



TALK TO YOUR KIDS: HOW DRINKAWARE TACKLED UNDERAGE DRINKING BY TALKING TO PARENTS.

CATEGORY:
4.1 Cause Related
& Charity

AUTHORS:
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drinkaware.co.uk
for the facts



The task

The UK has one of the **worst underage drinking rates in Europe**. Parental attitudes are enormously influential on teen relationships with alcohol, yet most parents do not initiate a discussion on the issue.

Drinkaware asked us to develop a campaign to encourage parents to proactively discuss the risks of alcohol with their children, in a credible and positive way.

The background

Drinkaware is a UK alcohol education charity that aims to get people to think differently about alcohol. They focus on getting people to understand the harm it can do to their health, families and those around them.

There are over 3.6 million 11 to 15 year olds in the UK. The way in which these children are introduced to alcohol is key, as it's these first impressions that will define their relationship with the issue¹. The **average age of a first drink in the UK is 13.7²**. Most often this occurs at home, when a child asks for a sip of their parents' drink. Many **parents allow this because they hope it will encourage a more responsible attitude to drinking (the 'Continental approach')**, removing the mystique around alcohol.

In reality, there's no scientific evidence to prove that this approach gives children a responsible attitude to drinking in later life.

The UK is one of the worst offending countries in Europe in terms of underage drinking. By the age of 15, 74% of young people have drunk alcohol³. Evidence shows that **young people who start drinking at an early age drink more later in life, and more frequently⁴**, than those who delay their first alcoholic drink. This is costly as illness and injury caused by excessive drinking accounts for more than 3% of the entire NHS budget⁵.

¹ 'Your Kids and Alcohol', published by Drinkaware.

² Drinkaware KPI data, 2013.

³ 'Children, adolescents and underage drinking factsheet', Institute of Alcohol studies, December 2013.

⁴ Grant, B.F., and Dawson, D.A. Age at onset of drug use and its association with DSM-IV drug abuse and dependence: Results from the National Longitudinal Alcohol Epidemiologic Survey. *Journal of Substance Abuse* 10:163-173, 1998.

⁵ The Burden of alcohol-related ill health in the UK, *Journal of Public Health*, Vol 31, No. 3 pp. 366-373, 3rd June 2009.



What we set out to do

Our objectives

- To get parents, many of whom drink in front of their children, to talk to their kids about alcohol
- To encourage them to initiate the discussion
- To provide them with the facts they need to have a credible and positively influential discussion

With these objectives in mind, Drinkaware challenged Leith to help encourage **parents across the UK** to have **meaningful and on-going chats with their children about the risks of underage drinking**. We needed to **prompt parents to initiate a pro-active discussion** with their children, rather than having a one-off, reactive conversation.

Our audience

Research shows that parents have the most influence on children's attitudes and behaviour towards alcohol⁶. Additional segmentation research⁷ highlighted that the most important parental segment to target were the 'Dismissive and Unconcerned' parents.

So, we set out to engage this segment in particular, defined as:

- With children aged 10-15 years old
- Their children are more likely to get alcohol from them, drink at home and start drinking earlier in life
- They are 'confidently misinformed' about the risks of alcohol and believe that children are resilient and will 'bounce back' from excess alcohol use
- And they enjoy alcohol, have the highest consumption compared to other parent groups and started drinking earlier in life⁸

⁶ 'Your Kids and Alcohol', published by Drinkaware.

⁷ GfKParents Segmentation Study, 2009.

⁸ 3/5 of parents had their first drink before they were 16, 'Your Kids and Alcohol', published by Drinkaware.

The conversation

We wanted to encourage parents to start a conversation with their children about alcohol, knowing that they are the biggest source of influence on their children's attitudes and behaviours. The problem is that most parents are **complacent** about the issue. **80% of parents say that they'll 'deal with it when it happens'.**⁹

In the belief that they are doing the right thing for their children, most parents don't feel the need to raise it as a discussion issue: only **17% of parents have a proactive plan** to talk to their kids about alcohol.

⁹ 'Your Kids and Alcohol', published by Drinkaware.

¹⁰ 'Your Kids and Alcohol', published by Drinkaware.

