The Alcohol Education Trust

A national charity that supports schools, parents, carers, health educators and youth outreach teams to ensure that young people of all abilities learn to stay safe around alcohol

Developing and delivering holistic, life skill and evidence-based approaches that build resilience and reduce underage drinking and alcohol related harms

HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE
STAY SAFE
AROUND ALCOHOL

facebook.com/talkaboutalcohol/
@talkalcohol
alcoholeducationtrust.org
talkaboutalcohol.com

Illustrations: Liz Bennett
Who we are

Established in 2010, The Alcohol Education Trust is a small focused charity which works across the UK to keep young people safe around alcohol. We are a leading early intervention charity that supports young people aged 11 – 25 in making more informed life choices through the 4,500 schools and youth organisations we support free of charge with our award-winning resources and training.

Our mission

To support parents, carers, teachers and community leaders to keep young people safe around alcohol.

What we do

INTERVENE EARLY
We aim to catch children before they begin drinking and help them work out why it makes sense to wait until they are older (if they choose to drink) and how early and heavy drinking increases their risk of injury, accidents and assault and makes them more vulnerable to others. We build children's resilience and life skills, helping them make responsible, informed choices as they encounter alcohol.

HARM REDUCTION
As young people begin to navigate the world of parties, pubs, clubs, festivals and independence, we equip young adults with the knowledge, awareness and strategies needed to stay safer around alcohol and drugs.

TRAIN THE WORKFORCE
We train teachers and professionals working with children and young people in how to deliver evidence-based, interactive and enjoyable alcohol awareness to young people of different abilities and backgrounds in a variety of settings.

IMPROVE LEARNING AND LIFE CHANCES
Our interactive activity-based and award-winning Talk About Alcohol programme is evidenced to improve knowledge and delay the age that teenagers choose to drink whole drinks. We focus on regions where alcohol harms are highest and have bespoke approaches for those most vulnerable to alcohol, such as looked-after children.

SUSTAINABLE, AFFORDABLE LEGACY
Those we train become our ambassadors and cascade their learning to others, meaning Talk About Alcohol costs just 50p per child. We continue to update resources, provide professional development and ongoing phone/email support.

STRENGTHEN ROLE MODELS AND BOUNDARY SETTING
As parents and carers are the prime suppliers of alcohol to children, we build parental confidence, knowledge and skills around alcohol. We encourage parents to monitor their children and to understand the risks associated with underage drinking, particularly in unsupervised settings.
Our impact and reach each year

700,000+
Allowing 1 year group per school, we estimate that over 700,000 children in over 4,500 settings used Talk About Alcohol games, films, lesson plans. This includes 54 new schools in Scotland, 63 new settings in the Midlands and a further 162 across the South and West during the 2019/20 academic year.

1,043
Schools, youth clubs, sports clubs, special schools, children’s homes and charities received AET resources during the 2019/20 year. 640 organisations were provided with the 100-page Talk About Alcohol workbook of over 30 lesson plans, games and activities.

7,500+
 Vulnerable children and children with additional learning needs were supported in 282 new settings such as special schools, children’s homes and pupil referral units through 265 activity packs tailored for young people at higher risk of alcohol related harms.

116,000
Unique visits were made to our websites through our youth facing website, talkaboutalcohol.com, and accessing resources and advice via the professional resources website, alcoholeducationtrust.org including 36,000 visits to pages on alcohol and the law and 31,300 on unit guidelines.

1,300
Teachers and professionals were trained and supported through 119 workshops, conferences and familiarisation sessions. In 2019/20 13,370 teachers and professionals received our bi-termly updates and advice.

Delivering an evidenced-based programme that reduces alcohol-related harm nationwide for less than 50p a child

Working in every county across England and Scotland
(All impact figures from AET outreach during 2019/2020 academic year)
Why we’re needed

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The Problems

- The average age at which young people first consume a whole alcoholic drink is just 13 in Britain. Early and regular use of alcohol can affect brain development and increases the risk of dependency later in life.

