this stuff. So we've been like trying to give the boundaries, like yes, okay, you can go to the party or whatever, but there's the two drinks and you're getting picked up at 10 o'clock." (NZ Family 5; parent; F)</i> <i>They just said, never to drink too much. Like they were always just like, be aware of what you're doing and like, if you go out to town be careful of where your drink is placed...they know that I wouldn't do anything stupid. But like it was more of be careful where to put your drink and know your limits and stuff like that.. (French Family 4, Young person, F)</i>

Authentic Environment

Our findings highlight the importance of creating an authentic environment that identified three key aspects - being 'open', 'trust' and enabling adolescents to be 'true to themselves' (see Table 3). Specifically, we found that an authentic environment is open and builds trust, enabling adolescents to be true to themselves. Authentic communication and behavior of parents, in addition to adolescents having the opportunity to be open and honest about their alcohol experiences and the ability to be true to themselves, is fundamental to parental-adolescent engagement around risky alcohol consumption.

Table 3. Authentic Environment

Authentic Environment	Description	Illustrative Quotes
Open	Parents create an open environment, where adolescents are open and honest about their experiences with alcohol	<i>Any topic we can talk about, nothing is off the table, nothing at all. And it's always been that way growing up...Very open, very easy to talk about. It was quite an approachable subject, like everything really, which was good, you can be honest. (NZ family 9, adolescent, F)</i> <i>So having... open communication with that has also allowed us to try new things and be more responsible overall with our consumption of alcohol. Which I think is really, really important, but also a lot of kids don't have that depth of relationships with their parents where they can talk about that stuff. (NZ family 5, adolescent, F)</i> <i>We were pretty liberal and fair to be honest; I feel and open to alcohol. (NZ Family 9, parent)</i>

Trust	Parents create an environment of trust between them and their adolescents	<p><i>We do talk things over, even if we also recognize that everyone keeps secrets. I told him that it's important for us to know a little about what's going on, if only it builds trust. (French Family 1, parent)</i></p> <p><i>"I think we're quite lucky in that sense, where we have built that relationship where they trust us with our decisions. So, you know, from a younger age, you know, when you first started drinking alcohol it was like yeah, give it a go but be sensible about it. So that kind of, yeah, environment, which I think has really helped me at least." (NZ Family 5; adolescent; F)</i></p>
True to self	Adolescents are true to themselves in terms behaving according to their beliefs, attitudes and values around responsible alcohol consumption	<p><i>I don't feel pressured to drink. Like if there's a guy that's, you know, drinking so much you don't want to feel like oh, he's beating me. It's not a competition, who drinks the most or anything like that. It's never a competition, I just don't feel pressured." (NZ Family 10; adolescent; M)</i></p> <p><i>I think the biggest message is know your own limits, and understand that those are boundaries that you will learn, and you will break, and that you'll set for yourself and then you'll go over them or, you know, time and time again. It's a constant learning process but just (laugh), yeah, just have those boundaries in place for yourself and, you know, if you do want to have fun and drink a lot more, go for it, but just understand that there are consequences to that." (NZ Family 5; adolescent; F)</i></p>

Discussion

Based on our analysis we develop an *authentic engagement framework for reducing adolescent risky behavior* (Figure 2). Our framework is underpinned by the key concept of authenticity (Alchin et al. 2023; Kernis and Goldman 2006), which aims to discourage risky consumption while allowing adolescents to flourish.

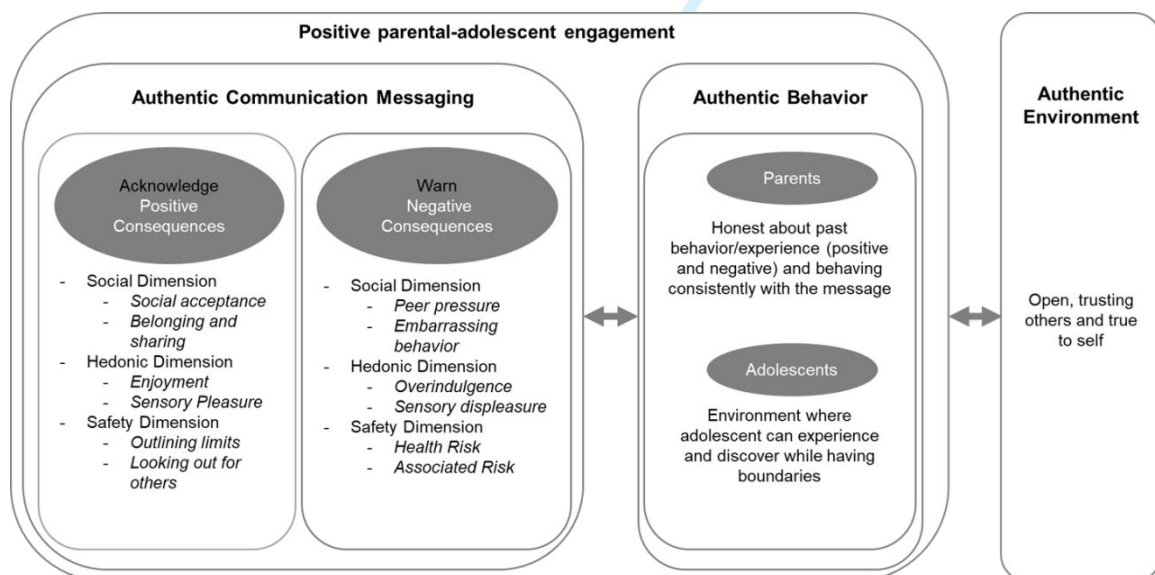


Figure. 2 Authentic Engagement Framework for Reducing Adolescents Risky Behavior.

Importantly, we found that effective engagement with adolescents requires a two-pronged approach: (1) consideration of the ‘authentic communication message’ including

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negative consequences (i.e., warning) and positive aspects (i.e., acknowledging) across three dimensions – social, hedonic and safety; and (2) attention to ‘authentic behavior’ of parents and adolescents- aligning messages (and attitude) with corresponding behavior. Ultimately this two-pronged approach leads to an authentic environment characterized by openness, creating trust and allowing adolescents to be true to themselves with the goal of reducing risky behavior. Importantly, we propose that an authentic environment is influenced by authentic communication messaging and authentic behavior and vice versa. We now discuss the framework components in detail.

Positive parental-adolescent engagement

Authentic communication messaging. Our findings show that a mixed approach (positive and negative) to communication messaging around risky alcohol consumption appears to resonate with adolescents. Historically, messaging about risky behavior has focused on highlighting the negative consequences using fear-based tactics (Esrick et al. 2019). Although adolescents are aware of the negative aspects, adolescents’ belief structures also include positive implicit attitudes (Fitzsimons and Moore 2008; Sherman 2008), indicating the potential importance of acknowledging the positive aspects of alcohol consumption, while warning of the negative consequences. It seems that ignoring adolescents’ implicit positive attitudes towards risky behavior disregards their reality, expresses a non-open environment, making messaging less authentic and trustworthy, and diminishing their ability to express themselves authentically (Harter 2002). Our findings support research that recognizes that consumer well-being can be improved by satisfying psychological needs related to safety and security (the safety dimension); hedonic well-being related to pleasure and happiness (the hedonic dimension); and well-being related to meaning and purpose, belonging and connection (the social dimension) and autonomy and authenticity (Dodds et al. 2021; Kasser 2004).