Barriers and challenges

We knew that there were a number of barriers and challenges we had to tackle with our sample segment:

1. They think they already know best and have good intentions. They don't like to be told how to parent

- 90% agree that it's up to them to set a good example through their own drinking¹¹
- They are most likely to think that the Government really talks down to them about the dangers of drinking alcohol¹²

2. They feel that health messages are exaggerated or aren't for them (rather, they apply to 'problem' homes). This means they deflect the messages

- They are most likely to agree that that alcohol isn't as bad for you as some people say¹³

3. They are complacent about their children drinking underage

- This segment are more likely to drink in front of their children¹⁴
- When asked about the last time they were drinking, **49% of 12-14 year olds (who have had a drink) say that their parents gave them the alcohol**¹⁵
- **68% of 12-14 year olds** (who have had a drink) were with their parents the last time they were drinking

4. They feel under-confident about what to say about the issue, especially given that many openly enjoy drinking

- We knew we needed to help parents understand the influence they have on their children as role models in terms of them being their child's preferred source of information

¹¹ Children, Young People and Alcohol: Davies, Williams & Wright, GfK NOP Social Research, January 2010

¹² Children, Young People and Alcohol: Davies, Williams & Wright, GfK NOP Social Research, January 2010

¹³ Children, Young People and Alcohol: Davies, Williams & Wright, GfK NOP Social Research, January 2010

¹⁴ Children, Young People and Alcohol: Davies, Williams & Wright, GfK NOP Social Research, January 2010

¹⁵ 'Your Kids and Alcohol', published by Drinkaware

Nailing the tone

With these barriers in mind, we knew that **adopting the right tone of voice for the campaign across all communications was key.** We had to be *on the side of parents*, tapping into the **natural parental instinct to protect their child from harm.** The tone needed to be supportive, and empathetic, avoiding any 'preachiness.'

But, we also had to adopt a thought provoking tone that would disrupt and encourage positive action.



The strategic breakthrough

On the one hand, we had a great opportunity to facilitate a conversation, knowing that 71% of children aged 12-14 would turn to their parents first for information and advice on drinking alcohol.¹⁶

On the other, we knew that there were lots of barriers to actually getting through to our target audience, the main one being complacency.

Drinkaware have a wealth of recent research into the issue of underage drinking. Looking at this, we identified that the key insight in relation to our challenge is that if parents don't talk about alcohol with their children, the children's peer group will.¹⁷ And, the peer group will become the biggest

source of influence. The problem is, as the research highlights, teenagers don't understand or know about the issue of alcohol to the same extent as adults. Some of the information they communicate is more myth than fact.

When parents reflected on this, and realised that their potential positive source of influence could be overshadowed by peer group misinformation and a lack of knowledge, they developed a greater sense of urgency about the need to talk to their children.

These insights led to our campaign proposition:

Talk to your children now about the facts rather than leave it to their less informed friends.

¹⁶ 'Your Kids and Alcohol', published by Drinkaware

¹⁷ 23% of young people would go to their friends if they wanted more information and advice about alcohol, Children, Young People and Alcohol: Davies, Williams & Wright, GfK NOP Social Research, January 2010

Media strategy

The positive impact of parental influence compared to that of the teenage peer group, also influenced our national media strategy. Research shows that parents are more likely to believe in the messages, and take relevant actions, if they are shared peer to peer.

For this reason, a traditional media approach using TV as the lead lacked the potential of an online one which encouraged sharing, as well as directed traffic to a website. This enabled parents to discover the facts they needed to discuss with their children.

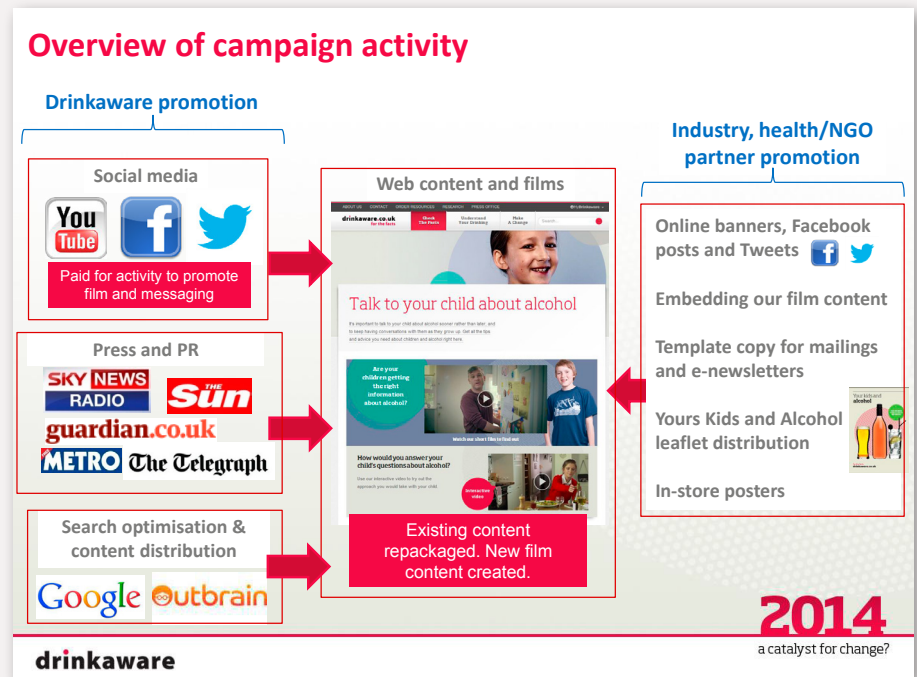
So, **online formed the backbone of the campaign**, allowing parents to seamlessly click through to the dedicated Drinkaware Parents site after viewing the ad to learn more alcohol facts, educating themselves before having a chat with their child.

