



clear

alcohol, you and your children



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Underage drinking can put young people at risk

The issue of young people using and misusing alcohol in Lancashire causes concern, as it does in the country as a whole. The good news is there are fewer young people drinking, however, those young people who do drink are drinking more. A recent survey (2011) showed that 20% of Lancashire's young people (14-17) are regular binge drinkers, drinking at least once a week and 5 or more drinks in one session.

It is crucial that young people have the most accurate information on the risks and issues surrounding drinking so they can make informed decisions. Parents are in the best position to give this information. Between the ages of 8 and 12, children generally accept what their parents say about alcohol. From 13 onwards, young people increasingly pay attention to their friends. However, you may still have more influence with your children than you think.

This booklet will help young people and their parents to better understand the risks involved in harmful patterns of drinking.

By drinking moderately you are acting as a positive role model to your children.

Children Learn by Example and Adult Responsibility

CLEAR Step One: Parents should educate themselves about alcohol.

CLEAR Step Two: Parents should think about their own behaviour and attitudes towards alcohol in the home.

CLEAR Step Three: Parents should set a clear and responsible example to their children.

Alcohol should be something you and your children can talk about naturally

When is the best time to start talking about alcohol with your children?

There is no definite answer to this. Ideally it is best to talk about alcohol, as informally as possible, before children start to experiment by themselves or with their friends. Use the opportunities provided through media coverage, including TV, advertisements and celebrity role models, to discuss how and why alcohol is used in our society.

It is therefore essential that as parents, you can answer your children's questions as accurately as you can.

How do young people learn about alcohol?

Young people learn about alcohol from a wide variety of places. Research, which took place in Lancashire, showed the following to be the most useful sources of information for young people:

- Parents • School • Friends • Media.

Do you know what your child is taught at school?

Alcohol will usually be discussed in science lessons and in Personal, Social, Health, Economic education (PSHEe) or Citizenship. However schools have such a busy timetable the time allocated to issues around alcohol will vary considerably. In Lancashire support and advice is provided to schools by a Teacher Adviser for Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco education to ensure that young people receive accurate and age appropriate alcohol messages.

Alcohol and religion

Lancashire has a diverse multi cultural population. Some religious beliefs prohibit the use of alcohol, whereas others accept drinking in moderation.

What can I do to help my child resist pressures to drink?

"If your child is 15-17 they probably spend a lot of time with friends and going out. Some teenagers of this age are beginning to drink on a regular basis. And at this age they're highly influenced by young adults, the age group most likely to binge drink. So make sure you know where they are and who they are with. Be clear that you're still in charge – but only because you care about their safety, health and future." **Drinkaware Trust**

Talk about the short term effects alcohol will have on:

Appearance - putting on weight and getting more spots

Relationships - arguing with friends or getting an embarrassing photo placed on Facebook!.

This will be more effective than warning them about the long-term risks of drinking, which can seem a world away when you're a teenager

It's important that your child has the confidence to say 'NO' if they are being pressured by their friends to drink. Remind them it's ok not to drink.

Supporting my teenager

Try and work out some ground rules together, which could include knowing where your children are and who they are with.

There are some things you can do as a parent to reduce the opportunities for children to drink and experience alcohol related harms.

- Encourage sensible attitude to drinking through being a good role model and maybe offering small amounts to drink under supervision
- Control pocket money or income
- Be aware of how accessible drink is in your house
- Encourage to participate in other activities
- Organise lifts to and from parties
- Ensure young people are contactable through a mobile phone when out unsupervised
- If ground rules are broken consider grounding or removing privileges

£10 could buy a young person 57 units of alcohol per week an amount harmful for an adult male!

Safety tips

It is important to make sure that your teenager knows how to keep safe if they have been drinking. They need to know how to get help if needed and how to get home safely.