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A key finding is the social dimension of alcohol consumption for adolescents. Our findings indicate the importance of acknowledging adolescents' need to socialize to instill confidence and enhance relationships with their peers (Akhtar and Boniwell 2010). With socializing and social acceptance come belonging and shared experiences within a group, both important in enabling adolescents to flourish and to have confidence. The key underlying message that seems to resonate is that "It's okay to have fun with your friends, but drink in moderation." This gives adolescents autonomy while setting clear boundaries around moderating risky behavior (Pechmann et al. 2019). Alongside the positive messaging it is crucial to warn about the pressure to drink and the accompanying potential embarrassing behaviors. Parents who explicitly discuss the risks and potential outcomes of indulging in harmful substances can reduce the likelihood of adolescents engaging in risky behavior (Cerezo et al. 2013).

From a hedonic perspective we found espousing the enjoyment aspect of alcohol is an important message that advocates the savoring of pleasurable experiences (Carr et al. 2021), while ensuring that any risks associated are monitored (Pechmann et al. 2019). This finding supports the notion that parents who monitor behavior in a warm, authentic environment are more effective at reducing risky behavior (Paiva et al. 2012). Safety is a key message, particularly around adolescents knowing their limits with alcohol. Adolescents who learn about themselves, set their own limits, and focus on their strengths, are more likely to be well-adjusted and hence avoid risky behavior (Carr et al. 2021). Also, messages about caring and looking after your friends are important. Adolescents who are part of friendship groups that care, cooperate, and help also tend to model these responsible behaviors (Wentzel et al. 2007). Fundamentally, we find that adolescents respect autonomy and respond to messages that allow them to make responsible decisions about alcohol, while being warned of the health and associated risks.

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Authentic Behavior. A critical consideration is that messaging being offered by parents (or significant adults) must align with their behavior to be perceived as authentic by adolescents. This means that parents must align with the message on the negative consequences by role modelling appropriate behavior in the form of moderate consumption themselves (Abar et al. 2009; Bowden et al. 2019). This is consistent with previous research highlighting the need to serve as a role model for adolescents (Brook et al. 2013; Darling et al. 2005). We also found that parents are best to be open about their own previous positive and negative experiences with risky behavior, specifically relating back to their own experiences as adolescents. Being open and consistent makes the key messages more authentic and trustworthy. Parents also need to give adolescents the room to experience and discover alcohol for themselves in a safe and supportive way to move towards openness, trust and self-authenticity. In this respect, behavior is not centered around prevention or forbidding alcohol; it focuses on enabling adolescents to have the freedom to experiment, acknowledging the implicit positive attitudes towards risky behavior, while providing boundaries and understanding the risks and associated negative consequences.

Authentic Environment. Our findings support Kernis and Goldman (2006), advocating that being *open and trusting* associated with an authentic environment that gives adolescents room to experience and allows them to be authentic (true to themselves), paired with clear boundaries, creates openness, and a trusting environment where adolescents can flourish and be encouraged to responsibly approach risky behavior. Giving adolescents room to gain experience within boundaries is supported by previous research on authenticity related to adolescent risky behavior (Baker et al. 2016; Fitzsimons and Moore 2008). Blind obedience to environmental forces (i.e., parents strictly forbidding alcohol) typically reflects the absence of authenticity (Deci and Ryan 2000), implying that it is critical that adolescents have the room to experience and be true to themselves (i.e., acknowledge their own implicit positive

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attitudes and desires). Nevertheless, research also highlights the need to monitor and restrict risky behavior (in conjunction with the warning, Pechmann et al. 2019), suggesting that leaving adolescents to their own devices might backfire.

In study 1, guided by P1-P4, we proposed an integrative framework around authentic engagement for reducing risky behavior that is relevant to a two-way engagement accounting for message and behavior. While the aim of study 1 was exploratory, with the aim of building theory and creating a conceptual framework relevant to two-way engagement, the purpose of study 2 was to gain conclusive evidence about an important component of this framework – authentic communication messaging (reflecting P1)– relevant to one-way communication in a marketing context (i.e., advertising campaigns targeted at adolescents with the aim of promoting responsible behavior). Study 1 identified dimensions relevant to risky behavior (safety, social, and hedonic), while study 2 applied and tested some of those dimensions.

Study 2: Testing Potential Intervention

The aim of study 2 was to test the causal relationships of P1, which is relevant to a one-way communication context such as a social advertising campaign target directed toward adolescents. To get conclusive results, P1 was transferred into testable statements specifying main and mediating effects between constructs/empirical variables (Ulaga et al. 2021). By making parts of our propositions empirically observable, we were able to test potential practical relevant interventions. In study 2 we tested a social marketing advertising campaign and its effect on adolescents' behavior. P1 deals with the relationship between message type (mixed message, acknowledging positive aspects while warning about negative consequences) and openness, authenticity and trust. Previous research has highlighted the association between trust and persuasion (Touré-Tillery and McGill 2015); hence we predicted that a message that is trusted is also more persuasive and has the ability to reduce risky behavior/enhance responsible drinking practices. Overall, we operationalized and

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predicted that mixed messages (positive and negative) vs just negative messages, would lead to adopting more responsible drinking practices, which are serial mediated by the openness of the message (i.e., considering a variety of perspectives), the authenticity of the source (i.e., being genuine, real and true to the topic) and thus the trustworthiness of the message.

Method

Design, sample, and procedure

In study 2, we used three experimental conditions featuring a fictitious responsible drinking advertising campaign. We manipulated the message type by describing either four negative consequences (negative condition), two positive and two negative consequences (mixed condition), or four positive consequences (positive condition) of drinking alcohol (Figure 3 features the negative and mixed conditions). We used message dimensions that were identified in study 1. We confirmed our manipulation in a separate study (N = 39; see Web Appendix C for full description, OSF link and results).

Mixed Condition		Negative Condition	
Drinking alcohol...		Drinking alcohol...	
we know		be aware	
... is a nice sharing experience	... is enjoyable	... can come from peer pressure	... can make you feel sick and hungover
be aware		be aware	
... can cause embarrassing situations	... can make your head spin and feel bad	... can cause embarrassing situations	... can make your head spin and feel bad
Choose to drink responsibly preventionetmoderation.org		Choose to drink responsibly preventionetmoderation.org	

Figure 3. Stimulus Material for Mixed and Negative Condition (translated from French).

Participants perceived the condition with positive consequences as more positive ($M_{\text{POSITIVE}} = 6.56$, $SD = .64$) than the negative ($M_{\text{NEGATIVE}} = 1.44$, $SD = .72$) or mixed ($M_{\text{MIXED}} = 5.44$, $SD = 1.07$) conditions (Wilk's Lambda = .037, $F(2, 37) = 475.11$, $p < .001$). Next, the results showed that participants perceived the condition with negative consequences as more negative ($M_{\text{NEGATIVE}} = 6.54$, $SD = .64$) than the positive ($M_{\text{POSITIVE}} = 1.67$, $SD =$

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1.28) or mixed ($M_{\text{MIXED}} = 5.49$, $SD = 1.32$) conditions (Wilk's Lambda = .106, $F(2, 37) = 155.47$, $p < .001$). Those results confirm our manipulation.

