



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 and other substances

Developing and delivering holistic, life skill and evidence-based approaches that build resilience and reduce underage substance use and harm

HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE STAY SAFE AROUND ALCOHOL AND OTHER SUBSTANCES



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alcholeducationtrust.org



talkaboutalcohol.com

Life-Stuff.org
Facts & advice for
young adults

life-stuff.org



Who we are

The Alcohol Education Trust (AET) is a small focused charity which works across the UK to keep young people safe around alcohol and other substances. We are a leading early intervention charity that enables young people age 11- 25 to make more informed, safer life choices through the schools and youth organisations we support free of charge with award winning resources and training.

Our mission

To support parents, carers, teachers & community leaders to keep young people safe around alcohol and other substances and to reduce negative risk taking.

What we do

Intervene early

We aim to reach 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 and other risk taking. We build young people's resilience and life skills, helping them make responsible, informed choices as they encounter alcohol and other substances.

Harm reduction

As young adults begin to navigate the world of parties, pubs, clubs, festivals and independence, we equip them 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 and drug 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 and drug misuse, such as care experienced children and victims of childhood trauma.

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, vaping and cannabis. We encourage parents to monitor their children and to understand the risks associated with under age drinking, particularly in unsupervised settings.

Provide diversionary activities

We encourage and facilitate diversionary activities for young people that build community cohesion and so help reduce anti-social behaviour, crime and the onset of drinking and substance use.

Our impact and reach each year

Scotland

As well as supporting children in schools, youth clubs and sports clubs across Scotland, we have trained 95 staff from 3 partnership charities and an additional 103 professionals from 27 organisations that provide training, support and education for young adults across the country

500,000+

Allowing one year group per school, we estimate that over 500,000 children in over 3,000 settings used Talk About Alcohol games, films, activities and lesson plans this year.

1,221

schools, youth clubs, sports clubs special schools, children's homes and charities received AET resources during the 2021/22 year. 923 organisations were provided with the Talk About Alcohol workbook, our powerpoints, games, fact sheets and activities during 2021/22.

21,000+

vulnerable children and children with additional learning needs were supported in 298 new settings such as special schools, children's homes and pupil referral units through activity packs tailored for young people at higher risk of alcohol-related harms.

151,500

returning and new visits were made to our websites, via our youth facing website www.talkaboutalcohol.com and via www.alcholeducationtrust.org, our resource site for teachers and youth professionals. There were 35,000 users of the alcohol clock game and 24,500 parent visits to alcohol and the law.

3,000+

teachers and youth professionals were trained and supported via 337 workshops, conferences and familiarisation sessions. In 2021/22 10,600 teachers and professionals received our bi-termly updates and advice.

DELIVERING AN EVIDENCED-BASED PROGRAMME
THAT REDUCES HARM DUE TO ALCOHOL AND OTHER SUBSTANCES, NATIONWIDE,
FOR LESS THAN 50P A CHILD

Why we're needed



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The Problems

- o 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. Early drinking is also a significant predictor of problematic use in later life.
- o Young people who use drugs when 14 or younger have the greatest risk for drug dependence (34% prevalence rate of lifetime drug use disorders). It is also a significant predictor of lifetime alcohol dependence. The most likely choice of drug by far for young adults is cannabis (1 in 3 have tried, one in 10 use regularly) with vaping use growing rapidly.
- o In 2021, 25% of 15 year-olds thought it was OK to try cannabis, and 14% thought it was OK to use it once a week.
- o The number of young people attending specialist substance misuse services in 2020/21 was 11,0133. In 77% of cases, cannabis was the primary substance. Drugs other than cannabis were the primary substance for only 8% of persons.
- o An estimated 1 in 10 under the age of 25 have experienced having their drink spiked or needle spiking and there were 5,000 cases reported to the police in 2022.
- o Peers may influence other young people to engage in or refrain from substance use directly or indirectly, there is a dramatic rise in levels of use among young people who believe most or all of their friends drink or take drugs.
- o Young people who experience childhood adversity and trauma such as emotional or physical abuse, family breakdown or neglect are particularly at risk. A young person experiencing four traumas is 11 times more likely to smoke cannabis and 4 times more likely to binge drink.
- o It is estimated that 14% of care leavers drink alcohol every day, a third use cannabis and a third use alcohol as ways to cope, deal with anxiety or to help forget trauma.
- o Children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) are three times more likely to face addiction when older. A diagnosis of ADHD or associated behavioural disorder is the greatest predictor of problematic alcohol or drug use.
- o Children with learning difficulties are three times more likely to be abused, with alcohol a factor in grooming and violence.
- o Young people who drop out of school, are 4 times more likely to be regular cannabis users and 1.2 times more likely to binge drink.
- o Excluded children are five times more likely to have used alcohol or drugs on the last month. In 2019/20, 8,099 children were excluded for a fixed period and 513 were excluded permanently from state schools in England due to alcohol or drugs.
- o Alcohol and Drugs can be both a cause and consequence of homelessness and the homeless population is 10 times more likely to be in treatment for alcohol or drugs. 35% of deaths of homeless people were related to drug poisoning in 2021 and 10% were alcohol-specific deaths.
- o Prison surveys suggest that 40% of inmates were under the influence of alcohol and 45% were under the influence of drugs at the time of committing an offence.
- o Lack of stable employment and lack of stable housing are significant contributors to poor mental health and turning to drink or drugs to cope with deprivation. The most deprived are 7 times more likely to have an alcohol related hospital admission and 16 times more likely to have a drugs related hospital admission.
- o Young people living with alcohol or drug dependent parents/carers report living highly disrupted and chaotic lives, characterised by unpredictability and insecurity. They also experience shame, stigma, and discrimination due to their association with a parent who uses substances.
- o Between 2018/19-2020/21 there were 10,569 alcohol-specific hospital admissions for under 18s in England - that's nearly 30 per day. The UK is one of the few countries in the world where more girls are admitted than boys.

