

Avoiding bad decisions: new course for students

IT WAS the personal experiences of Adair Donaldson that prompted him to start a program to help today's youth.

The Queensland-based solicitor was constantly faced with young people who were put in life-changing situations as a result of their poor decisions with alcohol and drugs.

"As a lawyer, I saw a constant stream of people whose lives had been turned upside down by a poor split-second decision," he said.

"What amazed me was that these people had no idea of the legal and social implications of their choices and behaviour."

Adair consulted teachers, the police and health care professionals to devise a program to assist parents and youth to address these issues.

The result was Putting Youth in the Picture, which he presented at Charles Sturt University last week.

The training program brings communities together to look at the social and legal issues surrounding alcohol misuse, drug use, cyber crime and youth violence.

Adair delivered a presentation to Wagga businesses and community leaders on the history and development of his program.

It was followed by a series of interactive "train the trainer" sessions that Adair held with 100 of the university's residential advisors and staff.

The program uses short film scenarios to show how young people become involved in life-changing incidents.

Adair's program does not impose solutions, rather presents a situation and encourages you to devise your own solution.

The program will now form a required part of the orientation process for new students at CSU each year.



Co-creator of Putting Youth in the Picture Adair Donaldson (left) takes time to talk to students at Charles Sturt University (second, from left) Nadine Scarfone, deputy vice-chancellor Lyn Gorman, Matthew Gibson, Kelly Ryan and Jason Stuart last week.
Picture: Oscar Colman

Adair Donaldson (inset) talking at CSU about the harmful effects of drugs and alcohol.
Picture: Oscar Colman