The majority of social media spend (70%) went to YouTube, a media channel that had worked well for previous Drinkaware campaigns. The campaign was also promoted through:

- Press and PR
- PPC
- SEO
- Content Distribution

15% of social media spend was allocated to Facebook, driving engagement with the campaign amongst a consumer parents audience. The remaining 15% of social media spend was allocated to Twitter, driving engagement with the campaign amongst a stakeholder audience. A hashtag (#talktoyourkids) was created to explicitly communicate the CTA.

PR also supported the campaign with stories that provoked parents to visit the dedicated Parents' website.



Based on this media plan, we set ourselves an ambitious target:

270k views of film content online

The creative

We wanted to make a short compelling film that would dramatise the idea that, if you don't tell your children the facts, their peers will give them a less informed view.

The creative featured a parent looking directly at the viewer, reciting myths about alcohol, with children's voices replacing his own. These myths prompted parents to consider what their own children

could be hearing about alcohol from their peers, thereby encouraging them to talk to set the record straight.

A version of the film, embedded into the Drinkaware Parents' website, targeted parents online and ran from 18th June 2014 to 16th July 2014:

Watch it [*here*](#).



TV SCRIPT

'Voices' (30 secs)

We open on an ordinary-looking 40 year old man. He's standing in front of a fridge that's covered with kid's drawings held up by magnets. He talks directly to camera. But every time he talks, we hear the voice of a different child talking.

Voice of a 12 year old girl: I heard that having a glass of wine helps you to relax.

Voice of an 11 year old boy: I've heard that the more you drink, the more popular you become.

Voice of an 11 year old girl: Someone at school told me that alcohol makes you really strong – like a super hero.

We now hear the real voice of the dad.

Dad: What kind of things are your kids hearing about alcohol from other people? Talk to them before someone else does.

The screen fades to black and a caption comes up.

Caption: Make sure **you're** the one who talks to your kids about the risks of alcohol.

Logo: drinkaware.co.uk for the facts

Hashtag: #talktoyourkids

Make sure **you're** the one who talks to your kids about the risks of alcohol.

#talktoyourkids

The results

The campaign performed exceptionally well, **breaking all targets originally set.**

YouTube

On YouTube alone, **we exceeded our target by 100k views**, with a total of **372k (+38%)**

The cost per view was **£0.045**, 20% below the target of **£0.056**

The halo effect resulted in around **50k additional 'free' video views** (from suggested video links)

Facebook

Over 6,000 engagements through paid advertising (+136% above target)
310 'shares' (+63% above target)

Twitter

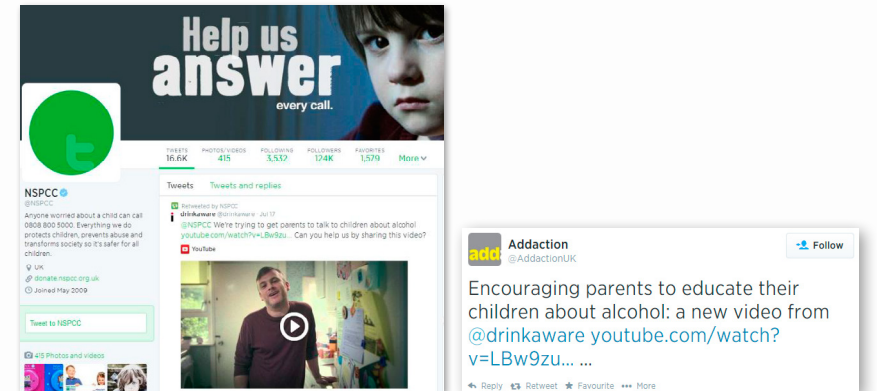
136 hashtag uses (#talktoyourkids) +24% above target