You might consider discussing some of the following points with your teenager if they do choose to drink:

- Eat something before they drink alcohol – drinking on an empty stomach means that the body absorbs alcohol very quickly, food will slow this down. **However it will not prevent them from getting drunk.**
- Alternate an alcoholic drink with a soft drink or water. This will help reduce the amount of alcohol consumed and reduce dehydration.
- Mixing different types of alcohol will worsen the hangover.
- Never leave a drink unattended, it may be spiked
- Mixing alcohol with any kind of drug can be extremely dangerous.
- Leave enough money for a bus or taxi fare home. Relying on a friend, who may also have been drinking, should not be an option.
- Always travel home in groups – don't leave anyone on their own to walk home.
- If a friend becomes ill, very drowsy or unconscious, get adult help. Don't be afraid of calling 999 if you need to.

What do I do if they come home drunk?

Don't panic. Don't over react this may cause more trouble – and anyway you will not get a sensible response. It may be better to wait until the next day when you have calmed down and they have sobered up.

First Aid

If your child seems seriously ill or is very drowsy or unconscious, you need expert help at once:

Call 999.

It is important not to panic. Tell the emergency services clearly what symptoms your child has and what alcohol or drugs they've had, if you know.

Vital steps to recovery:

- Don't delay
- Don't leave them on their own
- If the child is unconscious, lie them face upwards on the floor and check airway and circulation (below).

If they are breathing:

- Place or help them into the recovery position (see below)
- Call 999 for an ambulance, or get someone else to do it if possible, and stay where you are with the child.
- Keep them warm.

Airway

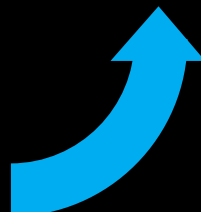
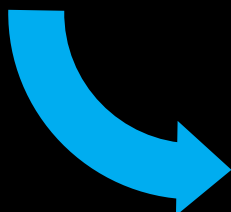
Open airway by tilting head back and lifting chin.

The Recovery Position

Place your hand against their cheek, pull on the leg to roll the child towards you on to their side, and adjust upper leg so that hip and knee are at right angles.

Circulation

Look, listen and feel for signs such as breathing, coughing or movement.



Facts about alcohol

CLEAR FACT: "By the age of 13 more teenagers drink alcohol than don't." *Alcohol Concern*

CLEAR FACT: As many as one in ten children drink alcohol in their final year of primary school figures show under-age girls were more likely to get drunk than boys. *Department of Health*

CLEAR FACT: Alcohol plays a big part in antisocial behaviour, crime and violence, one in 10 15 -16 years olds said that drinking got them into trouble with the police. *Home Office*

Why do young people drink?

"There is nothing to do except get drunk and have fun..."



"First started drinking when I was 9 or 10 started on alcopops 'cos of the sweet nice taste."

"We drink in a large group on the park, it's a good atmosphere and safe as there's a large number of us. There is never a lot of trouble but we act like hooligans, run around and dance to music, we don't cause any damage. We just want to act childish, you have an excuse when you are drunk, you don't care how you behave."

Health effects of alcohol

Many young people who do drink regularly think that it isn't really doing them any harm and aren't aware of the risks involved and the health problems they may be storing up for later in life.

Short term effects:

- Dehydration.
- Slows reactions.
- Affects judgement.
- Loss of co-ordination.
- Drunkenness.
- Hospital admissions for alcohol poisoning, facial injuries, accidents, assaults.
- Alcohol mixed with other drugs can be extremely dangerous.

Long term effects:

- Liver cirrhosis.
- Loss of bone density.
- Brain damage.
- Lowering of hormone production.
- Stomach disorders.
- Death – this is, fortunately, very rare.



Other Risks for Young People may include:

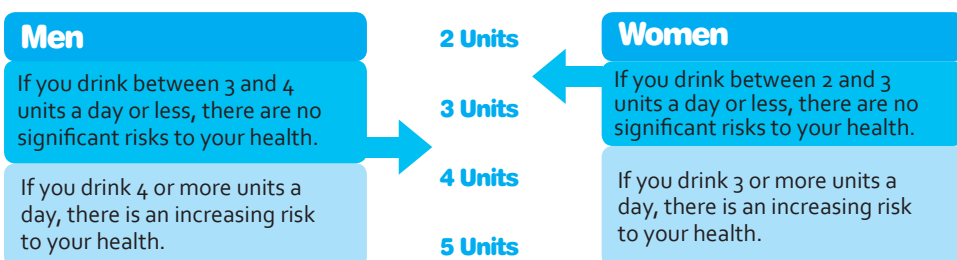
- Regretted sex.
- Walking home alone.
- Dangerous driving.
- Trouble with the police.
- Becoming a victim of crime.
- School exclusion.
- Poor school performance.