- Children who drink regularly and heavily before the age of 15 are significantly more likely to try drugs, smoke, engage in unprotected or risky sex, be injured or assaulted. GCSE predictions fall by 20 points, the difference between a grade 9 and a grade 5.

- Children who experience childhood adversity are twice as likely to binge drink and children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) are three times more likely to face addiction when older. Children with learning difficulties are three times more likely to be abused, with alcohol a factor in grooming and violence.

- Between 2016/17-2018/19 there were 11,233 alcohol-specific hospital admissions for under 18s in England - that’s 10 per day. The UK is one of the few countries in the world where more girls are admitted than boys.

- In 2018/19, 11,492 children were excluded for a fixed period and 688 were excluded permanently from state schools in England due to alcohol or drugs.

Our Solutions

- We engage children with an interactive online platform talkaboutalcohol.com that encourages them to build knowledge and find out in a fun way, through games and quizzes, about the effects of alcohol on their physical and mental wellbeing.

- Our activities, rehearsal strategies and role play allow young people to work out for themselves the effect of impulsive behaviour or drinking too much, enabling them to make more responsible, informed choices.

- We focus our training and support workers in areas of high deprivation where alcohol-related harms are highest. We have developed story and picture-led activities and games around alcohol for those who find reading a barrier to learning. We have targeted streams of work supporting looked-after children and those with learning difficulties who face a greater risk of alcohol dependency and misuse.

- From 2021 we will reduce the potential harms from alcohol to 16 – 25 year olds by equipping them with the knowledge awareness and life skills to prepare them for the legal drinking age and its risks and responsibilities.
The Problems

- Health Education became a statutory requirement for schools to deliver in September 2020, including alcohol and drug education. Teachers and youth workers cite not having enough time and not being subject experts as barriers to delivering effective health education.
- The time dedicated to health education (RSHE) decreased by 32% in KS3/KS4 between 2011-15.
- A record number of school exclusions were issued in 2018/19 in England due to drugs and alcohol.
- RSHE from 2020 is statutory, but schools have little budget, training or guidance.

Our Solutions

- We provide an easy one stop shop for busy, time-poor teachers where they can download lessons plans, PowerPoints, implementation and evaluation guidance by topic or by ability for each year group.
- We make our evidenced programme available free of charge to all secondary schools across Britain.
- We train teachers and provide ongoing guidance so they feel confident and knowledgeable in teaching about alcohol.
- We provide games, one to one and small group activities suitable for use with young people in alternative settings, sports and youth clubs together with free training.

COMMUNITIES AND FAMILIES

The Problems

- Parents and carers are the prime suppliers of alcohol to under 18s.
- Children living in households where parents drink to excess are more likely to drink early and problematically.
- Our research shows that 93% of parents and carers overestimate the number of teenagers who drink and get drunk and so supply their children with alcohol, thinking they will get it elsewhere otherwise.

Our Solutions

- We help parents and carers to understand why drinking at too young an age and drinking too much can harm their child’s short and long term health and also how drinking outside of the home raises the likelihood of other risk taking such as smoking or taking drugs.
- We correct perceived social norms with positive messages on how teenagers are drinking and getting drunk far less than they were 10 years ago.
- We give positive parenting tips that reduce all risk taking such as how to set boundaries, be a good role model and know where their children are.
- We empower parents to resist teen pressure and manipulation.
Impacts and outcomes

Independent evaluation of our impact, fidelity and effectiveness

- The Talk About Alcohol programme is evidenced to significantly raise the age of onset of drinking through the delivery of 4 lessons in Year 8 and 2 top up lessons in Year 9 (NFER 2013).
- This effect gets significantly stronger as teenagers get older (NFER 2015).
- It is equally effective for ethnic minorities (NFER 2013).
- It is effective in areas of multiple deprivation where alcohol-related harms for under 18s are highest in England (2016 UCL Institute of Education).