We used a 1x3 (consequences: negative versus mixed versus positive) between-subject design. We collected data from French adolescents aged 18 and 19, using Norstat (a European panel company). We chose not to sample adolescents younger than 18 as it would have required parental permission. Parental permission would have carried the risk of respondents' answers being biased by their parents, which we tried to avoid. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the three experimental conditions (see pre-test for details) featuring a fictitious advertisement campaign promoting responsible drinking.

We received a total of 475 responses. We removed systematic error variance and random noise using common data cleaning procedures to provide more accurate and powerful tests (Meyvis and Van Osselaer 2018). We excluded 153 participants who responded in an unrealistic task completion time of 360 seconds or less (time required to read all items and complete their answers based on the pre-test, see Johnson 2016). Web Appendix D summarizes all sampling details and exclusion criteria. We used an effective total of 322 participants (160 females, 4 non-binary, 1 transgender). Before exposing respondents to the stimulus, we presented a table that provided participants with information about what a standard glass means (i.e., 10 g of alcohol, with for example, 10 cl of wine at 12% alcohol or 25 cl of beer at 5%). Next, we measured respondents' usual drinking behavior (as a control variable). We asked "How many standard alcoholic drinks do you usually consume during an evening?" using a sliding scale from 0-30 drinks. The manipulation was followed by a set of questions assessing some of the key elements of our proposed framework. First, to prime the valence of the communication, we asked participants to write down in a few words what the message of this campaign ad was. Next, using a 7-point scale (1 = very unlikely to 7 = very likely, adopted from Kelly et al. 2012), we measured responsible drinking practices as a

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proxy for reducing risky behavior (Jaud et al. 2023), asking respondents how likely or unlikely they were to implement the following practices when they had an alcoholic drink. We presented six items ($\alpha = .838$; see Web Appendix E for items). Next, using a 7-point scale (1 = not at all authentic; 7 = very authentic), we measured authenticity by asking “How authentic do you find the organization preventionetmoderation.org?” (adapted from Cornelis and Peter 2017, see Web Appendix F for more details about the measure). We also measured trust in the organization on a 7-point bi-polar scale using two items: dishonest–honest and non-trustworthy–trustworthy ($r = .49^{**}$; $p < .001$; adapted from Kirmani et al. 2017). We added a measure of openness: “How open do you think the message of this responsible drinking ad campaign is?” using a 7-point scale (1 = not at all open 7 = very open; see Web Appendix F for details- post-test). We included a measurement of risk perception on a 7-point Likert scale as follows: “I am at risk of getting hurt or sick” and “It would provide me with pleasure” (adopted from Hampson et al. 2001). We also measured existing knowledge (control variable): “Do you know or have you ever heard of the organization preventionetmoderation.org?”. Respondents could answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’. After answering the key question related to our focal research objective, respondents completed additional measures as part of a broader explorative research project. Data analysis started after data collection was completed, following a pre-determined analysis plan. The data and code are available at <https://osf.io/x8nym/>

Results

Responsible Drinking Practice. We conducted a 1 x 3 (consequence type: negative vs. mixed vs. positive) one-way ANOVA with responsible drinking practice as the dependent variable. The main effect of the independent variable was significant [$F(2, 319) = 4.455, p =$

.012]¹. Specifically, adolescents in the mixed condition indicated higher levels of responsible drinking practices when the advertisement outlined mixed consequences ($M_{\text{MIXED}} = 4.93$, $SD = 1.23$) compared with negative consequences only ($M_{\text{NEGATIVE}} = 4.43$, $SD = 1.70$; $p = .021$) or positive consequences only ($M_{\text{POSITIVE}} = 4.33$, $SD = 1.75$; $p = .005$; see Figure 4).

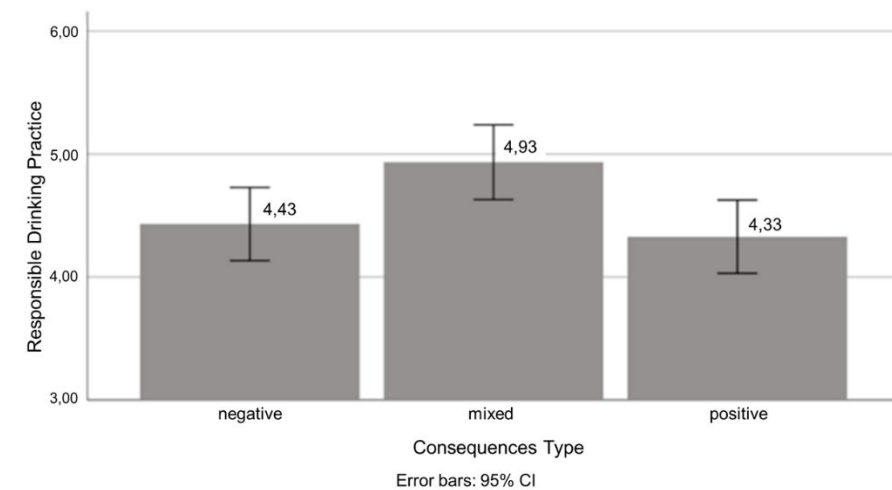


Figure 4. Effect of Consequence Type on Responsible Drinking Practices.

We did not find any significant difference between the positive and negative consequence conditions ($p = .632$). To ensure that the results were not impacted by pre-disposed risky behavior and pre-existing knowledge of the organization, we controlled for general alcohol consumption and organization knowledge in a separate model. The results of our main effect ‘consequence type’ stayed significant ($F(2, 317) = 4.865$, $p = .008$). Next, to ensure that our approach did not influence overall risk perception (i.e., by using positive consequences), we conducted a 1 x 3 (consequence type: negative vs. mixed vs. positive) one-way ANOVA with the two items separately. We found no significant effect of message type for both items ($ps > .19$). To investigate the sequential underlying mechanisms (i.e., the role of openness, authenticity, and trust) responsible for the effect of types of consequences on responsible drinking practices, we predicted the following serial mediation (see Figure 5):

¹When including participants who failed the accuracy screener the main effect was not significant with $p = .438$; but the results had the same directional effect with $M_{\text{MIXED}} = 4.34$, $M_{\text{NEGATIVE}} = 4.22$, $M_{\text{POSITIVE}} = 4.10$

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types of consequences → (1) openness perception → (2) authenticity perception → (3) trust → responsible drinking practices. Because the independent variable was multicategorical (negative vs. mixed vs. positive), we used Hayes (2018) PROCESS version 3 to test our serial mediation model (95% bootstrapping, Model 6, N = 5000 resamples) with types of consequences as the multicategorical independent variable (X_1 = negative vs. mixed; X_2 = positive vs. mixed; mixed condition, our key interest, served as the baseline condition), openness perception as Mediator 1, trust perception as Mediator 2, authenticity is Mediator 3 and responsible drinking practices as the dependent variable.