Our solutions

- o A whole school approach for every child is crucial, so that we can equip all young people with the skills, knowledge and tools to make safer choices before consumption begins. The likelihood of lifetime substance misuse drops 4-5% for each year use is delayed, hence independent evaluation showing that our Talk About Alcohol programme significantly raises the age teenagers choose to drink is paramount to improving young peoples life chances.
- o 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.
- o 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.
- o We have developed a complex suite of resources and training using proven communication methods for young people with learning difficulties using colours, stories, scenarios, pictures, emojis, cartoons and techniques such as distancing and using characters.
- o We include cannabis and vaping in our early intervention and harm reduction approaches and support young people, schools, youth and sports clubs as well as parents around both cannabis and vaping.
- o We focus our training and support workers in areas of high deprivation where alcohol-related harms are highest.
- o We have targeted streams of work supporting care experienced children and those who face a greater risk of alcohol dependency & misuse.
- o We reduce the potential harms from alcohol and cannabis to 16 – 25 year-olds by equipping them with the knowledge, awareness and life skills to make safer choices and where to go for help and support.
- o We correct social norms – namely the fact that most young people do not use drugs or get drunk.
- o We work closely with partners who ensure disadvantaged young people are given the best chances through building their self esteem, life skills, training and employability. We support staff with training, resources and the skills to support young adults around alcohol and cannabis misuse and vaping.
- o We work closely with virtual school and foster agencies who support care experienced children and care leavers. We have a bespoke alcohol and cannabis programme for 16 – 25 year olds leaving care or at risk of homelessness living in assisted accommodation. Training and resources enable life coaches to have one to one conversations around higher harms, levels of use, consequences, grooming, consent and other relevant issues.
- o We support young people in alternative education and provide training and resources to those working with them.
- o We work very closely with the Youth Offending Teams as well as training staff in pupil referral units being careful not to trigger trauma or stigma at all times.
- o Our staff training and materials at all times avoid stigma and triggering trauma and highlight the importance of being supportive, empathetic, non judgemental and how to offer targeted support and referral to specialist family charities working in this area specifically.





SCHOOLS AND HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

The Problems

- o 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.
- o In 2019/20, nearly 9,000 exclusions were issued by schools in England due to drugs and alcohol.
- o Schools generally have little budget, training or guidance for RSHE.
- o Charities and commissioned services supporting vulnerable children and young adults lack the expertise, resources and training to support them around alcohol and drugs.

Our Solutions

- o We provide an easy one stop shop for busy, time-poor teachers where they can download lesson plans, implementation and evaluation guidance by topic or by ability for each year group.
- o We make our evidenced Talk About Alcohol programme available free of charge to all secondary schools across Britain.
- o We train teachers and provide ongoing guidance so they feel confident and knowledgeable in teaching about alcohol and other substances
- o 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.
- o We provide workshops, training and resources to life coaches and mentors of young adults in settings such as Foyers, Housing Associations and for organisations such as The Prince's Trust.



