

Young Persons Alcohol Project

1. In response to the Government National Alcohol Strategy; Safe Sensible Social 2007 the PCT commissioned work from STASH to establish the drinking patterns of young people. The area chosen was Billingham and the work commenced in August 2008.
2. The project had a number of aims:
 - a) Engage with young people during periods when alcohol is most likely to be consumed.
 - b) Produce a teacher/training toolkit to be used in schools and further education, to be piloted in at least one setting.
 - c) Produce evidence of effective strategies being used with young people.
 - d) Ensure that the young people engaging in the project are also linked into developments in the area, specifically the Youth Café.
3. Initial work was done with stakeholders and hot spot areas were identified. A questionnaire was developed and sampled with a group of young people. 200 young people who self reported that they used alcohol completed surveys anonymously.
4. Seven young people were involved in identifying strategies that will work and the development of the toolkit and the focus group that was formed for this element of the work looked at existing resources being used by ThinkB4UDrink. The group recommended a web-based tool to include an alcohol unit calculator. They wanted to see alcohol education include culture and attitudes to drinking rather than the current 'health' focus and they said that they would prefer this to be delivered by someone other than a teacher.
5. In summary the research found:
 - a) All of the 200 interviewed were drinking alcohol with the majority citing one or two days of the week as normal mainly weekends. Of the 200, 88 were male and 112 female. The majority age range was 14 and 15 with three aged 10 and seven aged 12. 46 of the group were drinking three to six times a week and additional research was carried out with this group.
 - b) The majority of young people get older friends to buy their alcohol followed by family (including parents) and friends the next highest category was buying it for them selves. Beer and

Cider are the most popular drinks followed by spirits. 74% said that their parents knew that they were drinking alcohol.

- c) Anywhere and everywhere and at home were the most popular areas for drinking with only 18 (9%) saying they drink on the streets. However a total of 76 (39%) admitted drinking outside naming locations such as fields with only two saying that they used parks.
- d) 79% had received information about alcohol from their school and 73% felt that it was good to fair.
- e) The full group were asked about risky behaviour as a result of consuming alcohol with some ticking more than one answer. 83 (43%) admitted to having sex, 45 (23%) had taken drugs, 76 (38%) had become violent 71 (36%) had taken other risks.
- f) When asked what kind of activity would stop them drinking 48 (24%) chose not to answer. 50 (25%) said sports (however some sporting facilities that have been provided such as the MUGGA are used for sport on week days but for drinking on weekends), 22 (11%) said youth clubs, 34 (17%) said hobbies in addition 11 6% combined all three, 17 (9%) combined youth clubs and sports.
- g) When asked why they drank 40 (20%) did not answer, 35 (18%) said they drank for fun and 30 (15%) said it was to celebrate/be social/occasions. 21 (11%) did not know why they drank.

- 6. The final draft of the report is attached providing full details of the outcomes of the work. If anyone would like a bound copy of the report they can contact Jo Heaney on joanne.heaney@northteespct.nhs.uk

Community Safety Manager
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