



Registered Charity 1138775

# Newsletter

## for Parents



May 2013 Ed1

**WELCOME** to the first edition of our newsletter for parents about drinking and kids....alcohol is something that our children will **have** to make decisions about, as 88% of adults drink here in the UK, and it's all around us, in shops, cafes, bars, and in our homes. For most of us adults, drinking is a relaxing and sociable thing to do, but our livers and brains are fully developed and we're mature enough to make sensible decisions about alcohol.



As parents, you can make such a difference as to when your child starts to drink alcohol and when they do, how much. So we want to make sure that you have as much information as possible at your fingertips to help your children make the right choices about alcohol as they get older. As the Summer holidays loom we've put together some tips and ideas.....

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### Safer Summer Holidays

The Summer holidays are when a lot of teenagers drink with friends for the first time - exams are finished, long light evenings.. and the reasons given are often that they're 'bored', and there's 'nothing else to do', or they just want to have a good time with their mates. If you work it's often difficult to know what to do with teenagers, here are a few ideas that parents have said really help:

**sports and hobbies** - it doesn't matter if it's football or knitting, encouraging your kids to be passionate about something they love or are good at, fights off boredom and can fill a lot of time. Find out about clubs locally and holiday programmes and team up with other parents for lifts and ideas.

**youth and holiday clubs** - great if your kids are not sporty as many clubs have music, art or film workshops going on in the holidays.

**getting a job** - this can be painting a shed for a friend, dog walking, mowing the lawn, babysitting and not just 'proper' jobs that are often difficult to find for under 16's. Having to deal with other adults, get up on time and have money they've worked hard to earn can give your child confidence as well as responsibility.

**volunteering** - there are some great volunteering opportunities for under 18's for charities and in your community that could help them with a job later. Take a look at <http://timebank.org.uk/idea/under-18> or [www.volunterraing.org.uk](http://www.volunterraing.org.uk)

**check where they're going and who they're with** - it might seem obvious, but research among teens say their parents often don't know the truth about where they've been. So check plans are genuine, especially sleepovers and always make sure they've got a fully charged mobile with them.





**first festival?** - festivals have got a lot stricter over the last couple of years about ensuring under 16's are with older adults. But it's quite a rite of passage, with some having 'legal high' tents and there will be plenty of alcohol about.

We suggest you go through our top tips for staying safe leaflet [AET website](#)

- [parent's pages](#) - scroll down to the **young adult's area**.

**don't leave too much alcohol in the house** - and know what you've got. We hear so many stories of finding the vodka bottle's been filled up with water, or half the beers in the garage have disappeared, or you've found the empties hidden in the rubbish. If you're out or away, it can be very tempting, or a mate can 'mislead' your youngster.

**all inclusive holidays?** - another place where teens will first get drunk is on holiday. All inclusive holidays offer a lot of temptation, and you're more likely to have your guard down and probably drinking a lot more yourself (sipping that cocktail on the beach), so be aware of the dangers around the sea and swimming pools, balconies and those alluring boys chatting up your daughter!

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## The Alcohol Education Trust

Setting rules and sticking to them, checking sleepover and party plans, knowing where your kids are and who they are with are some of the ways of helping to keep our kids safe and to ensure a responsible relationship with alcohol as they get older. We've put as many tips together as we can to help you talk to your kids about alcohol and to be confident in your knowledge and decision making.



Take a look via : [AET website - parents' home page](#)

We're not here to be preachy, but to encourage you to think about the ground rules around alcohol, when to talk about alcohol and what to say. At the moment the average age of a first whole drink in the UK is about 13 and a half - and that's at home with you, usually on a special occasion.

Part of our work is to explain that there is a world of difference between a sip or little bit in a glass on a special occasion and allowing whole drinks - basically the more permissive you are at home, the more likely your kids are to drink outside of the home (average age 14) We'd like to encourage you to wait until 15 - in line with the CMO medical guidance.

Click here for video clips that act as good conversation starters [AET website - video clips](#).

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## Follow us on Twitter and Facebook

As well as a dedicated parents' area on our website [www.alcoholeducationtrust.org](http://www.alcoholeducationtrust.org) which is full of tips and advice for parents, you can also now find us on **twitter** and **facebook**. By following **@AETparenthelp** and/or 'liking' the Alcohol Education Trust page - you will receive regular information and tips to support you to support your youngsters. In today's busy world, having these reminders as part of your mobile device applications will help to keep this important issue at the forefront of everyday life.

If you enjoy social networking join the conversation at Family Talk UK - a facebook page discussing talking to kids about alcohol with videos, tips and resources [facebook.com/FamilyTalkUK](https://www.facebook.com/FamilyTalkUK).

Perhaps you are a school governor or a member of the parents' group at your youngsters' school....why not ask them to organise a parent talk in school. This can be arranged by contacting Sandra (our Parent Coordinator) on [sandra@alcoholeducationtrust.org](mailto:sandra@alcoholeducationtrust.org)

**REMEMBER: your influence is strong** - if you are at a summer B-B-Q garden or beach party then being a good role model is important. Show the youngsters that you are responsible where alcohol is concerned.

Some good things to do are:

- ✓ Have soft drinks in between alcoholic ones
- ✓ Eat food as well
- ✓ Try to leave at the planned time
- ✓ Leave the car behind

For further information on any of the above please contact

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