COMMUNITIES AND FAMILIES

The Problems

- o Parents and carers are the prime suppliers of alcohol to under 18s.
- o Children living in households where parents drink to excess are more likely to drink early and problematically.
- o Those who use alcohol or drugs have significantly lower parental supervision than those who don't use substances.
- o Parenting that increases alcohol and drug use includes: a lack of parental monitoring, high levels of parent/child conflict & a child's lack of willingness to disclose information to their parents.
- o The greater the number of unsupervised evenings with friends, the greater the likelihood that young people will report having consumed alcohol in the last week and having used drugs in the last month.
- o 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'll get it elsewhere, otherwise.

Our Solutions

- o 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.
- o We correct perceived social norms with positive messages on how teenagers are drinking and getting drunk far less than they were 10 years ago.
- o 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.
- o 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



Children and Young
People Now! 2022
Finalist for best early
intervention awards



Alcohol Awareness for
Young People Award
(2018) from the Chris
Donovan Trust



Teach Secondary
Awards 2021
Best Free Resource



Inspiring Wellbeing
Awards 2018 -
Outstanding contribution
to Wellbeing



Private Education &
Development Awards
2019

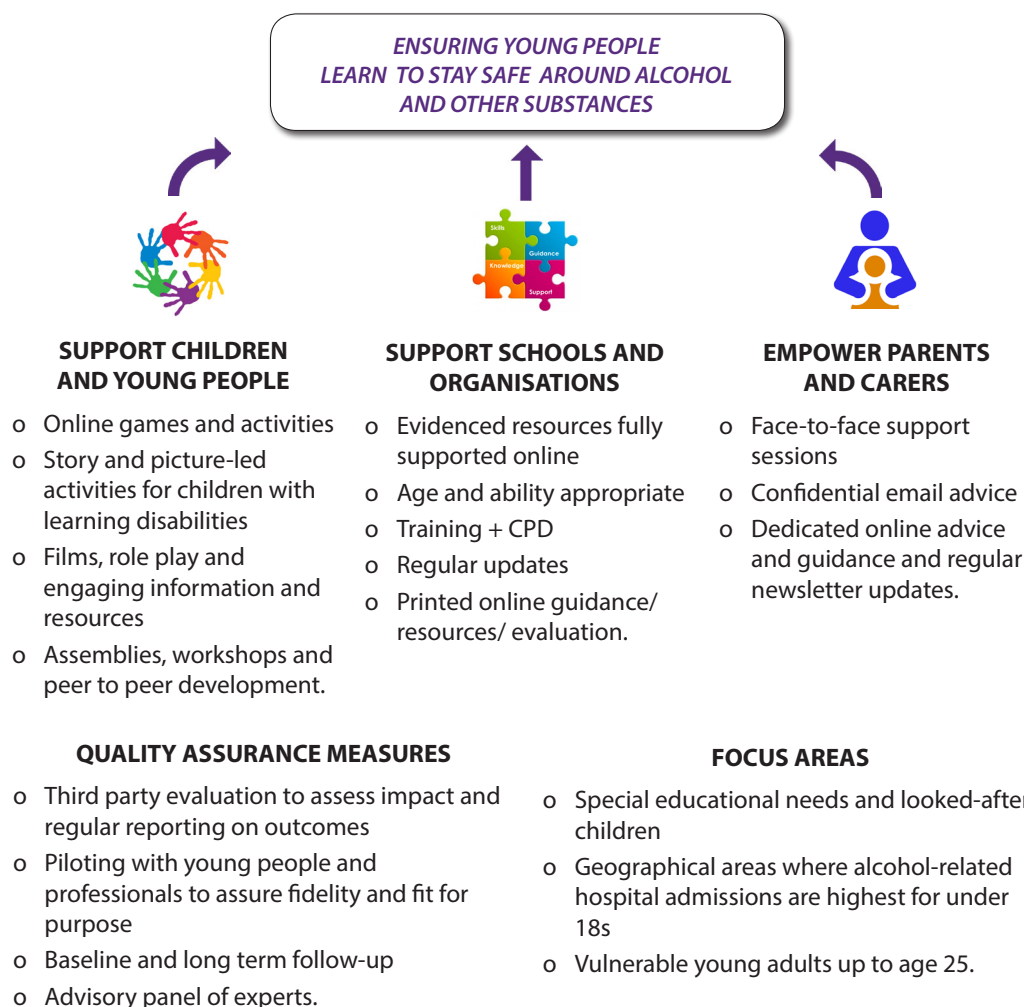


Charity Times Finalist
for best small charity of
the year 2017



Education Resource
Awards 2019, Highly
Commended for best
secondary school
resource

A joined up approach to reduce alcohol related harm



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 and other substances.

