



# YEAR 8

## Teaching Guidance Notes

### Purpose of the Resource

The purpose of this resource is to support you in the delivery of an Alcohol Awareness Session which will be delivered to students in Year 8. The WREK'D team have created this session to enable young people to explore some of the risks that are linked with alcohol and to help them to make informed choices, thus increasing their awareness and understanding in the importance of staying safe.

### Objectives of the Session

- ★ Greater awareness of the effects that alcohol has on the human body and the social risks associated.
- ★ Better understanding of the mixed messages society gives about alcohol.
- ★ Increased knowledge and understanding of the impact that media and marketing can have on alcohol consumption.

We recognise that you, as the teacher, are the expert in delivering learning to children and young people and are therefore best placed to bring about change. We hope by sharing these health and social risk materials in the form of the Year 8 Alcohol Awareness Session, we can join with you in educating young people and helping them to keep safe.

### Background

The Health and Social Care Information Centre (2013) identified the North East as having 51% of pupils aged between eleven to fifteen years old who admit to getting drunk; the England average is 43%. Further local research carried out in Northumberland by Targeted Adolescent Service (2013) revealed that 90% of young people feel under pressure to get drunk. Current studies conducted by leading alcohol related harm organisation Balance North East also note that young people can be influenced by media when exposed to alcohol imagery, particularly from a young age.

## Before you begin

There is a short introductory paragraph on how to begin using this online resource on the home page, then select Teachers & Youth Workers section and read/work through the instructions and the relevant materials provided in preparation for the session.

### Your WREK'D materials consist of:

- ★ **An online Presentation (or printable Presentation) for each Year 8-11** for you to focus the session around plus various year appropriate break out Exploratory Activities and Media Clips to dip into during the Presentation hopefully if your time schedule allows. These online or printable PDF Exploratory Activities and Media Clips are age appropriate and devised to also be used as shorter stand-alone activities; some of which are repeated within the presentation depending upon the nature of the activity.
- ★ **A downloadable/printable set of PDF's under Teaching Resources for each Year 8-11.** This set gives you an essential background to the session and is only for Teachers/Youth Workers. It includes Teaching Guidance Notes, Lesson Plans, a generic Media Clips & Questions document, a Letter to Parent/Guardian & an Evaluation Form. The Teaching Guidance Notes are a step by step guide to delivering this Year 8 Alcohol Awareness Session to young people. The Lesson Plans help you check Learning Outcomes. The additional documents in this set are hopefully self-explanatory. Begin by reading/following the Teaching Guidance Notes, plus read/use the accompanying Teaching Resources documents as and where indicated.
- ★ **Please note** the Letter to Parent/Guardian can be adapted to include your school logo and details, as well as who to contact within your school for further information. Once personalised it is key that the Letter to Parent/Guardian PDF document is to be printed and sent home with pupils to create the opportunity for family members to become aware of the importance of an alcohol-free childhood. Should any issues be disclosed relating to alcohol related harm, please refer to your school's safeguarding policy (child protection) and link with the appropriate services.
- ★ **Please note** the completed Evaluation Forms are to be returned to the WREK'D team at Northumberland County Council, see About page for contact details.
- ★ **A downloadable/printable PDF of Important Background Information** which forms a good backdrop for the session for you, parents & guardians and students. It is from a well-recognised national resource: [www.drinkaware.co.uk](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk)
- ★ **Other online information** such as an About page and useful Links page.
- ★ **Online sections for Parents/Guardians and Students.** They can also work through these sections of the website at home with or without their own child to reinforce the message.



## Session Notes

Please open the online Presentation (or printable PDF Presentation) and follow the notes below:

### REFER TO SLIDE

#### Just a Laugh? Let's talk about alcohol

TEACHER: Today we are going to be talking about alcohol and the way it can affect the body. We will also be talking about how it can change the way we behave as well as looking at the things that can influence people to drink alcohol. This is important to talk about as alcohol is often used in Britain, but not everyone understands the harm that it can sometimes cause – especially to young people. This session is really interesting and it gives you the chance to join in a few fun activities as well as watching a couple of DVD clips. I hope by you taking part in this session, you will learn more about what alcohol is and the effect it can have. Please let's have lots of discussion as we go through; ask lots of questions but most of all, enjoy learning about this topic.

### REFER TO SLIDE

#### Classroom group agreement

The agreement should be used with every session delivery and can be adapted according to age and level of understanding.

This agreement helps to create a safe environment in which the young people will have reduced anxiety and embarrassment; it also reduces the risk of unintended personal disclosures. The way young people feel when engaging in an alcohol awareness session will clearly impact upon how well they engage in the learning process. A safe learning environment with well-established boundaries will enable both you and the pupils to discuss a whole variety of issues and topics safely. This is particularly important as you might have young people who have already been affected by alcohol related harm.

Begin by telling the group that the purpose of the classroom group agreement is so we can fully understand how we can behave in the session and that this agreement will apply to everyone, including you. Explain that you want everyone in the group to feel as safe and as comfortable as possible in order to have fun and enjoy the session that we are going to work on.