The AET Talk About Alcohol programme is selected as best practice by

- European Platform for Investment in Children Promising Practice
- Early Intervention Foundation

Awards and recognition

- Private Education & Development Awards 2019
- Education Resource Awards 2019 highly commended for best secondary school resource
- Charity Times Finalist for best small charity of the year 2017
- GSK King’s Fund Health Impact runner-up award 2016

- Alcohol Awareness for Young People Award (2018) from the Chris Donovan Trust
- Inspiring Wellbeing Awards 2018 - Outstanding contribution to Wellbeing
- Children and Young People Now! 2017 Finalist for best early intervention awards
A joined up approach to reduce alcohol related harm

ENSURING YOUNG PEOPLE
LEARN TO STAY SAFE AROUND ALCOHOL

SUPPORT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
- Online games and activities
- Story and picture-led activities for children with learning disabilities
- Films, role play and engaging information and resources
- Assemblies, workshops and peer to peer development.

SUPPORT SCHOOLS AND ORGANISATIONS
- Evidenced resources fully supported online
- Age and ability appropriate
- Training + CPD
- Regular updates
- Printed online guidance/resources/evaluation.

QUALITY ASSURANCE MEASURES
- Third party evaluation to assess impact and regular reporting on outcomes
- Piloting with young people and professionals to assure fidelity and fit for purpose
- Baseline and long term follow-up
- Advisory panel of experts.

EMPOWERN PARENTS AND CARERS
- Face-to-face support sessions
- Confidential email advice
- Dedicated online advice and guidance and regular newsletter updates.

FOCUS AREAS
- Special educational needs and looked-after children
- Geographical areas where alcohol-related hospital admissions are highest for under 18s
- Vulnerable young adults up to age 25.

Our goals and priorities for 2020-2023
The Alcohol Education Trust’s mission is to support parents, carers, teachers & community leaders to keep young people safe around alcohol. Our goals are to:
- Raise the age of onset of drinking whole drinks from the current age of 13 to at least the UK Chief Medical Officers’ Guidance of age 15 with a long term goal of the legal age of purchase of 18.
- Reduce the prevalence and social acceptability of binge drinking and drunkenness.
- Ensure the life chances of the children most vulnerable to alcohol harm and abuse are improved.
- Reduce the accidents, violence, assault and harm caused to young people and the community by alcohol.
- Encourage diversionary activities for young people that reduce anti-social behaviour crime and onset of drinking (new).
We will work to continue to achieve these goals over the next three years by focusing on the following core objectives:

**SUPPORT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**
- Continue to ensure that all young people (aged 11-18) have free access to the *Talk About Alcohol* programme across the UK.
- Support 30,000 vulnerable young people at higher risk of alcohol related harms with targeted approaches.
- Expand our harm minimisation resources for young people.

**QUALITY ASSURANCE**
- Ensure all our training and resources are evaluated for their impact and produce regular reports on the outcomes of our work.
- Seek evaluation by academic specialists of our key programmes and to only deliver evidenced approaches that prevent or reduce alcohol related harm.

**SUPPORT SCHOOLS AND ORGANISATIONS**
- Train 1,000 more teachers, health educators (PSHE), professionals and community leaders each year and support support 100,000 on line.
- Support the provision of the Talk About Alcohol resources free of charge to 1,500 schools and organisations.
- Provide ongoing guidance, updates, new resources and training to the 5,000 plus settings provided with *Talk About Alcohol* and training ongoing.
- Offer training and support to teachers and youth professionals by regionally based AET specialists throughout England and Scotland.

**EMPOWER PARENTS AND CARERS**
- Equip 150,000 more parents and carers, face-to-face and online, with the necessary skills to keep their children safe around alcohol.

**ENHANCE OUR SERVICES**
- Extend our remit and reach to young adults up the age of 25, specifically those more vulnerable to alcohol related harms and student populations.
- Expand our digital outreach, training games and interactive materials.
- Develop the range of resources offered to cover the effects of using alcohol and drugs (poly use).
- Enhance local community cohesion in Dorset through our new facilities to include partnership delivery of diversionary activities and opportunities for training and skills for young people.
- Seek to expand our geographical reach to include Northern Ireland and Wales.
How you can help

The AET has to raise £200,000 annually to support the production of its free award-winning school resources, to employ its regionally based specialist trainers who work with parents, teachers and community leaders and to develop and maintain the digital and game-based online platforms for young people, parents and professionals.