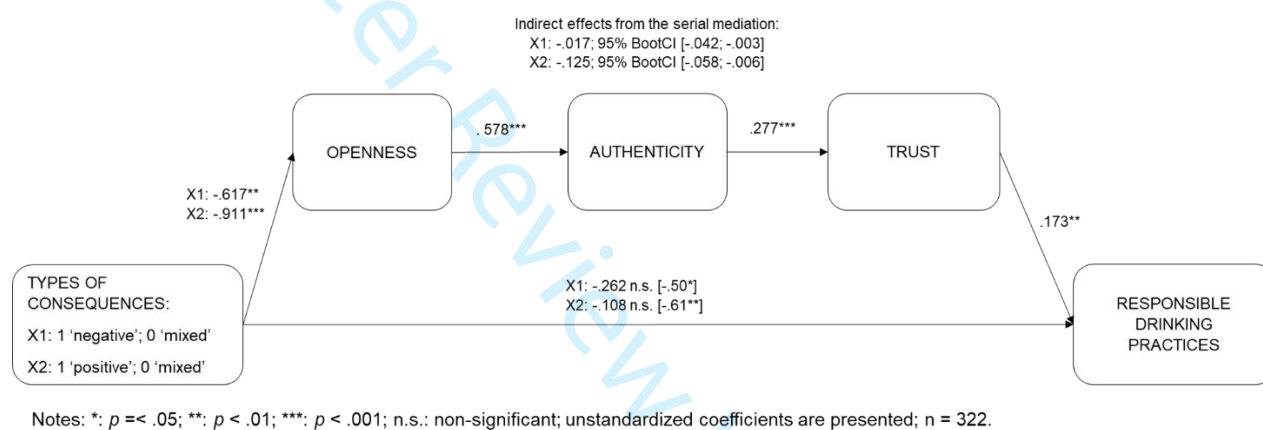


Figure 5. Serial Mediation Model for Openness, Authenticity and Trust.

We found significant negative effects of (1) mixed vs. negative and (2) mixed vs. positive consequences on openness ($b_{\text{NEGATIVE}} = -.617$, $b_{\text{POSITIVE}} = -.911$; $p_s < .01$). Openness had a significant and positive effect on authenticity ($b_{\text{OPEN}} = .578$, $p < .001$). Next, authenticity had a positive effect on trust ($b_{\text{AUTH}} = .277$, $p < .001$, and this increased trust then triggered higher levels of responsible drinking practices ($b_{\text{TRUST}} = .173$, $p = .002$). The indexes for the serial indirect effects through the three sequential mediators—openness, authenticity, and trust—were significant ($b_{\text{NEGATIVE}} = -.017$, 95% CI = $-.042$; $-.003$; $b_{\text{POSITIVE}} = -.025$, 95% CI = $-.058$; $-.006$), indicating that the effects of types of consequences on responsible drinking practices were serially mediated by openness, authenticity and trust (in that order). Last, while the total effects of types of consequences on responsible drinking practices were

significant (X_1 (negative vs. mixed): $p = .021$; X_2 (positive vs. mixed): $p = .005$), the direct effects of consequences were not significant (95% CI for negative vs. mixed: $-.509$ to $.292$ and positive vs. mixed: $-.651$ to $.128$), indicating indirect-only mediation, i.e., the strongest type of mediation (Zhao et al. 2010). The full regression results for the serial mediation are reported in Web Appendix G.

Discussion

Our results confirmed our prediction about the mixed messages that led to a higher intention to engage in responsible drinking practices (i.e., reduced risky behavior). The serial mediation-based results confirmed the positive effect of applying mixed versus negative or positive consequences on responsible drinking practices, using three underlying mechanisms: (1) openness (2) authenticity, and (3) trust. Our findings taken together suggest that in social marketing campaign messages that aim to reduce risky behavior, acknowledging the positive aspects of risky behavior while warning of the negative consequences is the most efficient way to encourage responsible drinking consumption among adolescents. The least efficient is communicating around positive consequences only, which makes sense given that individuals are aware of the negative side effects of drinking alcohol.

Overall Discussion and Implications

Adolescent risky behavior continues to be a major public policy concern. Despite research on effective marketing and policies to address adolescent risky behavior, studies that provide further insights into the messages and behavior that resonate with adolescents are still needed. Applying the concept of authenticity, which has great significance for adolescents, we proposed and tested effective communication messages and behaviors that adolescents respond to. Using qualitative group interviews followed by an experiment to test one of our marketing relevant interventions, we found that policy makers' and parents' messages need to acknowledge the positive aspects of risky behavior while warning of the negative

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consequences across three key message dimensions – social, hedonic and safety. Our findings support proposition 1, which proposed that mixed messaging (positive and negative) would be more effective in reducing risky behavior. A key takeaway from our study is that adolescents perceive a campaign sponsor as more authentic and trust its message because it does not deny adolescents' implicit and explicit attitudes towards risky behavior (Fitzsimons and Moore 2008; Sherman 2008), creating a perception of openness.

Our qualitative findings, guided by propositions 2, 3 and 4, further suggest that those messages (P1) must align with both parents' and adolescents' behavior to be effective. From the authenticity literature, we found that messages around risky behavior need to align with the parent's own behavior expectations. Authentic behavior by parents (i.e. other-authenticity) is characterized by parents mirroring the message they give to adolescents by drinking responsibly (i.e., role modeling). At the same time, it is important to allow adolescents to be true to themselves (self-authenticity); that is, that they are given permission to align with their true nature and attitudes, and are given the room to experience but in a controlled environment. Aligning messages about risky behavior with behavior helps to create an open, authentic and trusting environment that also allows adolescents to be true to themselves. Fundamentally, our findings support a participatory approach to adolescent risky behavior that recognizes the importance of allowing adolescents to have 'socially accepted' life experiences, but within boundaries (Mason et al. 2013). They also point to an adolescent's need for not only autonomy but also pleasurable and meaningful consumption experiences (Carr et al. 2021; Schmitt et al. 2015). Our authentic engagement framework provides an integrated platform for understanding authentic communication messages and behavior related to adolescent and risky behavior. The underlying premise of the framework is that it fosters authenticity and provides parents and policy makers with guidance on how to engage in a participatory approach.

Theoretical Contributions

We provide important contributions to public policy literature on effective ways to reduce adolescent risky behavior. First, we highlight the important role of parents' engagement with adolescents with regard to authentic communication messages and authentic behavior, and the development of a novel authentic engagement framework. We build on Ryan et al.'s (2010) systematic review of parental strategies to reduce adolescent alcohol consumption, and Pechmann et al.'s (2019) comprehensive theorization of how parents can facilitate adolescent well-being, by providing empirical evidence of the need to provide support by openly discussing the risks, giving guidance around peers, monitoring and restricting risky behavior, and to model good behavior. Previous research has investigated individual practices to reduce risky behavior (Ryan et al. 2010). Using authenticity insights, we are the first to investigate and propose a framework that looks at each practice and how they are interconnected.

Second, previous research has continuously highlighted the need to warn adolescents about risky behavior (Gerrard et al. 1999). We extend this knowledge by proposing and testing the need to also acknowledge adolescents' implicit and explicit attitudes towards risky behavior by *acknowledging* some of the positive aspects of alcohol consumption, across social, hedonic and safety dimensions, making the message more authentic and ultimately more effective. A mixed message that acknowledges the positive aspects and warns of the negative consequences leads to communication messaging being perceived as more authentic. Along with delivering a mixed message is the need for parents (and other communication sources) to behave authentically by aligning with the message/s. This two-pronged participatory approach contributes to creating an open and authentic environment leading to trust and allowing adolescents to be true to themselves. In this environment, adolescents are

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more likely to trust their parents (and other significant adults/organizations) and can flourish while adhering to responsible behaviors.

