



NORCAS
YOUNG PEOPLE AND ALCOHOL
EXPLORATORY RESEARCH
PROJECT 2008

Pat Branigan, Elaine Ellis, Janet Holmes and Chris Lee

RESEARCH REPORT
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pat@healthevaluation.co.uk





CONTENTS

Executive summary	3
1.0 Background aims and objectives	5
Section 1.1 Methodology	6
1.1.1 Survey with young people	6
1.1.2 Focus groups	6
Section 2.0 Findings	
2.1 Demographics of the NORCAS alcohol survey	9
2.2 Information about alcohol and drugs	11
2.3 Awareness to NORCAS agency and alco cards	12
2.4 Drinking behaviour	16
2.5 perceptions of risk taking behaviours associated with alcohol	31
2.6 Where to go for help/support	38
Section 3.0 Concluding commentary	40
3.1 Implications and links to revised government alcohol strategy	40
3.2 Links to Suffolk LAA	42
3.3 Implications for future NORCAS priorities	42



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- CHEC were commissioned by NORCAS to help complete a report for the NORCAS exploratory research alcohol project 2008.
- A mix of quantitative and qualitative research methods was used in this exploratory research project to better understand alcohol related issues and deliver the agreed project objectives.
- The average age for the sample (n=713) was 15 years and 4 months. The oldest group was at Lowestoft College, the youngest being Holywells High School.
 - On its own age is a significant factor in whether the young people in the survey reported that they get drunk or engage in risky behaviours. (Older respondents more likely to respond positively to both).
- There were slightly more males in the sample than females, due to the all male sample from Warren Hill.
 - Gender was not a significant factor in whether respondents report that they get drunk but it is highly significant in whether they engage in risky behaviours, with male respondents more likely to engage in these behaviours and when they do they are more likely to engage in criminal or violent/aggressive behaviours with female respondents more likely to engage in unprotected sex.
- Around a quarter of the sample had heard of NORCAS and a similar percentage had seen NORCAS Alco Cards prior to the study. Although the group as a whole shows no significant link between engagement in risky behaviour and having seen the NORCAS resources, when gender is taken into account female respondents who have engaged in risky behaviours are significantly more likely than those who do not engage in these behaviours to have at least heard of NORCAS. One reading of this result is that the service may be targeting appropriately or, perhaps, given that they report that they have engaged in risky behaviour they may have been directed to NORCAS by other services (such as sexual health).
- 15% of the sample said they get drunk to get drunk either regularly or 'always', but around a quarter stated that they never get drunk.
 - The proportion getting drunk regularly or 'always' ranged from 33% at Warren Hill and 29% at West Suffolk College (this is at odds with the result below) to 3.9% at Holywells.
- Just over half the sample either claimed to not drink at all or only on special occasions, with a further third drinking at weekends.

- Those claiming to drink either daily or regularly ranged from 33% at Lowestoft College and 29% at Warren Hill to 2.5% at West Suffolk College and 4% at Holywells.
- 17% of the sample stated that they engage in aggressive or violent behaviour when drinking, 14.7% engage in unprotected sex and 13% in criminal activity.
 - This ranged for violent behaviour, 1.2% at King Edward High School to 61% at Warren Hill. Unprotected sex ranged from 0.6% at Holywells to 56% at Warren Hill and Criminal Activity ranged from 3.2% at Holywells to 71% at Warren Hill
- On average respondents gave 1.75 answers each to the question about what type of alcohol they drink, 39% of the sample said they usually drink Spirits, 34% drink beer and 33% alcopops.
 - In this sample there were no significant relationships between the type of alcohol drunk and the likelihood (and frequency) of being drunk.
- Parents were seen to be the most popular suppliers of alcohol (25%) followed closely by: pub/nightclub, local shops and home
 - Generally sites with lower average ages were more likely to get alcohol from parents or within the home, with those with older average ages being more likely to purchase alcohol in shops, pubs or nightclubs.
 - Regarding the source of alcohol and its link with the likelihood of getting drunk 'regularly' or 'always', those getting alcohol from parents were least likely to get drunk whereas those getting alcohol from the supermarket reported the greatest likelihood of reported having been regularly drunk (more so even than those drinking in Pubs and Clubs).
- Most respondents usually drink either at home (55%) or round friends houses (45%) with pubs /nightclubs (30%)
- Just over half the respondents were not worried about their drinking, of those who were worried health problems was the most popular response (21%).
 - Respondents at West Suffolk College (39%) and Warren Hill (46%) were least likely to say they were not worried about their drinking. These two sites were also most likely to be worried about trouble with the law (24% and 37% respectively).
- The aspects and characteristics of an alcohol service that young people felt were most effective were;
 - Trust
 - Confidentiality
 - Non-judgemental staff
 - Good communication skills
 - Up to date, accurate advice
 - Online options
- Key recommendations for linking future NORACS alcohol work to the government alcohol strategy aims and objectives were made and prospective priorities identified.