

## Where has this term gone? The Easter holidays, the clocks going forward – Spring at last!

We've had such a busy half term with Talk About sessions being held in schools all over the country, and calls for our resources and advice for parents from as far as The Seychelles and Australia.

For some strange reason, Government advice on how much is too much as regards alcohol consumption, daily low risk guidelines and even the size of a drink is different in almost every country – so a unit is 8g here, 12g in Denmark, 14g in the US and 19.75g in Japan!



How many units in a drink?	
1 =	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A half bottle (175ml) of wine</li> <li>A half pint (284ml) of all types of beer</li> <li>A single measure of spirit (25ml)</li> </ul>
2 =	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A bottle (350ml) of wine</li> <li>A pint (568ml) of all types of beer</li> <li>A double measure of spirit (50ml)</li> </ul>
3 =	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A bottle (350ml) of wine</li> <li>A bottle (350ml) of beer</li> <li>A bottle (350ml) of spirit</li> </ul>
4 =	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A large bottle (700ml) of wine</li> <li>A bottle (350ml) of beer</li> <li>A bottle (350ml) of spirit</li> </ul>

In short, UK daily guidelines suggest that women shouldn't regularly drink more than 2-3 units (1 medium glass of wine at 13%) and men 3-4 units (a pint and a half of regular beer). 'Regularly' means on most days. There are of course times when we shouldn't drink at all, and you can learn more about UK guidance by visiting [www.drinkingandyou.com](http://www.drinkingandyou.com) or [www.drinkaware.co.uk](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk), or there is a good summary on the parent area of our website [www.alcoholeducationtrust.org](http://www.alcoholeducationtrust.org).

A unit calculator is also provided on the NHS website: [www.nhs.uk/Tools/Pages/Alcohol-unit-calculator.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Tools/Pages/Alcohol-unit-calculator.aspx)

## For parents of younger children



If you're looking for a conversation starter to talk about alcohol and you've got children aged 10-12, then BBC Newsround have made a short programme called Living With Alcohol, which is balanced and informative with lots to talk about, from a child growing up in a pub, to another losing a father with depression and drinking problems. Rather like our 'Just A Few Drinks' films of teenagers' experience around alcohol, this 15 minute feature tells the real-life stories of three children who have had very different experiences.

You can view the BBC Newsround special at [www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/31427685](http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/31427685) or the Just A Few Drinks films, at [www.alcoholeducationtrust.org/teacher-area/effects-physical-and-social/effects-physical-social-ice-breakers](http://www.alcoholeducationtrust.org/teacher-area/effects-physical-and-social/effects-physical-social-ice-breakers)

## GCSE, A level and exam stress

Some of us will be trying to keeping our kids calm and focused ready for GCSEs, AS and A levels. You may be facing rows about whether they should be staying in and revising or going out to meet mates or to that party over the holidays.. It's a difficult balance as they need to unwind and have some time off, but not be so tired they can't work properly the next day. Try and avoid sleepovers as you can guarantee 'sleep' doesn't really come into it. Agree an earlier pick up time than usual if there is a party, or be prepared to say no if you're not happy. You can always cheer them up with promises of fun things to do as soon as exams are over.



If you need advice on your kids going to parties or if you're thinking of hosting a party yourself, then we've got plenty of advice for you at [www.alcoholeducationtrust.org/parent-area/teenage-parties/](http://www.alcoholeducationtrust.org/parent-area/teenage-parties/)

## Do you have a child with Special Educational Needs?

We're thrilled to have won funding to create four picture and activity based resources on alcohol for children with special educational needs – SEN charity Image In Action will be helping us develop the resources, but we are always looking for knowledgeable parents to join our advisory group – So if you have an opinion/guidance or would like to trial the resource once it's developed with your child, then please contact [kate@alcoholeducationtrust.org](mailto:kate@alcoholeducationtrust.org)



## In the news

Two features have caught our attention this term – Firstly, a new survey indicates that about a third of 15-year-olds in the UK have blacked out due to alcohol, and the rate rises to nearly three-quarters by the time they reach 19.

“Blackout is associated with pretty severe intoxication,” said Dr Marc Schuckit, the study’s lead author from the University of California, San Diego. It occurs when the blood alcohol level “is about double the legal limit for driving... We found that (blackouts) were shockingly common” among the teens in the survey.

Schuckit believes teens and popular culture, view blacking out as funny. But it’s very serious, he said, adding that when blood alcohol levels are high enough to cause blackouts, “people are very likely to get into trouble.” The 1,402 teens in the study, all of whom reported drinking when surveyed at age 15, were surveyed again at ages 16, 18 and 19. At age 15, 30% reported drinking to the point where they could not remember what happened the next day. By age 19, about 74% had experienced an alcohol-related blackout.

His group reports in the journal *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research* that being female, drinking more, smoking, having fewer inhibitions and having more friends thought to be drinking and using drugs, were all tied to an increased number of blackouts. Parents, Schuckit said, should start a discussion about drinking.



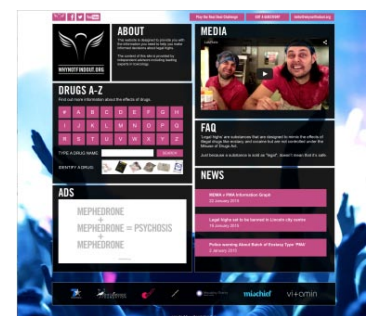
The second study suggests that for girls, highlighting calorie information in drinks encourages them to eat less on nights when they plan to go out drinking – This is doubly harmful as if they drink on an empty stomach, alcohol rushes into the bloodstream much more quickly than if they drink with or after food, putting added strain on the body’s organs and liver. It also means the girls are likely to get drunk more easily and quickly and therefore be more vulnerable to risk taking and harm. We suggest that you emphasise to your teens that if you eat before you go out – even a sandwich or a bowl of cereal, you’re more likely

to stay in control and have a better time. Alternating with water or soft drinks will keep them hydrated (and they’ll spend less). Focus on the importance of staying with their friends, never going home on their own or with someone they don’t know well, keeping their mobile fully charged and switched on and never leaving their drink unattended.

## Legal highs and abuse within relationships

We’ve found at our parent talks that parents often ask us about other teenage issues they are worried about. One that comes up again and again is around cannabis and legal highs (NPS) being available to their kids – you can find out some good information via [www.whynotfindout.org](http://www.whynotfindout.org)

Also, although out of our areas of expertise, we’ve also been impressed by the <http://thisisabuse.direct.gov.uk/> website which deals with inappropriate relationships, girls and gangs and the sharing of sexual images, or ‘sexting’.



For confidential advice around talking to your kids about alcohol email [info@alcoholeducationtrust.org](mailto:info@alcoholeducationtrust.org) and do visit our website [www.alcoholeducationtrust.org/parent-area/](http://www.alcoholeducationtrust.org/parent-area/), [twitter.com/talkalcohol](https://twitter.com/talkalcohol) or [facebook.com/talkaboutalcohol](https://facebook.com/talkaboutalcohol).

AET resources comprise of [www.alcholeducationtrust.org](http://www.alcholeducationtrust.org) and [www.talkaboutalcohol.com](http://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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