

Know the facts

In the UK, drinking alcohol and driving still accounts for a quarter of all car crashes and 25% of those involved are killed.

Pedestrians who are over the alcohol limit also account for over a third of people killed in a road collision.

Young drivers and riders have a lower tolerance to alcohol which further increases their risk of having a crash. For young people accident risk increases after one drink, it doubles after two, and after five it may increase up to ten times more. Alcohol reduces their ability to see clearly and at night, they may be more easily dazzled.

Alcohol creates a sense of overconfidence which results in people taking greater risk. The ability to notice what is happening when using the roads is weakened and peripheral vision is reduced.

Under 21's account for 10% of drink driving convictions. Drink drive collisions are caused by drivers of all ages. However, the highest rate occurs in young men between the ages of 19-24 years.

It is a fact that 17-19 year olds are far more likely to be killed or injured on the roads than any other age group.



Find out more

The following web sites will be able to provide you with detailed information.

www.drinkaware.co.uk

www.ias.org.uk

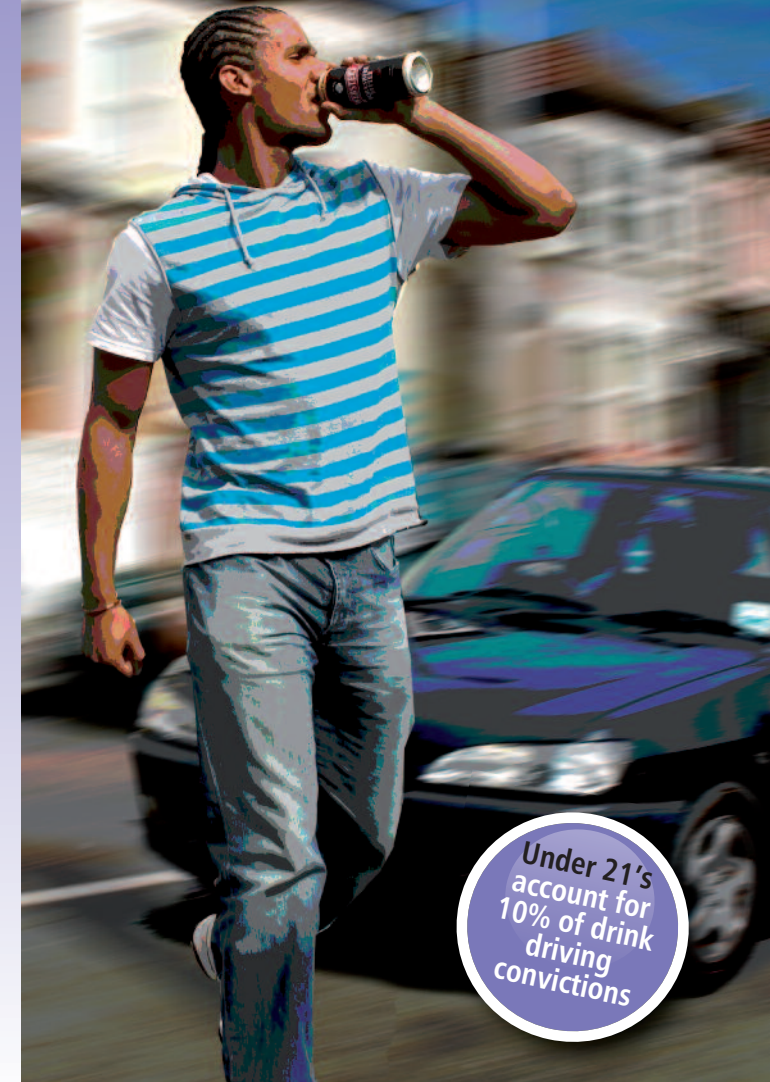
www.dcsf.gov.uk

www.dft.gov.uk



A Guide for Parents and Carers

ALCOHOL AND YOUNG ROAD USERS



Under 21's
account for
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driving
convictions

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Know the risk

Every year too many young people are killed or seriously injured on our roads because of alcohol.

Often, drinking alcohol is a popular way of enjoying a night out for young people. However, they don't realise that alcohol acts as a depressant drug which changes their behaviour, leading to many young people being killed or seriously injured on our roads.

They do not fully understand the effect alcohol can have on their lives. Research shows that 15% of young people think it is normal to get drunk at least once a week. This can lead to serious problems such as liver damage, brain damage and depression. It's a startling fact that each year over 10,000 young people end up in hospital as a result of drinking alcohol.

Often, parents/carers find out about their child's drinking habits too late to prevent them becoming injured on our roads. Pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists, passengers and drivers are all more vulnerable to serious injury when alcohol is involved. Could your child become one of these road casualties as alcohol is so easily available?

Young people seldom realise how quickly alcohol can take effect. Just one drink can seriously affect their judgement when using the roads. The strength of different products and the amount they drink may cause them long-term harm.

Know the signs

Many of the recognised signs of regular alcohol use are similar to those shown by teenagers in general. You need to consider the wider aspects and not take the following points in isolation.

- Do** they seem depressed and want more privacy?
- Are** their decisions or reactions slower than normal?
- Have** they lost interest in their hobbies, friends or appearance?
- Do** they show signs of aggression and a lack of self control?
- Are** they uncoordinated or do they feel they are invincible?
- Do** they seem emotional, exhausted, shaky, or have slurred speech?
- Are** their mood swings more than you would normally expect?

Drinking too much can lead young people into risky situations, so talk to them about their alcohol usage, discuss the consequences of excess and agree boundaries with them.



Know the alcohol

Alcohol is absorbed into the bloodstream; this happens very quickly but wears off very slowly.

AlcoPops

A ready made mix of spirit such as vodka or gin mixed with soft drinks. They can contain more alcohol than a standard beer. Because they are sweet they often appeal to young people.

Ciders

Plain cider sometimes has more alcohol than lager and premium cider can be twice as strong.

Lagers/Beers

Individual servings of bottles and cans of beers and lagers can vary widely in size and alcohol content. This makes it harder to know how much alcohol is being consumed.

Wine

Most bars now offer to serve wine in small, medium or large glasses and on average most wine is 12% alcohol. Someone drinking three large glasses (one average bottle) would lose self control and become seriously impaired.

Spirits

Spirits such as vodka, gin, rum, brandy, and whisky usually contain 40% alcohol. One single measure can result in poor coordination, slower reflexes and poor judgement.

Road Traffic Incidents - The biggest single cause of death and serious injury to young people