

A Picture of Health

In Public Health we look at the way people in Tameside live as a whole population. This helps us understand what the main health and wellbeing challenges are for people living here, so we can look for ways to improve levels of health. We'll be sharing facts and figures about health in Tameside with you every month, to put you in the picture. We'll also be giving you information on how you can help yourself and the people around you to live well.

In focus this month: Children and Alcohol

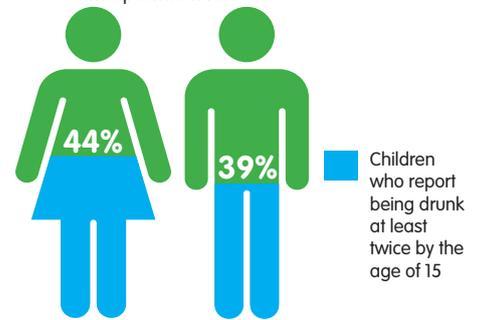
1 It's summer time and barbecue season is here. With supermarket promotions on alcohol, family gatherings can become a boozy affair but it's important to know that evidence shows that children can suffer long term physical and emotional harm due to adults drinking around them. In a survey people were asked whether they knew of a child/children who had been neglected or not well looked after because of someone else's drinking. 8% of people said yes. That equates to around 728 children in Tameside.



2 Seeing family and friends drinking regularly can influence a child's behaviour around alcohol as they grow older. Here are some of the impressions children have formed about alcohol based on what they've seen; A survey of 9-11 year olds showed that three in four think that it is normal to drink to forget your problems. In a survey of 14-17 years olds 57% felt that getting drunk is normal, and 72% think that getting drunk is fun. Are these really the lessons we want our children to learn?



3 The Chief Medical Officer recommends that children under the age of 15 drink NO ALCOHOL at all due to the risks to their developing bodies and brains, yet by the age of 15 44% of girls and 39% of boys have already been drunk at least twice. Most often, it's parents, guardians and family friends over the age of 18 who provided the alcohol for them. The majority of children who say they drink, do so at home while their parents are in.



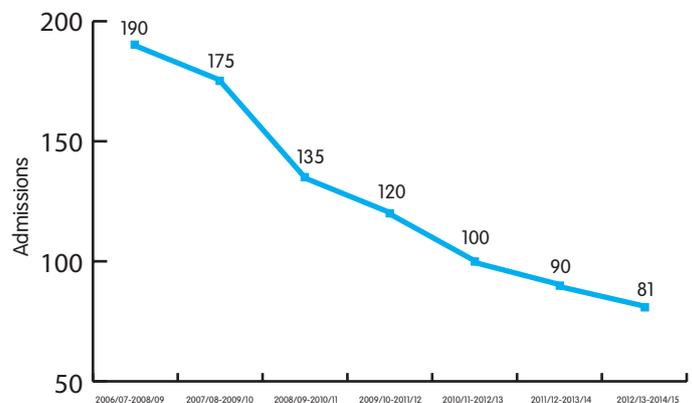
4 Drinking at any stage of pregnancy can cause damage to the developing baby. Children with foetal alcohol spectrum disorder can be born with distinctive features or deformities, as well as learning difficulties, hearing and sight problems, and poorly functioning organs. Around 1 in every 100 children born in Tameside each year has FASD - That's 29 children with a life-changing condition. There is no 'safe' level of drinking in pregnancy.



5 Binge drinking in children aged 14-17 in Tameside dropped from 22% in 2011 to 9% in 2013.



6 Alcohol related hospital admissions in the under 18s has been steadily falling in Tameside too.



7 19% of people who access alcohol treatment have dependent children. For 17% of children on a child protection plan, parental alcohol misuse was a contributing factor, and 4.7% of Young Carers are looking after a parent who misuses alcohol. We know that many more children are living in similar situations but remain 'under the radar' so these figures are much lower than the real picture.

9 In a survey of 3,000 13 and 14 year olds, those who reported being drunk at least once were twice as likely to report not using a condom the first time they have sex than those who had not been drunk. We can't be sure if drinking causes this situation to arise but we do know that young people who take risks with alcohol also tend to take risks elsewhere in their lives. Is there a link? It's certainly one to think about.

10 Children drinking alcohol can be a sign of a bigger problem. Around one in ten young people being treated for alcohol problems in Greater Manchester have disclosed that they have been sexually exploited, or have engaged in sexual contact they later regretted when sober.

8 Alcohol can harm children, but it can also harm communities if placed in the hands of children. A significant number of anti-social behaviour incidents caused by 10-17 year olds in Tameside involve alcohol.



For more information email publichealth.enquiries@tameside.gov.uk

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