Strongly positive reaction to the campaign on Twitter
(76% of hashtag uses)

Exceeded 2.8k engagements target by 197% (8.3k)

The campaign grew Drinkaware Twitter followers by 11.3%

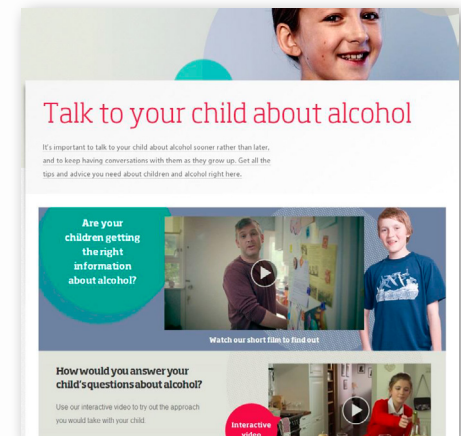
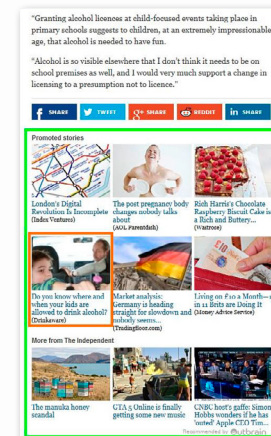
7 non-governmental organisations (including a city council and the NSPCC) tweeted the video to over **200,000 followers**



SEO, PPC and Content Distribution

Parents Homepage:

- 8,055 unique visits (+64%)
- 8,303 visits (+46%)



Drinkaware website

- **Excellent engagement on the Drinkaware website during the campaign period**, achieving **83k page views** of parent content with an average dwell time of **01:44m**
- A specific parent campaign landing page received 13,495 page views and 4,978 click throughs to further parents' content

PR coverage

Press and PR coverage achieved was exceptional, delivering 183 hits (+144%) including 17 of these in national news outlets (+240%).

The Independent

SOCIETY

Parents 'are endangering teenagers by giving them alcohol'

By Dominic Harris

Parents are being urged not to give their children alcohol as a reward for finishing their exams after it emerged that more than 16,000 intoxicated youngsters were admitted to hospital in just three years.

The charity Drinkaware predicted that about one in four

parents would give their children alcohol this summer to help celebrate the end of the school term. Its researchers found that on average, children aged 14 to 17 will be given nine units of alcohol – the equivalent of four cans of beer, a bottle of wine or a third of a bottle of vodka at post-exam parties, holidays or festivals.

The study also found that more

than half of parents had given their child a drink outside of the exam celebration period, with 86 per cent admitting they had done so because their child asked for it. Drinkaware said that 15,000 children were taken to hospital between 2010 and 2013 because of excessive alcohol.

Elaine Hindal, the chief executive of the charity, said

yesterday: "The average amount some parents are providing is equivalent to a whole bottle of wine, and that is more than enough to get a 15-year-old drunk. "No parent wants to think of their child out on their own being drunk and vulnerable, but effectively that is what we could be facilitating by giving alcohol as a reward."

Sunday Express

Kids drowning their tomorrows in drink

PHOTO COURTESY WASHINGTON

I CANCER got to drink I ended up coming home in an ambulance. It was a terrifying episode that contributed to my giving up alcohol for good some years ago, as I have discussed previously in this column. My mother had been an alcoholic who drank herself to death so I am all too familiar with the many faces of booze, from the invisible to the noticeable.

That said, I am not anti-alcohol. If drinking helps you to unwind, then, but if, like me, it makes you scared then I suggest taking it to the next level.

Nurses last week argued that parents should be better off taking up in dedicated drink tanks rather than clapping up kids. With 10 per cent of casually addicted alcoholics related, according to Alcohol Concern, the



JUST when we had made the transition back to hating them separately, Dominic Harris and Chris Martin have now hinted at a reconciliation. Apparently their conditions accepting has led to them becoming closer than ever. A case of subconscious reciprocating, perhaps? Or as we more evocative call it: marriage.

But the problem with binge drinking is that it is extremely common. It is the "old" glass. Once a bottle of wine is opened, it is finished. A couple of glasses after work turns into eight. Youngsters drink to get drunk.

We all know what happens when we drink too much, what we really need to find out is why, as a nation, we keep on doing it.

