CHASE SA
Collaboration for Harm Reduction and Alcohol Safety in the Environment in Southern Africa

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CHILDREN'S RIGHTS: AN OVERLOOKED APPROACH TO PREVENTING ALCOHOL-RELATED HARM

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Abstract: The CHASE-SA research consortium explores how upstream political and economic factors shape alcohol environments, and how these influence downstream behaviours and associated health and social outcomes. A focus of our work includes the often-overlooked role of children's rights, which may be neglected in public health discourse if policies are not child-centred. Alcohol-related harms to children occur through three main pathways: direct harm to the unborn foetus from alcohol exposure during pregnancy, harm from children's own alcohol use, and indirect harm from adults' drinking. Yet the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) places obligations on governments and third parties to protect children's wellbeing. This includes children's right to health (Article 24 CRC) and the general norm that children's best interest must be a primary consideration (Article 3 CRC).

Methods
Five panelists will present research centring children's rights as part of a whole-system response to child well-being: presenting evidence on the risk of harms to children; examining how historical injustices shape harm during pregnancy; critiquing industry narratives that deflect responsibility; and foregrounding child rights-based analyses as essential for the policy responses.
A moderator will connect themes across talks, and ensure diverse audience voices are included in the conversation

Results:
The panel aims to catalyze a shared global agenda centering children and their rights within public health discourse on alcohol.

Conclusion
Collectively, the panel will illustrate that harmful alcohol use presents multiple and often overlooked risks to children and suggest opportunities to apply a children's rights lens to policy

Topic: Harm to others and alcohol policies
Why alcohol matters: the breadth of harm and arguments for policy

Keywords:Children, Rights, well-being