Third, we contribute to the literature on adolescent authenticity (Alchin et al. 2023) and authenticity related to marketing (Vredenburg et al. 2020) by demonstrating how critical (and effective) authenticity is to parent-adolescent and policy maker-adolescent engagement around risky behavior. Along with our novel authentic engagement framework for reducing risky behavior, we propose a new conceptualization of ‘authenticity and adolescent risky behavior’ (see Introduction), building theory in this critical area. Significantly, we extend authenticity to the context of adolescent–parent engagement around risky behavior. We highlight the need for parents and policy makers to apply the notion of ‘authenticity’ as outlined in our framework. Fundamentally, adolescents’ attitudes and experiences need to be acknowledged and correspondingly adjusted to messaging and behavior. Harter (2002) emphasizes the need for parents to acknowledge their children’s reality rather than purely acting on their (parents’) agenda to promote authenticity aligning with a participatory approach (Mason et al. 2013).

Implications for Public Policy and Marketing

Our research has implications for how public policy officials and agencies can influence adolescents to engage in responsible consumption, indirectly via their parents as key socializing agents, and directly via targeted messaging (i.e., social marketing advertising campaigns). Our authentic engagement framework can be used by public policy officials and agencies in efforts to prevent adolescents from engaging in risky behaviors through (1) education and (2) marketing communications.

Education – the components of our framework and key findings around authenticity and alignment can be used by public policy officials to develop and provide guidelines for effective ways to communicate with adolescents about risky behavior and educate parents

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about the importance of aligning their own behavior with their messages through training modules and via media such as TED talks and podcasts. The US Department of Health and Human Services already provides evidence-based practical resources for communities, parents, and educators to prevent risky behavior (SAMHSA 2023). With insights from our research, clear guidelines can be added to existing resources. Specifically, the three dimensions – social, hedonic and safety – can serve as talking points. For instance, schools and/or other educational institutions could run education programs for both parents and adolescents. Parents could be given the tools to manage adolescent risky behavior and learn to behave authentically by acknowledging the social, hedonic and safety (positive and negative) aspects of alcohol use and other risky behaviors. Policy makers and educators could develop training modules for parents to facilitate and inspire authentic conversations; for example, they could be given a range of specific statements that could be used, such as “I know that drinking alcohol can make you feel you are part of a group; however, it comes with risks, so know your limits and don’t feel pressured by your friends”. This communication should emphasize key aspects of responsible consumption (e.g., the number of standard drinks deemed responsible, eating while drinking, drinking in a safe environment, and looking out for your friends) and focus on authentic elements that empower adolescents to say ‘no’ when they have had enough, to recognize their own limits, and deal with peer pressure. In this context it is important to note that our description of ‘positive’ messaging around risky behavior does not negate any legal or public health issues. Our mentioning of positive aspects should in no way be seen as a promotion of risky behavior; instead, it is solely an acknowledgment of them. Further, our research does not promote alcohol consumption. Parents must set boundaries, while acknowledging their implicit need to experience life (i.e., their authenticity). Critical to our findings is warning adolescents of the social, hedonic and safety (health) risks.

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Marketing communications – Our results also provide a direct tool for social marketers developing responsible consumption campaigns targeted at adolescents. Specifically, in our experiment we tested P1 as a potential intervention for social marketers. Social marketing advertising campaigns targeting adolescents can use messaging that acknowledges the positive aspects (social and pleasurable aspects) in addition to warning of the negative consequences (health risks, peer pressure). National advertising campaigns are particularly important in countries such as the US, Australia, UK, New Zealand and France, that have issues with adolescent heavy episodic drinking (WHO 2018). Moreover, public policy social media marketing can be implemented as a key strategy to communicate with adolescents. Social media platforms are a powerful way to communicate with vulnerable consumers, such as youth, and have been shown to enhance wellbeing (Fletcher-Brown et al. 2021). Social Media Influencers (SMIs), known for influencing and empowering youth in a positive way and behaving responsibly, can be used in responsible drinking campaigns. SMIs can post about their own past experiences in an authentic way (i.e., both negative and positive experiences), while communicating their stance for ‘responsible consumption’.

Conclusion and Future Research

We offer a comprehensive authentic engagement framework to mitigate adolescent risky behavior as a platform for future research. First, our framework was developed in the context of alcohol consumption; however, we believe it has the potential to be applied to other risky behaviors (e.g., vaping, social media use, drug consumption, sexual behavior), and further research is needed to explore its application in these different contexts. Alcohol consumption is a topic most parents have knowledge and experience with, and the risks generally apply to both males and females. Other risky behaviors, such as sexual behavior (see Tanner and Tanner 2020), might require a gendered approach; for instance, mothers might find it easier to communicate around sexual behavior with their daughters and fathers

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with their sons, respectively. Also, parent–adolescent communication around sexual behavior may not be as open and engaging due to potential embarrassment about discussing this topic on both parents' and adolescents' sides. Second, our research focused primarily on reducing risky behavior (i.e., risky drinking practices); however, our framework might be influenced by or impact other variables such as youth experimentation, rites of passage, and emerging identity and self-esteem and ultimately adolescent well-being. Importantly, our research implemented family group interviewing which has the potential to create desirability bias, whereby adolescents may not have disclosed their true behavior. Future research can consider both family group interviews alongside individual interviews with adolescents separate from their parents. Third, research could also investigate potential boundary conditions, such as adolescents' or parents' characteristics for this framework. For example, there might be other factors that can impact the perception of proposed messages and behavior, such as cultural, demographic and/or sociographic characteristics. Fourth, future research could consider more diverse gender identities and dig deeper into how a mother/father could communicate with their non-binary child (for a conversation about gender and consumer research, see Drenten et al. 2023). Finally, our research helps to demonstrate the importance of authenticity, opening many avenues for future research. Our research makes a link between authenticity and trust; however, future research could consider the believability of the message and other behavioral elements (e.g., binge drinking). Future research should consider well-being outcomes (psychological, social and emotional) and broaden the authenticity lens to include positive psychology to ensure adolescents flourish. Authenticity as part of positive psychology is an extremely important area, especially for adolescents. Our research suggests that an authentic environment enables adolescents to be true to themselves. Further research could investigate the nuances of this notion and how that links to a better outcome. We hope we inspire more research to further expand and investigate our framework and the concept of authenticity.

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Web Appendix: Curbing Adolescents' Risky 'Drinking' Behavior with Authenticity

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These materials have been supplied by the authors to aid in the understanding of their paper. The AMA is sharing these materials at the request of the authors.

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Web Appendix A: Interviewing, Recruitment and Participant Details (Study 1)

Family group interviewing: family group interviewing was an effective way to gain data about feelings and opinions from a consumer group (adolescents) that is considered vulnerable, about a sensitive topic (alcohol consumption), while being supported by their parent/s (Dodds and Hess 2021; Scharlach et al. 2006). Family group interviews are an established methodology for studying sensitive issues and are often used to create a safe environment for children and adolescents (Adler et al. 2019). The parent/s participated in the interview, but also acted as co-facilitators, by encouraging and prompting their child to participate. The main advantage of the group interviewing technique is the opportunity for all participants to share their experiences and knowledge on a particular issue or phenomenon, without feeling intimidated or dominated by others in the group (Muridan et al. 2019; for an overview see Dodds and Hess 2021).