For more information about alcohol and young people please visit www.youthhelthtalk.org/young-people-drugs_and_alcohol/

Units of alcohol – recommended daily guidelines

In England 90% of the adult population drink. Many people across Lancashire drink to relax, be sociable and have a good time. The majority do so without causing harm to themselves or others. However, the misuse of alcohol can affect individuals, families and whole communities. It is important that individuals can make informed and responsible decisions about their own levels of alcohol consumption.

Adults are advised by the Department of Health to drink no more than 2 to 3 units per day if you are a woman, or 3 to 4 units per day if you are a man. These are guidelines only, you can't 'save up units' for the weekend – that is classified as 'binge drinking' and drinking a lot in one go, can be very risky. It is also advisable to have 2 to 3 alcohol free days per week to allow the liver to recover.



Alcoholic Drink	ABV	Units	Approx Calories
Pint of premium lager	5%	2.8	265
Pint of normal cider	5%	2.1	119
Glass of red wine	12%	2.1	130
Glass of white wine (med)	12%	1.4	228
Alcopop 275ml bottle	5%	2.8	210
Vodka and coke 35ml shot	40%	1.4	120

For tips on cutting down on your drinking visit
www.drinkaware.co.uk

Chief Medical Officers guidance:

Chief Medical Officers guidance:

Drinking too much alcohol when young can really affect lives resulting in:

- Poor performance at school
- Increased chances of being involved in an accident
- Increased chance of getting in trouble with the police or becoming a victim of crime
- Increased risk of long term health impacts
- Increased chance of getting into a situation that you are not happy with and are not capable of dealing with.

Chief Medical Officers says;

- An alcohol free childhood is best. Children shouldn't drink before they're 15.
- Young people should only drink when they are supervised by an adult.
- If 15-17 year olds drink, it should only be once in a while and definitely no more than once a week. They should never exceed adult recommended daily limits.
- Parents should be aware of their influences on children's alcohol use and be given the knowledge to deal with alcohol misuse and know where to get support and guidance.



"Alcohol is put under your nose. It's acceptable in society. You cannot then turn round to a child and tell them not to drink. You are not going to win on that one, all you can do is educate them through it." Parent

Over half the parents in Lancashire provide their young people alcohol to drink unsupervised - TSNW Survey 2011

Alcohol and the law

It is against the law to sell alcohol to anyone under the age of 18. Young people often find someone to buy alcohol on their behalf, this is called 'proxy sales'. Young people may approach parents, friends, siblings and even complete strangers, outside shop premises.

Clear Fact: Proxy sales can lead to unsupervised drinking by young people in public places that is clearly linked to crime and anti-social behaviour.

The consequences

Buying alcohol for someone under the age of 18 is against the law:

- Its illegal to sell alcohol to anyone under 18
- Its illegal for an under 18 year old to ask someone over 18 to buy alcohol
- Its illegal to buy alcohol for someone under 18 years of age

You could end up with an £80 fixed penalty or taken to court to face a maximum £5000 fine.

It's worth reminding your child that if they are caught drinking in a public place, police can seize their alcohol and are likely to take their details and contact you and their school.

What sort of person buys alcohol for a child?

"I get somebody else to buy alcohol for me...ask people outside shops to go in and get my drink .. usually get someone to agree" (Female aged 14)



Someone could be buying alcohol that your child could drink unsupervised in risky surroundings

Partners in Lancashire are working together to tackle underage alcohol consumption and the negative impact it has on young people and your community.

Community Alcohol Networks are being set up across Lancashire working together we can make a difference around the negative impacts of anti-social behaviour, littering and nuisance.

If you suspect that proxy sales are taking place please report it to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111

Frequently asked questions

Can I take my kids into a pub?

In general under 16s are allowed in pubs accompanied by an adult but can't drink and may have to leave by a certain time. If your child is 16 or 17 they can have wine, cider or beer if it is bought with a meal.

Is it ok to let my kids drink at home?