Part of the problem is that society sanctions binge behaviour. This, we considered anti-social if you don't drink.

But if you do because alcohol is associated with every event in our lives, from the cradle to the grave, it becomes the norm to drink rather than abstain. We went from giving our children to get excited instead of staying sober. A study by Drinkaware last week revealed that some parents give their teenagers alcohol to celebrate the end of their exams. The charity found that one in

four parents will give their underage children the equivalent of four bottles of beer or a bottle of wine this summer. That's basically a huge drinking session with a boy on top. The report also found that more than half (54 per cent) of parents had given their child a drink outside of the exam celebration period, with 86 per cent admitting they had done so because their child asked for it.

Intoxication is, however, selling the baby's head and leaving the deed we were to have forgotten that just because alcohol is legal, it doesn't make it less lethal than any other drug. And yes, society pays into the alcohol industry's hands by giving children alcohol as a reward for finishing their exams.

It is a tragedy. It is a tragedy that we need to put an end to getting hammered. I've never been able to understand why children don't celebrate children about

the dangers of alcohol as they do drugs or underage sex since the consequences can be just as catastrophic. Parents want children to get into the best schools, gain the best grades and go to the best universities and yet are seemingly happy to watch them slip up against the wall because it's "the ability in numbers" theory. I don't think you consider the fact that the increase in hospital admissions due to the dangers of alcohol as they do drugs or underage sex since the consequences can be just as catastrophic.

Today's UKAS applications are full of children of Edinburgh's worst. Grade eight passes that, but children who really want to get ahead in life might be better off being, instead, lower in the "Great Gatsby" in which P. Scott's "Prized" entry points out: "It's a great advantage not to drink among hard-drinking people."

Newcastle Journal

MEDICAL NOTES

PARENTS are being warned against breaking open the bubbly this summer to help kids celebrate end-of-term exams. The charity Drinkaware said one in four parents will give their children alcohol at the end of term. It found 14 to 17-year-olds will, on average, be offered nine units – equal to four cans of beer, a bottle of wine or a third of a bottle of vodka – at post-exam parties, holidays or festivals.

Its chief executive Elaine Hindal said: "No parent wants to think of their child being drunk and vulnerable but, effectively, that is what we could be facilitating by giving alcohol as a reward. It is important to support children to celebrate without it."

According to the charity, between 2010 and 2013, 15,000 children were treated in hospital for excess drinking.

SINGING could improve memory in Alzheimer's patients. The University of Paris asked

people with moderate to severe Alzheimer's to sing rather than speak some commonly used words. Those who sang then performed better in memory tests when they were asked to learn words with similar syllables.

Alzheimer's kills brain cells, but areas of the brain linked with music are spared. Researchers now want to see whether singing could prevent memory loss in earlier stages of the disease.

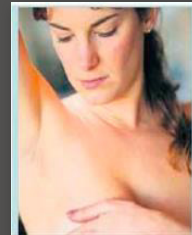
IF YOU are one of the thousands of people plagued by the misery that is cold sores, here's something new to try.

Liquorice and Melissa Li Gel, left, from Skin Shop has been found to help with outbreaks.

In a double-blind trial carried out by the Herpes Virus Association, the gel reduced the severity and duration of outbreaks for more than 73% of subjects while 83% of testers reported that their cold sores on average lasted half the normal time.

Find it at skinshop.co.uk priced £7.95

Daily Mirror



Andrew Gregory's HEALTH NOTES

Breast cancer screening reduces the number of deaths from the disease by 28%, new research suggests.

For every 368 women invited to have a mammogram, one death is prevented, a study by the University of Washington School of Medicine in Seattle has shown.

Baroness Delyth Morgan, chief executive of Breast Cancer Campaign, said: "This study adds to existing evidence that confirms that breast screening saves lives."

"Diagnosing it quickly is vital, as the earlier the cancer is diagnosed and treated, the greater the chance of survival."

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ANDREW GREGORY is the Mirror's Health Correspondent

Sunday Express

CAMILLA TOMINEY Kids drowning their tomorrows in drink

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Yorkshire Post

Parents urged not to give alcohol to children after finishing exams

PARENTS ARE being urged not to give their children alcohol as a reward for finishing exams after it emerged more than 15,000 intoxicated youngsters were admitted to hospital in just three years.

The charity Drinkaware says around one in four parents will give their children alcohol this summer to help celebrate the end of the school term.