Recruitment Process: Recruitment involved firstly emailing the contacts (i.e., the parent/s) with information about the study, including the background and purpose of the study, what participating would involve, and the research ethics (e.g., rights of the participants, such as privacy, anonymity, right to withdraw from the research, right to not answer any questions etc.). Parents who agreed for their family to participate were then contacted to arrange a suitable time for the group interview. Prior to the group interview, the key contact was sent consent forms and a quick online survey to collect some preliminary information from each participant. Parents and children over the age of 16 signed individual consent forms. For children under 16, the key contact (parent) signed on their behalf, but under the proviso that the child was willing to participate. The University's human ethics policies require consent forms for children under the age of 16 to be signed by a legal guardian. Each family that participated was compensated for their time with a voucher.

Table W1. Participation Details -Family Group Interview

New Zealand Families			French Families
1	Janet, 70s, grandmother, retired teacher Miriam, 40s, mother, travel agent Jack, 18, son, Uni student Kane, 18, daughter, Uni student	1	Caroline, 42yrs, mother, administrator Olivier, 45, father, wine-grower/maker Leo, 15, son, school student Charlotte, 14, daughter, school student
2	Vanessa, 40's, single mother, Manager Nicole, 16, daughter, school student Gabby, 14, daughter, school student Olivia, 12, daughter, school student	2	Anne, 44, mother, therapist Laurent, 46, father, university professor Maxence, 18, son, uni student Aurélien, 16, son, school student
3	Susan, 46, single mother, retail manager Oliver, 20, son, plumbing apprentice Kayla, 18, daughter, part-time supermarket George, 15, son, school student	3	Diana, 40, mother, doctoral student and entrepreneur Hélène, 14, daughter, school student
4	Jane, 54, single mother, nurse Daniel, 21, son, uni student Tom, 19, son, looking for work Isabel, 21, son's girlfriend, uni student	4	Agnès, 46, mother, legal administrator Benoit, 49, father, police officer Albane, 17, daughter, school student Maxence, 15, son, school student
5	Chris, 50s, father, professional Amanda, 50s, mother, professional Erin, 22, daughter, uni student Ashleigh, 20, daughter, uni student	5	Laure, 49, mother, flight attendant Olivier, 53, father, company manager Marin, 17, son, school student Grégoire, 15, son, school student
6	George, 51yrs, single father, educator Katie, 14yrs, daughter, school student	6	Nadia, 40, mother, teacher Vincent, 42, father, engineer Léa, 21, daughter, uni student Maria, 16, daughter, school student Virginia, 11, daughter, school student
7	Vera, 40's, mother, office administrator Tony, 40s, father, IT specialist Sam, 18, son, part-time retail	7	Marie-Claude, 48, mother, biological pharmacist Jérôme, 52, father, pharmacist Lucie, 19, daughter, uni student Clément, 17, son, school student Agathe, 14, daughter, school student
8	George, father, 50, school teacher Joanne, 40s, mother, school teacher Leah 15, daughter, school student David 18, son, uni student	8	Catherine, 45, mother, teacher Olivier, 46, father, teacher Pierre, 16, son, school student Inès, 13, daughter, school student
9	Paul, 55, father, lecturer Kathy, 54, mother, self-employed Emily, 19, daughter, gap year Kate, 21, daughter, graduate looking for work	9	Virginie, 40, single mother, accountant Mathéo, 15, son, school student Noémie, 15, daughter, school student
10	Barbara, 58, mother, researcher Jim, 60, father, IT consultant Nicola, daughter, 20, uni student Tim, 18, son, uni student Henry, 18, son, gap year	10	Clarisse, 39, mother, physician Mathieu, 37, father, project manager Louis, 17, son, school student Paul, 15, son, school student
11	Claire, 54yrs, mother, professional John, 52, father, finance manager Jack, 20, son, uni student Logan, 18, son, gap year	11	Xavier, 41, single father, agronomist Rose, 15, daughter, school student Manon, 13, daughter, school student
Note- The participants in bold was the main contact person		12	Mathilde, 46, mother, association president Denis, 50, father, automotive engineer Blandine, 15, daughter, school student Olivia, 13, daughter, school student

Web Appendix B: Interview Guide (Study 1)

Responsible alcohol consumption and family communication**Interview Questions/Guide**

Thank you for agreeing to help out with our research. Have you read the information sheet outlining the project and your involvement? (***Go through information sheet highlighting participants' rights and what is required of them***). Are there any questions you'd like to ask before we start?

(I will then give a brief background of ourselves)

I will begin by asking a few broad questions about your experiences with alcohol and then move to the main purpose of this interview, which is to understand family communication around alcohol and what you think is effective messaging around responsible consumption. As we go along, I will ask specific questions according to your responses. It will be more of a discussion, a bit like a conversation involving both parents and adolescents.

We know that talking about your own experiences with alcohol might be sensitive; however, we would appreciate your honesty. Please remember you are free to stop at any time or decline to answer any questions.

Main Questions/Points of Discussion	Possible follow-up questions
<p><i>Consumption</i> <i>Ask parents first, then adolescents</i></p> <p>1. Can you tell us about your experiences with alcohol?</p> <p>2. Could you describe situations or occasions in which you are likely to drink alcohol? Why do you drink alcohol in such situations?</p>	<p>Describe <point of interest> Tell us more about <experience></p> <p><i>Adolescents</i> - How and when were you introduced to alcohol? <i>Parents</i> – How did you introduce alcohol?</p>
<p><i>Family communication</i> <i>Parents:</i></p> <p>3. Tell us how you communicate with your teenagers about alcohol consumption?</p> <p><i>Adolescents:</i></p> <p>4. Tell us about your experience of the communication about alcohol consumption with your parents?</p>	<p>Tell us more about <experience></p> <p><i>Parents</i> – What are key messages do you give about alcohol? Negative and positive</p> <p><i>Adolescents</i> – what messages are you most likely to listen to?</p>
<p><i>Effectiveness of communication</i> <i>Adolescents:</i></p> <p>5. Based on our previous point of discussion, what messages do you think are the most effective to encourage you to drink wisely (or responsibly)?</p>	<p>Explain <point of discussion> How would you evaluate the effectiveness of the selected messages?</p>
<p><i>Responsible alcohol consumption</i> <i>Adolescents first, then parents</i></p> <p>6. What does responsible or wise alcohol consumption mean to you?</p>	<p>Describe further <concept></p>
<p><i>General</i> <i>Directed at adolescents</i></p> <p>7. Are there any other aspects about family communication or family dynamics that influence your decisions about drinking alcohol?</p>	
<p>8. Finally, may I record your ages and occupation (If not already been volunteered during the course of interview)</p>	

Thank you very much for sharing your experiences with us and giving up your time

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Web Appendix C: Manipulation Check

To ensure our selected social marketing advertising campaign (i.e., stimulus material) was indeed perceived as intended, we conducted a manipulation check of the stimuli in a separate study. A sample of French consumers aged 18-22 ($N = 39$; 48.7% female; MODAGE = 22) was recruited online via Prolific. As part of a within-subject design experiment with three conditions (type of consequences: negative vs. mixed vs. positive, see Table W2), each participant was assigned to all conditions, which were presented in random order. To avoid confounds, the text in the three conditions was of similar length. All conditions started with the heading “Drinking alcohol...” at the top and finished with “Choose to drink responsibly” and “preventionetmoderation.org” (the French version of an actual European Union website) at the bottom. Negative consequences were introduced with “be aware” while positive consequences began with ‘we know’. The condition about negative consequences presented two series (that started with “be aware”) of negative facts (e.g., “can make you feel sick and hungover”, “can cause embarrassing situations”). The condition about mixed consequences presented one series (that started with “we know”) of two positive facts and one series (that started with “be aware”) of two negative facts. We chose two of the facts used in the positive-only and negative-only conditions and presented them in the mixed condition. The condition about positive consequences presented two series (that started with “we know”) of two positive facts (e.g., “is enjoyable”, “makes you feel part of a group”). (See full description of Stimulus Material in Table W2). To prime the valence of the communication, we asked participants to write down in a few words what the message of this campaign ad was. Next, as manipulation checks, participants answered two questions “This ad campaign acknowledges the positive consequences of drinking alcohol”, then “This campaign warns about the negative consequences of drinking alcohol” using a 7-point scale covering the range “1 = Not at all”; “4 = Neutral”; “7 = Very much”. We conducted a series