Explain that the agreement starts with 'We like it when:' as this starts our session off in a more positive way rather than giving a list of do's and don'ts. Although for the purpose of the alcohol awareness session the classroom group agreement will be prewritten, it is important to go through each point and explain what is meant by that statement. This will ensure that all the young people understand what boundaries are in place and also the consequences for behaviour.

The agreement will be the foundations of the session and will also provide an important framework for effectively managing behaviour. Its structure allows you to positively challenge those who are not following the group agreement in a clear and constructive manner. It is expected that you will have to refer back to the classroom group agreement during the session to maintain the safe environment that was created at the beginning and also to continue to build a level of trust and respect. It is important to feel comfortable in challenging inappropriate behaviour in order to ensure a safe environment for all and to maintain good boundaries.

This Classroom Group agreement could also be written up on a flipchart using engaging colours such as blue or green.



## **REFER TO SLIDE**

### **Stand up if...**

or

## **YEAR 8 EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES**

### **Stand up if...**

Either simply go through each statement on the slide and encourage verbal debate.

Or alternatively download/print the Stand up if... PDF page and follow the instructions.

Allow the class to make comments relating to the activity.

TEACHER: Where might people see alcohol and alcohol messages? (This might include on the television, in the home, in shops, when they have been to family functions or even when they have been around older friends/siblings. Remind students not to share names; just the story).

This section is to show the class that even at a young age, they will have been exposed to alcohol through lots of different ways. Explain to the class that alcohol is used a lot in our society; this includes during celebrations and socialising with other people. However, alcohol isn't needed to have a good time and actually it can be quite damaging to the brain and the body if you drink alcohol as a young person.

## **REFER TO SLIDE**

### **Know the facts**

TEACHER: Do you know what alcohol is? The chemical name for alcohol is ethanol. This happens when fruits and grains are put through a process which is called fermentation. Fermentation is when yeast or bacteria react with sugars to give ethanol. The pure form of alcohol tastes absolutely disgusting! Can you think of what might get added to alcohol so it tastes nicer? (Answer is sweeteners, sugars and artificial preservatives) What can happen if the body has too much sugar? (Bad for the skin, weight gain, dental decay etc.)

Alcohol is a strong legal drug – we define drugs as any chemical (and we mentioned that ethanol is a chemical) that affects biological functioning of the body and can pass from body to brain. Drugs interfere with the signals in the brain (called neurotransmitters) therefore limiting the function of both the body and the mind.

So why is it important to learn about alcohol? Alcohol can have a harmful effect on the developing brain. If you are under the age of 18, then your brain is still developing. Also, young people who drink alcohol are more likely to be a victim of a violent crime, are more likely to be admitted to hospital and are more likely to try illegal drugs.



## REFER TO SLIDE

### How can alcohol affect our bodies?

Explain to the group that this activity is to get us thinking about all of the damage that alcohol can do to the body and the mind.

Go through each of the body parts on Slide 5 and the effects of alcohol on them (see notes below).

**BRAIN** - Alcohol is a depressant which means it slows down the functioning of the brain. Drinking alcohol can cause memory loss, and heavy alcohol use can cause brain damage.

**CANCER** - Our bodies convert ethanol (alcohol) into a dangerous chemical called acetaldehyde; this chemical causes damage to our DNA. Alcohol causes 9,000 cancers each year and is linked to seven different types of cancer. Drinking alcohol increases the risk of cancer as it passes through different parts of the body including the mouth, throat, stomach, liver and bowels.

**MEMORY** - A serious memory condition called Korsacoff Syndrome (sometimes known as alcohol related dementia) is caused by damaging the short term memory through heavy alcohol consumption as well as affecting other parts of the brain.

**SKIN** - Alcohol ages the skin; the sugars and sweeteners can lead to outbreaks of spots and weight gain. It can also make your face look puffy and bloated.

**PANCREAS** - Alcohol can cause pancreatitis. This is where the cells in the pancreas become inflamed and damaged.

**HEART** - Long term or heavy drinking can increase the risk of heart disease, increase the risk of high blood pressure (the main cause of heart attack and stroke) and weaken the heart muscle which is needed to pump blood efficiently. Alcohol can also cause your heart to beat irregularly.

**EMOTIONS** - Alcohol is a depressant which means people might feel tearful, low in mood and sometimes angry afterwards.

**DECISION MAKING** - Alcohol distorts your perception and lowers your inhibitions; this means people are more likely to take dangerous risks.

**LIVER** - Alcohol can damage the cells of the liver which can result in liver cirrhosis.

**BABIES' DEVELOPMENT** - When women are pregnant, drinking alcohol can cause brain damage to the unborn child. Even small amounts of alcohol can result in babies being born with a condition known as Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). If expectant mums drink alcohol then the baby gets the same amount, but their bodies (such as the liver) aren't developed enough to process the alcohol and therefore causes permanent damage. There are therefore no safe alcohol limits for pregnant women.