Its report found that on average, children aged 14 to 17 will be given nine units of alcohol – the equivalent of four cans of beer, a bottle of wine or a third of a bottle of vodka – at post-exam parties, holidays or festivals.

Elaine Hindal, chief executive of Drinkaware, said: "It is illegal for parents to purchase alcohol on behalf of someone under 18. Worse still, it normalises a culture of excessive drinking among young people. We want to reassure parents that not all young people drink alcohol and that it is important to support children to celebrate without it."

WARNING: Drinkaware says one in four parents will give their children alcohol this summer



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Meanwhile, experts have found an increase in the amount of junk food consumed by young adults could have led to a soaring number being diagnosed with a serious bowel problem.

The warning comes as new figures suggest that the number of 19 to 29-year-olds admitted to hospital in England suffering from Crohn's disease has risen by almost 300 per cent in a decade.

The statistics, obtained by BBC Newsbeat from the Health and Social Care Information Centre, show that in 2005/6 there were 4,877 young adults admitted to hospitals in England for the condition and in 2012/13 there were 16,465 people admitted.

Dr Sally Hinton, a consultant gastroenterologist at St George's Hospital in London, said: "If you have a lot of junk food before your diagnosis, it actually makes it more likely that you will develop Crohn's disease."

"Also, people have noticed those who have lots of antibiotics – particularly in younger life – also seem to be more likely to develop this condition."

Crohn's affects one in every 1,000 people in the UK and is caused by inflammation of the lining of the digestive system, it can lead to diarrhoea, abdominal pain, fatigue and weight loss and three-quarters of sufferers will need bowel reconstructive surgery at some point in their lives.

Daily Mirror

YOUR LIFE

Bringing you closer to the issues that matter

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Would you let your teenager celebrate the end of exams with booze?

With GCSEs and the school year almost over, teens want to party with alcohol and new figures show some parents are happy to oblige. Irresponsible or sensible? Julie McCaffrey reports

I let them drink at 14 to stop bingeing

Marie and Stephen, 42, of Warrington, Cheshire, have two children, 14-year-old Sophie and 16-year-old James. Sophie is a keen drinker and has been since she was 14. James is a keen drinker and has been since he was 16. They are both happy to let their children drink at 14 to stop bingeing.

TALKING TO TEENS ABOUT ALCOHOL

Find a friend who you can talk to about alcohol. It's important to have someone you can talk to about alcohol. It's important to have someone you can talk to about alcohol.

I won't allow kids to touch alcohol until they're 18

Julie McCaffrey, 42, a parent of two teenagers, says she won't allow her kids to touch alcohol until they're 18. She says she won't allow her kids to touch alcohol until they're 18.

Measuring impact: claimed behaviour change

Qualitative research¹⁸ indicated that the proposition cut through successfully.

Comments from C1C2 parents of children aged 10-13:

'If I don't talk to my child about drinking, someone else will'

'Children will (find out) about drinking from friends if you don't discuss it'

'Check that you, as their parent, are the one giving the strongest and right messages that your children need to hear'

Comment from parent on YouTube:

'This advert is creepy as hell, which serves the point. I love it'

The numbers from quantitative research¹⁹ also show how the proposition cut through successfully:

- **74% of parents surveyed claimed they were likely to speak to their child about the risks of alcohol**
- **64% were likely to talk to their partner about their child and the risks of alcohol**

A campaign delivering value

Based on **372k completed film views**, research would suggest that the campaign **generated 275,028 'Motivated Parents'**²⁰ (74% of 372k).

Based on a campaign spend of **£69,209** including creative development, production and media spend, **the cost per 'Motivated Parent' was therefore £0.25.**

We hypothesise that, based on a current UK population of 64.1 million, if each of these 275,028 motivated parents made one of their children a more responsible drinker later in life, this would equate to 0.43% of the population, or a total annual saving of **£1.6 million**²¹, and a **campaign ROI of £23.22 TO £1.**

Conclusion

Despite a number of major barriers we faced in influencing our target audience, a successful strategy coupled with nailing the correct tone of voice led to a target smashing campaign, encouraging parents to talk to their children about alcohol, breaking their cycle of complacency.

²⁰ Based on 74% of parents surveyed in qualitative research claiming that they were more likely to speak to their child about the risks of alcohol

²¹ Based on an annual NHS bill of £374 million for treating cirrhosis of the liver, The Burden of alcohol-related ill health in the UK, Journal of Public Health, Vol 31, No. 3 pp. 366-373, 3rd June 2009

¹⁸ Drinkaware qualitative research evaluation, Parents Campaign, 2014

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