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of repeated-measures ANOVAs. The results first showed that participants perceived the condition with positive consequences as more positive ($M_{\text{POSITIVE}} = 6.56$, $SD = .64$) than the negative ($M_{\text{NEGATIVE}} = 1.44$, $SD = .72$) or mixed ($M_{\text{MIXED}} = 5.44$, $SD = 1.07$) conditions (Wilk's Lambda = .037, $F(2, 37) = 475.11$, $p < .001$). Next, the results showed that participants perceived the condition with negative consequences as more negative ($M_{\text{NEGATIVE}} = 6.54$, $SD = .64$) than the positive ($M_{\text{POSITIVE}} = 1.67$, $SD = 1.28$) or mixed ($M_{\text{MIXED}} = 5.49$, $SD = 1.32$) conditions (Wilk's Lambda = .106, $F(2, 37) = 155.47$, $p < .001$). Hence, our manipulation worked as intended. Data and code are available at <https://osf.io/x8nym/>

Table W2. Stimulus Material

Cond.	Stiumulus Material (French)	Stiumulus Material (translated into English)
Neg. - Neg	<p style="text-align: center;">Boire de l'alcool...</p> <p>soyez conscient que</p> <p>... cela peut être le fait de la pression des autres ... cela peut vous rendre malade et provoquer la gueule de bois</p> <p>soyez conscient que</p> <p>... cela peut provoquer des situations embarrassantes ... cela peut vous faire tourner la tête, vous sentir mal</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Choisissez de boire responsable preventionetmoderation.org</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Drinking alcohol...</p> <p>be aware</p> <p>... can come from peer pressure ... can make you feel sick and hungover</p> <p>be aware</p> <p>... can cause embarrassing situations ... can make your head spin and feel bad</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Choose to drink responsibly preventionetmoderation.org</p>
Mix: Pos. - Neg.	<p style="text-align: center;">Boire de l'alcool...</p> <p>nous savons que</p> <p>... c'est une bonne expérience de partage ... c'est agréable</p> <p>soyez conscient que</p> <p>... cela peut provoquer des situations embarrassantes ... cela peut vous faire tourner la tête, vous sentir mal</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Choisissez de boire responsable preventionetmoderation.org</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Drinking alcohol...</p> <p>we know</p> <p>... is a nice sharing experience ... is enjoyable</p> <p>be aware</p> <p>... can cause embarrassing situations ... can make your head spin and feel bad</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Choose to drink responsibly preventionetmoderation.org</p>
Pos. - Pos.	<p style="text-align: center;">Boire de l'alcool...</p> <p>nous savons que</p> <p>... c'est une bonne expérience de partage ... c'est agréable</p> <p>nous savons que</p> <p>... cela vous permet d'être accepté au sein du groupe ... cela contribue à vous sentir détendu et confiant</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Choisissez de boire responsable preventionetmoderation.org</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Drinking alcohol...</p> <p>we know</p> <p>... is a nice sharing experience ... is enjoyable</p> <p>we know</p> <p>... makes you feel part of a group ... can make you feel relaxed and confident</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Choose to drink responsibly preventionetmoderation.org</p>

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Web Appendix D: Sampling Details (Study 2)

Exclusion criteria:

Arndt et al. (2021) recommend screening (i.e., using a selection and accuracy screener) in every online sample. Based on our sampling goal of reaching young (adolescent) people of a legal age to participate, we set a selection screener for respondents between 18 and 19 years of age. This screener was applied directly by Qualtrics (i.e., respondents were automatically screened out if they indicated they were younger than 18 or older than 19). Next, since rapid completion of questionnaires and its association with poor response quality is pronounced in younger respondents such as our target population (Zhang and Conrad, 2014), we used response time as our accuracy screener (Arndt et al. 2021). Prior to the study completion we recorded the minimum time in which the study could be properly completed, including time spent on instructions, stimuli, and dependent variables (see Meyvis and van Osselaer 2018). We pre-determined 360 seconds and below as unrealistic task completion times. After data collection but prior to data analysis we removed 32% of the responses because they failed our accuracy screener. The removal of participants was relatively even across all conditions and hence did not differentially remove participants between conditions (see Table W3).

Table W3. Sample before and after exclusion across conditions.

<i>Condition</i>	<i>N (after exclusion -less than 360 seconds excluded)</i>	<i>N (before exclusion)</i>
Negative	109 (33.9%)	164 (34.5%)
Mixed	104 (32.3%)	160 (33.7%)
Positive	109 (33.9%)	151 (31.8%)
Total	322 (100%)	474 (100%)

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Web Appendix E: Responsible Drinking Practice Items (Study 2)**Table W4.** Items related to Responsible Drinking Practice

<i>Item</i>	After reading the content of this campaign ad, how likely or unlikely would you be to implement the following practices when you have an alcoholic drink?
1	Count the number of drinks you have
2	Deliberately alternate between alcoholic drinks and non-alcoholic drinks (water, soft drinks)
3	Making a point of eating while consuming alcohol
4	Quench your thirst by having a non-alcoholic drink before having alcohol
5	Limit the number of drinks you have
6	Refuse an alcoholic drink you are offered because you really don't want it

Note: Measured on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (very unlikely) to 7 (very likely)

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Web Appendix F: Post Test (Validity of Authenticity and Openness)

We conducted a post-test to validate the single-item measures for authenticity (adapted from Cornelis and Peter 2017) and openness. Bergkvist and Rossiter (2007) argue for the use of single-item measures in cases of double concrete constructs (i.e., a concrete singular object and a concrete attribute). Since both the construct for openness and authenticity are double concrete, we used two single-item measures in study 1. To further verify our measures and to provide certainty about our one-item measure, we conducted a post-test to establish that our items measured our concepts as intended. We collected data from a sample of 93 participants aged between 18 and 22 years via Prolific Academic (18=10%, 19=18%, 20=27%, 21= 41%, 22 = 4%; 55% female, 1% non-binary). The study followed a between-subjects design. We used the same stimulus material as in Study 2. Each participant was randomly allocated to either the mixed message condition (featuring positive and negative consequences of drinking alcohol) or the negative message condition (featuring just negative consequences of drinking alcohol). After exposing participants to the randomly assigned stimulus, we measured our key items including an additional multi-item measure (Orazi and Newton, 2018) that aligned with our conceptual definition of authenticity, as well some additional items we developed related to our conceptualization of openness.