Our goals are to:

- o 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.
- o Reduce the prevalence and social acceptability of binge drinking and drunkenness.
- o Ensure the life chances of the children most vulnerable to alcohol harm and abuse are improved.
- o Reduce the accidents, violence, assault and harm caused to young people and the community by alcohol.
- o Encourage diversionary activities for young people that reduce anti-social behaviour crime and onset of drinking.

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

- o Continue to ensure that all young people (aged 11-18) have free access to the Talk About Alcohol programme, its websites, games, films and activities across the UK.
- o Support vulnerable young people at higher risk of alcohol and drug related harms with targeted approaches in all settings
- o Ensure harm minimisation resources for young people to age 25 are freely available on alcohol, cannabis and vaping. Provide workshops, peer to peer training and opportunities for young adults.



SUPPORT SCHOOLS AND ORGANISATIONS

- o Train teachers, health educators (PSHE), youth professionals and community leaders new to the AET programmes face to face and on line on all issues regarding alcohol, cannabis and vaping
- o Support the provision of the Talk About Alcohol programme and other resources, websites, films, games, lesson plans and worksheets and SEN specific activities free of charge to schools and youth supporting organisations.
- o Provide ongoing guidance, training, updates, signposting and new resources to settings currently provided with AET programmes through our regionally based specialist staff throughout England and Scotland.



EMPOWER PARENTS AND CARERS

- o Equip parents and carers, face-to-face and online, with the necessary skills to keep their children safe around alcohol and other substances.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

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

ENHANCE OUR SERVICES

- o Extend our remit and reach to young adults up the age of 25, specifically those more vulnerable to alcohol and drug related harms and student populations.
- o Develop our harm minimisation resources for young people aged 16+ preparing them for the legal drinking age and its responsibilities.
- o Expand our digital outreach, training games and interactive materials.
- o Expand the range of resources offered to cover the effects of the combined use of alcohol and drugs.
- o Seek to expand our geographical reach to include London and The South East Northern Ireland & Wales.
- o 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 that, in turn, reduce anti-social behaviour, crime and onset of drinking and drug use.

How you can help

The AET has to raise £300,000 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 3,000 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 an estimated 500,000 children and 13,000 teachers and youth professionals each year. The alcoholeducationtrust.org website enjoyed 144,000 unique page views in 2021. 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 Board of Trustees or our advisory group of PSHE leads, school nurses and medical specialists, to becoming a Director of our trading arm. If you'd like to be involved, please do contact kate@alcoholeducationtrust.org.

VOLUNTEER

From helping to organise local community fundraising events, to bid writing, research, marketing or piloting our resources, we need volunteers at many levels. We also have opportunities to volunteer for our community outreach events or in the café - both at the Pavilion in the Park. Please do contact kate@alcoholeducationtrust.org for more information.

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.

Find out more...

Read about our work in the past year in our [Progress and impact report for 2022](#)



The Lancashire Prince's Trust and Blackburn Youth Zone staff attended the education sessions provided by Kathryn, we gained a clear understanding and overview of the resources we can and will use to support our young people across Lancashire & Cumbria so they can reflect and learn. Really looking forward to putting what we have learnt into practice.

Princes' Trust

Great to have access to resources which can be tailored to individual circumstance. Thank you, it was a great training session.

Sheffield Foyer

I have had great feedback from the team and some of the interventions and resources have already been used with clients. Thank you so much for all of your support and input.

Project 3 - Doncaster

Great training session- thought provoking- great use of resources and information to help within our work. Really useful to know services and support available for young people, carers and professionals.

Dorset NHS CIC Health Team

"Resources will be invaluable during home visits and clinic appointments. I can now be more focused and confident in the discussions I have around alcohol use and awareness.

Birmingham Children in Care Team

I found the content & delivery of this training session, interesting, informative & relevant, not just with regards to my job role but also as a parent!

It was good training which refreshed my dated knowledge. It also highlighted how we are quick to assume, from societies norms, without knowing the figures of those who actually drink.

Some really thought provoking statistics and facts. I enjoyed the style of the session and felt the delivery was very warm, engaging and informative.

The time flew by! Thank you.

Foster Care Associates

I just wanted to follow up your delivery of the training on Wednesday evening to say thank you from all the team. It has already got the team thinking about how they can implement some of the activities but also consider how they deliver other topics too using the method of scenarios ending with a positive one.

Inspire Youth, Harrogate

Loved it all! A really enjoyable and interactive session, the resources are great and Karen was really knowledgeable. Thank you!

Woodside Group

All of the course was useful and will be really beneficial in my job role. The resources were very helpful.

**Eastwood Grange School,
Derbyshire**



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