Legally you can let your children drink alcohol in your own home from age 5 onwards. Official guidance says an alcohol-free childhood is best. However if you have older teenagers who are already drinking you may prefer them to do so under your supervision at home. Remember that they should always drink in moderation.

My teenager drinks alot - should I be worried?

If your child's drinking is getting out of control, seek professional help. Talk to your doctor, contact Drinkline on 0800 917 8282, or try one of the local treatment services listed at the back of this leaflet.



National Support

Parentline Plus can help with parenting advice.
Visit parentlineplus.org.uk or call **0808 800 2222**

To talk to other parents about how they deal with talking to their children about alcohol, you can visit the forum pages:

Dadtalk.co.uk
Mumsnet.com
Netmums.com

Alcohol Concern
www.alcoholconcern.org.uk
Tel: 0800 917 8282

Drinkline
Tel: 0800 917 8282
Monday to Thursday, 9.00 to 23.00;

Frank
Tel: 0800 77 66 00
Email: frank@talktofrank.com
www.talktofrank.com

Drinkaware
www.drinkaware.co.uk

Parentline Plus
Parentline: 0808 800 2222
Textphone: 0800 783 6783
www.parentlineplus.org.uk

Local Support

There are lots of organisations that young people or adults can go to if they feel worried and need someone to talk to. These are some that are local to Lancashire.

Young People

Treatment providers

North Lancashire

Covering Fleetwood, Morecambe, Lancaster, Lytham St Annes and the surrounding areas

Young Addaction

Morecambe: 6-8 Kensington Road, Morecambe, LA4 5LX. Tel: 01524 428310
www.addaction.org.uk

East Lancashire

Covering Accrington, Burnley, Clitheroe, Rawtenstall, Pendle and the surrounding areas

Early Break

Nelson: St Phillips, Grassroots Centre, Leeds Road, Nelson, BB9 9XB. Tel: 01282 604022 www.earlybreak.co.uk

Central Lancashire

Covering Preston, Leyland, Chorley and Skelmersdale and the surrounding areas.

Young Addaction

Urban Exchange, Mount Street, Preston, PR1 8BQ. Tel: 01772 255307
www.addaction.org.uk

Local Agencies

Urban Exchange

Advice centre for 11-25 year olds in Preston area.
Mount Street off Fishergate, Preston PR1 8BQ
01772 255300
www.urbanexchange.org.uk

The Line

Freephone number available daily from 10am - 10pm
0800 511 111
www.q2a.co.uk

Adults

Treatment providers

North Lancashire

Covering Fleetwood, Morecambe, Lancaster, Lytham St Annes and the surrounding areas

J2R (Journey to Recovery) www.j2r.co.uk

J2R - Fleetwood: 162 Dock Street, Second Floor, Fleetwood, FY7 6JB Tel: 01253 870101

J2R - Morecambe: Bellfield House, Ground Floor, 173 Euston Road, Morecambe, LA4 5LQ Tel: 01254 834210

J2R - Lancaster: 24 Great Johns Street, Lancaster LA1 1NG Tel: 01524 230804

East Lancashire

Covering Accrington, Burnley, Clitheroe, Rawtenstall, Pendle and the surrounding areas

Inspire - Accrington: 33 Eagle Street, Accrington, BB5 1LN Tel: 01254 282900

Inspire - Burnley: Burnley House, 37-41 Westgate, Burnley, BB11 1RY Tel: 01282 644644

Inspire - Rawtenstall: The Chambers, 4 Bacup Road, Rawtenstall, BB4 7ND Tel: 01706 253670

Inspire - Clitheroe: 44a York Street, Clitheroe, BB7 2DL Tel: 01200 413630

Central Lancashire

This covers Preston, Leyland, Chorley and Skelmersdale and the surrounding areas.

Discover - Preston: Bickerstaffe House, 53 Garstang Road, Preston, PR1 1LB
Tel: 01772 676000

Discover - Leyland: 6 Golden Hill Lane, Leyland, PR25 3NP Tel: 01772 773540

Discover - Skelmersdale: 75-77 Westgate, Skelmersdale, WN8 8LP Tel: 01695 50740

Discover - Chorley: For services contact Leyland until further notice
Tel: 01772 773540