**IMMUNE SYSTEM** - Too much alcohol prevents the body from absorbing essential nutrients needed for good immune health and it can make white blood cells (the ones needed to fight germs) less able to do their job.

Alcohol can also cause diarrhoea, stress, stomach problems, shaking, sweating, anxiety, depression, infertility, osteoporosis (thinning of the bones), dehydration, sleep disturbances and many more biological conditions.



## REFER TO SLIDE

### Alcohol and the teenage brain

or

## YEAR 8 MEDIA CLIP

### Alcohol and the teenage brain

Watch the clip. Work through the Media Clips & Questions document in Teaching Resources and invite discussion about the clip.

## REFER TO SLIDE

### Just a laugh? Alcohol can influence...

and

## YEAR 8 EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES

### Risk cards

By this point in the session the class should be becoming increasingly aware that alcohol can alter both perception and judgement. Go through the slide points.

Download/print the Risk Cards PDF and follow the instructions.

TEACHER: Please discuss which risks a young person might be likely to take under the influence of alcohol (and the risks that might come with that decision) and the risks they might not take if no alcohol had been consumed. Gain feedback from the groups.

An important point to bear in mind is that we are not proportioning blame to the individuals who might drink alcohol and end up in risky situations; young people drink alcohol predominantly for the same reasons that adults do and sometimes become victims of crime or unwanted attention as a result. We believe that although these situations could have been potentially avoided if alcohol had not lowered inhibitions or increased risk taking behaviour, young people are still vulnerable and fault lies with the individual who commits that crime or who entices a young person into that situation.

Ask the class the following questions and welcome open feedback:

- ★ Do you think alcohol can make young people at greater risk of being injured or harmed? How so?
- ★ Do you think alcohol changes the way young people might react in situations that could be dangerous? How so?
- ★ Do you think that alcohol might make people do things they could regret? How so?



## REFER TO SLIDE

### What do these sources tell us about alcohol?

TEACHER: We have spent time looking at how alcohol can damage the body and the brain, however many people often get a completely different message about how alcohol can affect people. The media (which includes sources like television, magazines, radio etc.) give us lots of messages about alcohol and sometimes can mislead us to think that drinking alcohol is needed for a good time; this isn't true!

Ask the class the following question and welcome open feedback.

★ What messages do these types of media give us about alcohol?

Many sports have alcohol sponsorship with logos displayed on clothing. By having role models endorse alcohol, it leads people to believe that alcohol is acceptable and harmless if promoted by people who are very healthy/athletic. Associating alcohol branding with famous stars also portrays an associated false image of glamour and success; this makes the viewer feel more comfortable with alcohol and the brand.

Many storylines on popular TV soaps such as Hollyoaks, EastEnders and Emmerdale all use bars as strong themes for socialising; this normalises alcohol and leads the viewer to believe alcohol is important when socialising.

Many lyrics in songs listened to by young people endorse a 'party lifestyle'. Recent research shows that one in five popular music songs endorses alcohol within the lyrics. Product placement is also commonly used in music videos. This tactic enables a young generation to become familiar with a brand so they will be more likely to trust it and try it.

Finally, Twitter, Facebook and other social media platforms are popular ground for alcohol companies to advertise their products; none of this is filtered to prevent it reaching young people and a constant stream of competitions, images and videos once again create a false image that tricks us into thinking that alcohol use is safe, acceptable and an important part of socialisation.

## REFER TO SLIDE

### The truth about alcohol advertising

Ask the class the following question and welcome open feedback.

★ Why do you think alcohol companies would lead us to believe alcohol is good for us if it really is damaging to our health?

**Answer** – Because it makes them lots and lots of money. If they were to tell people the true story about the damage that alcohol can do, then they wouldn't sell as much and wouldn't make as much money. Alcohol companies rely on creating an illusion to make sure people keep buying their product; this is clever marketing but that doesn't mean it is truthful.



**REFER TO SLIDE****See what Sam sees**

or

**YEAR 8 MEDIA CLIP****See what Sam sees**

Watch the clip. Work through the Media Clips & Questions document in Teaching Resources and invite discussion about the clip.

NB: Balance North East have produced this advertisement to highlight the risk of alcohol related harm to young people. The clip is age appropriate but does contain one mention of the words 'unprotected sex'. This is to highlight evidence which tells us that alcohol increases the risk of harm and danger. We do feel this clip is suitable viewing for Year 8, however we recommend viewing before the session to ensure your school is happy to show the clip.

**REFER TO SLIDE****Your rights**

Go through the rights.

TEACHER: Saying no to alcohol is not our choice to make it is yours! We hope by taking part in this session, you will have gained new information that will help you to make an informed choice about alcohol. We strongly believe that no alcohol during your years as a young person is the best thing for your health, your safety and your wellbeing.

Thank the class for their participation and please ask that they complete our brief Evaluation Form (see PDF download for print out) so that we can learn what has worked well for your class and what we need to include for future sessions. Please forward the completed forms to the WREK'D team at Northumberland County Council, see About page for contact details.