Authenticity refers to the quality of being true to oneself and others and is associated with attributes such as genuineness and what is 'real' (Beverland and Farrelly 2010; Molleda 2010). We thus measured authenticity by first using our original measure "How authentic do you find the organization preventionetmoderation.org?" before asking to what extent respondents agreed or disagreed that the organization behind the campaign ad was "genuine", "real" and "true to the topic" (adapted from Orazi and Newton, 2018; 1. Strongly disagree; 7. Strongly agree). Next, openness is defined as: "willingness to consider/accept a variety of perspectives including values, opinions, beliefs and behavior". Despite our best efforts, we

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could not find an appropriate measure aligning with our conceptual definition and the context of one-sided messages only. Openness has mainly been investigated from the perspective of one's own openness (openness referring to a mind-set; Xu and Petty, 2022) or in two-way interactions (e.g., openness in family communication; Caughlin, 2003). To show how participants perceived our single item measure "How open do you think the message of this responsible drinking ad campaign is", we asked respondents to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the following two statements: "The message considers a variety of perspectives", and "the message shares the consequences about alcohol consumption (both good and bad)" (1. Strongly disagree; 7. Strongly agree). To provide evidence of the distinctiveness of our measure to existing measures, we also included the four items from Xu and Petty, 2022: "How likely are you to: 1) share the campaign ad with friends? and 2) read another campaign ad taking the same position as the one you read to get a better perspective on the issue?" (1. Extremely unlikely; 7. Extremely likely), followed by "To what extent do you: 1) Appreciate the position taken in the message? 2) Recognize the merit of the arguments. The data and code of the post-test are available at <https://osf.io/x8nym/>

We found a strong correlation ($r = .63$; $p < .001$) between our original measure of authenticity and the three combined items from Orazi and Newton (2018), supporting the validity of our single item measure aligning with our conceptual definition. Further, we found a strong correlation ($r = .52$; $p < .001$) between our original measure of openness and our two additional items, providing initial support for the validity of our measure, which aligns with our conceptual definition. We also obtained a Cronbach's alpha of .70, making this measure acceptable. To confirm that our openness is conceptually different with the openness scale from Xu and Petty (2022) that deals with one's own openness, we calculated a correlation between our original measure and their four items. As expected, we found a weak correlation of $r = .21$ ($p = .04$), indicating that their measure is conceptually different from ours.

Web Appendix G: Regression results (Study 2)

Table W5. Serial Mediation Results – Openness, Authenticity, Trust

Predictor	Criterion	Estimate	SE	<i>p</i>	95% CI	
					LL	UL
Constant	<i>M1: Openness</i>	5.048 (4.369)	.159 (.141)	<.001 (<.001)	4.735 (4.09)	5.361 (4.647)
X1		-.617 (-.302)	.222 (.199)	.006 (.130)	-1.054 (.692)	-.180 (.089)
X2		-.911 (-.462)	.222 (.203)	<.001 (.023)	-1.348 (-.860)	-.473 (-.063)
<i>R</i> ²		.052 (.011)				
Constant	<i>M2: Authenticity</i>	2.111 (1.980)	.264 (.190)	<.001 (<.001)	1.592 (1.608)	3.019 (2.353)
X1		.016 (.115)	.183 (.154)	.931 (.454)	-.345 (-.187)	.376 (.417)
X2		-.374 (-.272)	.186 (.157)	.045 (.085)	-.740 (-.581)	-.009 (.037)
Openness		.578 (.588)	.046 (.036)	<.001 (<.001)	.488 (.518)	.668 (.658)
<i>R</i> ²		.369 (.380)				
Constant	<i>M3: Trust</i>	2.400 (2.328)	.315 (.225)	<.001 (<.001)	1.781 (1.887)	6.018 (2.769)
X1		-.141 (-.113)	.199 (.164)	.479 (.492)	-.533 (-.435)	.251 (.210)
X2		-.518 (-.440)	.203 (.169)	.011 (.009)	-.918 (-.771)	-.119 (-.109)
Openness		.376 (.372)	.061 (.048)	<.001 (<.001)	.256 (.279)	.496 (.466)
Authenticity		.277 (.261)	.061 (.049)	<.001 (<.001)	.157 (.164)	.397 (.357)
<i>R</i> ²		.348 (.340)				
Constant	<i>Y: Responsible Drinking Practice (RDP)</i>	2.252 (1.736)	.340 (.241)	<.001 (<.001)	1.58 (1.262)	2.92 (2.211)
X1		-.262 (-.002)	.198 (.159)	.187 (.991)	-.651 (-.315)	.128 (.311)
X2		-.109 (.089)	.204 (.165)	.595 (.588)	-.510 (-.234)	.292 (.413)
Openness		.167 (.188)	.064 (.049)	.010 (<.001)	.041 (.091)	.292 (.284)
Authenticity		.171 (.159)	.062 (.049)	.006 (.001)	.048 (.063)	.294 (.256)
Trust		.173 (.206)	.056 (.045)	.002 (<.001)	.063 (.118)	.282 (.294)
<i>R</i> ²		.215 (.249)				
<i>Indirect effect</i>						
X1 → Openness → RDP		-.103 (-.057)	.058 (.041)		-.239 (-.149)	-.011 (.014)
X2 → Openness → RDP		-.152 (-.087)	.078 (.049)		-.325 (-.200)	-.018 (-.008)
X1 → Authenticity → RDP		.003 (.018)	.032 (.027)		-.064 (-.030)	-.066 (.078)
X2 → Authenticity → RDP		-.064 (-.043)	.045 (.030)		-.173 (-.114)	-.001 (.004)
X1 → Trust → RDP		-.024 (-.023)	.033 (.033)		-.093 (-.088)	.043 (.047)
X2 → Trust → RDP		-.089 (-.091)	.047 (.041)		-.193 (-.178)	-.013 (-.017)
X1 → Openness → Authenticity → RDP		-.061 (-.028)	.033 (.021)		-.137 (-.076)	-.009 (.007)
X2 → Openness → Authenticity → RDP		-.090 (-.043)	.047 (.027)		-.199 (-.106)	-.015 (-.003)
X1 → Openness → Trust → RDP		-.040 (-.023)	.022 (.017)		-.094 (-.062)	-.008 (.005)
X2 → Openness → Trust → RDP		-.059 (-.035)	.031 (.021)		-.134 (-.083)	-.014 (-.004)
X1 → Authenticity → Trust → RDP		.001 (.006)	.009 (.009)		-.019 (-.010)	.019 (.024)
X2 → Authenticity → Trust → RDP		-.018 (-.015)	.013 (.010)		-.050 (-.038)	-.001 (.001)
X1 → Openness → Authenticity → Trust → RDP		-.017 (-.010)	.010 (.008)		-.041 (-.027)	-.003 (.002)
X2 → Openness → Authenticity → Trust → RDP		-.025 (-.015)	.013 (.009)		-.055 (-.035)	-.006 (-.002)
<i>Direct effect</i>						
X1 → RDP		-.262 (-.002)	.198 (.160)	.187 (.991)	-.651 (-.315)	.128 (.311)
X2 → RDP		-.108 (.089)	.204 (.165)	.595 (.588)	-.509 (-.234)	.292 (.413)
<i>Total effect</i>						
X1 → RDP		-.503 (-.118)	.216 (.182)	.021 (.517)	-.929 (-.476)	-.077 (.240)
X2 → RDP		-.606 (-.239)	.216 (.186)	.005 (.199)	-1.031 (-.605)	-.180 (.126)

Note – Consequences type: X1 (1 = negative; 0 = mixed); X2 (1 = positive; 0 = mixed). In brackets results for N=475 -including screened out participants.

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