

Kids safely back at school, January to survive and New Year resolutions to keep? – According to Drinkaware, 36% of us break our resolution to cut back on alcohol in January – mainly due to stress!

Remember you can find out how much is too much and more about units and guidelines [here](#) on our newly launched site with elastic pages for tablets and iphones – let us know what you think!

www.alcoholeducationtrust.org/parent-area/are-you-alcohol-aware/



Our teenagers, sleep, mobile devices and alcohol

Were your kids given a smartphone or tablet for Christmas? You might want to think about whether you let them keep it in their bedrooms at night.

According to recent research published in the journal *Pediatrics*, children who sleep in the same room as small screens such as smartphones get 20 minutes less shuteye a night compared to those who don't. In the two age groups studied, the children also reported less regular sleep with a phone nearby, due to the buzz of text messages and Snapchat.

The paper joins a growing body of research finding that gadgets in the bedroom lead to shorter, more fitful nights. Even adults who use glowing e-readers before bed have worse sleep and more drowsiness than those reading printed books. The evidence is mounting that bright, blinking screens affect our biological timekeeper, the circadian clock. This is how the human body uses light and darkness to influence the physical, mental and behavioral changes in a 24-hour cycle. The brain's internal clock uses the amount of light to know when to produce more melatonin, a hormone that brings on sleepiness.

TV and games consoles in bedrooms can also mean 18 minutes less sleep a night. Each hour of TV- or DVD-viewing a day meant 4 minutes less sleep, compared with five fewer minutes for gamers. *"The risks associated with shorter sleep duration and poorer sleep quality mean reduced academic performance, behavioral problems, possibly an increased risk for weight gain and possibly negative impacts on immunity,"* say the authors.

What's that got to do with alcohol? I hear you ask. Well, there's a link between poor sleep and problems such as binge drinking, drink drive and risky sexual behaviour too!! Not only that, but the more time teenagers spend on electronic media communication with friends, the higher their alcohol use, according to a study of 6,504 teens from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health. Using interviews and questionnaires from the HBSC study, the research looked at data from 1994 to 1995 in 1996 and from 2001 to 2002, assessing the participants in adulthood. At all times, sleep difficulties when young meant more alcohol-related interpersonal problems, binge drinking, being drunk or very high on alcohol, driving under the influence of alcohol, getting into a sexual situation one later regretted due to drinking, ever using any illicit drugs, and drug-related problems. This may be because youngsters see more references for alcohol online and friends share things that have happened, such as getting drunk - we haven't got the answers! You may find that less screen time means more chat time - great for bonding and understanding what's going on in your kids' lives.

Top tips to think about

- Agree a time that devices are switched off and left outside the bedroom – varying with age
- Turn the WIFI off at a certain time with everyone's agreement
- Have a wind down routine – bath or shower warm drink and read before lights out
- Have a weekday policy and reward things going well with more time at weekends

Do you have a child with special needs?

If reading a lot of information is a problem, you may find the following visual rich worksheets and film clips helpful to look at with your teenager.

Unit and guidelines poster

www.alcoholeducationtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/unitsimple.pdf

Alcohol and the law fact sheet

www.alcoholeducationtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/alclawsen.pdf

Reducing risk taking, how much is too much?

www.alcoholeducationtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/HM2muchsen.pdf

Reducing risk taking film clips

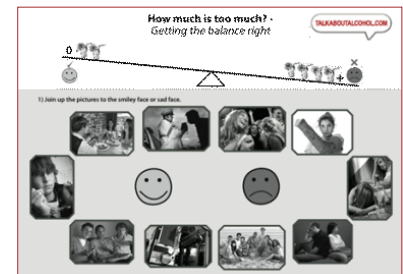
www.alcoholeducationtrust.org/teacher-area/visual-rich-resources/

plus, a short film clip from Dudley College

www.youtube.com/watch?v=KhUZqrmisU&list=PLXh61VCkl-Ux7fPUoH17sz-HJyq63-7W3&index=5

We plan to improve our provision of visual rich resources in 2015, so if you have any ideas or recommendations, we would love to hear from you.

Please email kate@alcoholeducationtrust.org



Have you visited our facebook page via www.alcoholeducationtrust.org/parent-area/ or join our 600 followers on twitter via [#talkalcohol](https://twitter.com/talkalcohol) for news on talk about alcohol? – Please do post and recommend us to your friends!

Post any worries you may have or contact us directly via info@alcoholeducationtrust.org.

AET resources comprise of www.alcoholeducationtrust.org and www.talkaboutalcohol.com, a Teacher Workbook, booklets 'Alcohol and You' for 15yrs+ and 'Talking to Your Kids About Alcohol' parent and carer guide. We offer teacher CPD workshops and parent information talks.

For further information on any of the above please contact

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