INDIVIDUAL DONORS
You can support your local school with our award-winning Talk About Alcohol resource for just £90, or fund training of youth leaders at your sports or youth club for £300, making a huge difference at community level in reducing children's risk taking. If you cycle, run, hold coffee mornings or book sales, please think of us as a worthy cause. To learn more or for marketing resources, please email kate@alcoholeducationtrust.org

CORPORATE PARTNERS
We welcome responsible corporate partners who wish to improve the health and wellbeing of children locally or across Britain. The AET programmes are used in over 2,000 schools and organisations and can demonstrate evidence of impact, behaviour change, fidelity, sustainability and value for money. Please invite us to make a presentation by emailing helena@alcoholeducationtrust.org

KEY SPONSOR
The AET resources are used in schools, youth and sports clubs across the UK, reaching 500,000 children, 110,000 parents and 12,000 teachers and health editors each year. The alcoholeducationtrust.org website enjoyed 194,000 unique visitors in 2018. Organisations such as youth and sports clubs use our resources too. The right sponsor could help ensure that our resources remain available to our key users free of charge and, if appropriate, raise awareness of their goods or services to a broad audience.

AMBASSADOR OR MENTOR
As a small charity of just ten part time staff with such a broad remit we welcome and need ambassadors and mentors to guide and support our work, from joining our group of 40 PSHE, school nurse, medical and professional advisors, to becoming a trustee. Please do contact us via kate@alcoholeducationtrust.org if you'd like to be involved.

VOLUNTEER
From helping to organise local community fundraising events, to bid writing, research, marketing or piloting our resources, we need volunteers at many levels. Please do contact us via kate@alcoholeducationtrust.org

With thanks
Donations and grants are made to The Trust from a range of funders and grant making bodies. We are extremely grateful to have received grants, donations and pro bono support. We would also like to thank the friends and advisors of AET, those who have given their time, donated or attended our various fundraising events and to Epic Printing Services, Dorchester for their sponsorship of this publication.
The resources from AET have been hugely appreciated, they have enabled our pupils to review their thoughts and misconceptions around alcohol in an interactive and engaging way that has fuelled positive and reflective discussions.

Pupils have been able to access the resources independently to support them to come to their own answers on how they could better lead healthier lifestyles and make more informed choices around the use of alcohol.”

Assistant Head Teacher, The Compass School (Alternative Learning Provision) Southampton

“The workshop in class showed real-life situations and consequences for young people. It wasn’t just teachers talking about statistics. We could relate to this much more because it was someone our own age who had been affected by alcohol”.

S5 pupils

I was shocked to learn that we, the parents, are the main suppliers of alcohol and give children alcohol as young as 13. We honestly thought it was their friends.

I’ve learnt so much this evening and feel much more confident in talking to my teenager about parties, peer pressure and that it’s OK to say no sometimes.

Year 10 parent

The resource allowed me to feel confident when delivering these lessons as it is backed up with evidence and statistics. I found my students liked having the facts. It also used language that my students understood and allowed me to feel sure that I was giving the correct information.

The links to the website mean that the resource is ‘live’ and can be kept current. This is essential for any PSHE resource. I would recommend this resource to other teachers.

Christ the King College, Isle of Wight

The materials are very accessible for a range of pupils and learning styles and are enjoyed by the students.

We particularly like the AET approach which is based on best evidence and which has a social norms approach.

Since we have been using the AET resources in B&NES we have seen a considerable reduction in alcohol use and misuse, as evidenced by our regular SHEU surveys of schools.

The resource makes life so much easier for teachers and support staff – everything is there and instructions are easy to understand.

PSHE Coordinator for B&NES Council
NB: The Talk About Alcohol resources and online support are available to all schools in the UK free of charge, but we don’t have regional coordinators and training /parent support in unfunded areas.

We are seeking a funding partner to adapt the Talk About Alcohol programme for Wales and also for Northern Ireland.

Children with moderate learning difficulties are also supported nationwide, with a grant for story and picture-led resources. The fully funded areas have enhanced support thanks to local funding for resources, teacher training and parent support sessions.
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