



Let's talk about alcohol



#spiritsBULGARIA #ALKOHOLvate #Teachers #S

Objective

On a short-term basis:

- To initiate the dialogue about alcohol with teenagers at the age when the first alcohol intake starts (12- 15 years)
- To train teachers how to talk about alcohol
- To support Bulgarian schools in being more proactive in their prevention roles
- To increase knowledge about the problem among parents, schools and institutions

On a longer-term basis

- To delay the age of onset
- To increase the understanding of harms related to alcohol abuse
- To increase the understanding of responsible drinking behaviour
- To reduce incidences of drunkenness and binge drinking among the target group
- To create a long-term platform to work on its own

Description

spiritsBULGARIA decided to start the programme as research data published in recent years, including the 2020 HSBC study, shows that underage drinking is a problem with many starting to drink as young as 11. Tolerance of underage drinking by both society and family provides underage drinkers the opportunity to try alcoholic drinks as young as 12-14 years and/or to binge drink occasionally (15-18 years). In addition, the prevalence of lifetime use of alcohol is

very high when compared to other European countries, although these numbers are in decline. Lastly, there is no organised institutional policy on how to address the issue and institutions are unable to organise prevention programmes themselves due to various factors. The programme is a natural extension of **Parental Meetings: Small Talks on BIG Themes** and complements spiritsBULGARIA's effort to prevent underage drinking by opening the dialogue between teachers and pupils in schools. It is targeted at 12-16-year-old pupils, an age when studies show that teens often begin to drink alcohol and are at their most susceptible to peer pressure. The aim is to influence and change the intent and behaviour of pupils by raising knowledge and awareness of the risks related to underage drinking. Through focusing on having a healthy social lifestyle it is hoped to delay the age of the first drink as much as possible and to provide pupils with the tools to make an informative and confident decision about whether to drink alcohol in the future.

spiritsBULGARIA supplies schools with the necessary methodology/materials and leaves the execution in the hands of the teachers. The programme is designed to slot into the school year, which for the secondary grades (12-14 years) starts on 15 September and ends on 15 June. It integrates into the regular school curriculum during the "Hour of the Class." Teachers are trained to run the programme in schools and receive a bonus qualification to provide an incentive for them to take part.

Programme elements are:

- **Seminars for teachers** to train them to lead the dialogue and become programme ambassadors without being moralising. Each seminar is run over 2 days, with 6 hours per day and include practical exercises to reinforce the information. Mrs Christina Ovcharova, PhD, a consultant from the University of Plovdiv, is the Pedagogical Consultant to the programme and leads the seminars.
- Two hour-long **lessons for pupils** that includes practical exercises, tips on how-to stand-up to peer pressure, living healthily, and ways to enjoy themselves without drinking alcohol.
- **Teacher's manual** for use with pupils: The material was translated and adapted from the Swedish programme for use in Bulgaria. It covers a range of exercises based on social values and behavioural perspectives. The issues are discussed from an interdisciplinary point of view and are linked to the school's policy for preventing teen alcohol use. Different experiences and situations in which young people could find themselves are highlighted and focus is on developing resilience, opposing social coercion and peer pressure, and saying "no" to early alcohol consumption. The manual can be used as a guide to prevention but is also educational and inspiring for the teachers.
- An **internet platform** for teachers and pupils to access and use materials online.

A pilot phase took place from October 2020 to January 2021 followed by national roll-out in the 2021-2022 school year. In 2021-2022 police officers from 9 regional cities also attended the seminars so that they can hold LET'S TALK ABOUT ALCOHOL sessions in settlements and/or schools outside the scope of the seminars.

Partners

- University of Plodiv Pedagogical Faculty
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of internal affairs
- Regional Education Inspectorates
- Regional health inspectorates on behalf of Bulgarian Ministry of Health
- “Parents” association
- National Network for Child Protection
- Traffic Police Directorate

Results

2021-2022 (National roll-out):

- 290 secondary school teachers and 98 police officers attended the seminars.
- 610 pupils from 162 schools took part.
- Schools were in 12 districts of different sizes and urban arrangements.
- 300 Teacher’s books were printed and 297 handed out.

2020-2021 (Pilot):

- A committee of 2 spiritsBULGARIA’s members, 1 psychologist, 2 specialists from the Pedagogical Faculty of Plovdiv University and an agency were chosen to execute and lead the project. 3 schools took part. 3 teachers’ seminars were organised in October 2020 and took place on-line for teachers from the participating schools. 60 teachers in total participated. Each school received 3-5 copies of the teacher’s manual. 189 pupils took part. 2 classes had the lesson at school, and 4 classes had the lesson remotely due to the COVID-19 situation.
- Following the pilot the Ministry of Education and Regional Inspectorates supported contacting school authorities to get them to run the programme. In addition, the Ministry of Internal Affairs offered a lecturer for some seminars and to run the programme themselves in smaller regions, where spiritsBULGARIA cannot organise events.
- In recognition and approval, the Teacher’s Book was also uploaded to the official internet site of Ministry of Education in the section with support materials for class teachers:
<https://www.mon.bg/bg/27>.

Measurement & evaluation

2021-2022: 3 questionnaires were developed with the independent agency “Teachers in the Cloud”. They contain both closed and open questions and are filled in anonymously, online, on the internet platform of the programme.

1. Questionnaire for teachers who attended the teachers’ seminar
2. Questionnaire for teachers who carried out a programme lesson
3. Questionnaire for pupils who took part in a lesson of at least one hour

Replies to the questionnaires were submitted between January 2022 and May 2022. 255 teachers replied to the questionnaires: 191 to the first and 64 to both. 415 pupils filled in the questionnaire*.

Selected replies to teacher’s questionnaire 1: 97% of respondents rate the training as useful or very useful; 96% rate the information interesting or very interesting; 94% believe that the talks about alcohol will have an impact on preventing underage drinking.

Selected replies to teacher’s questionnaire 2: 25% used both of the recommended topics “How to decide whether or NOT to use alcohol” and “Facts or myths”. 78% felt that most of their students showed interest in the topic. 91% think the programme provides an informed and accurate picture of the risks of underage drinking. 94% think pupils will be more cautious when it comes to alcohol related harms. 86% feel that the programme gives pupils the means to resist drinking alcohol before they are 18.

Selected replies to student’s questionnaire 2: 62% of respondents have already tried alcohol, 38% of which did so aged between 13-15, 23% aged between 11-12 and 17% aged between 9-11. Most drink with friends at home (37%) or outside with friends (31%). 67% found the lesson interesting. 66% felt that they need the lessons “a lot”. 68% felt there was “enough” or “a lot” of new and useful information. 91% of respondents said that what they have learned from the programme helps them understand why alcohol consumption is highly undesirable before adulthood. 73% are motivated to wait regarding drinking alcohol. 78% would voluntarily continue to participate programme. 36% would share what they have learned with their parents and 34% would share with a sibling.

* Note: The questionnaire system cannot separate participants in the pilot phase from participants from those in the national roll out so both phases are included the results below.

The full evaluation results can be found in the attached documents.

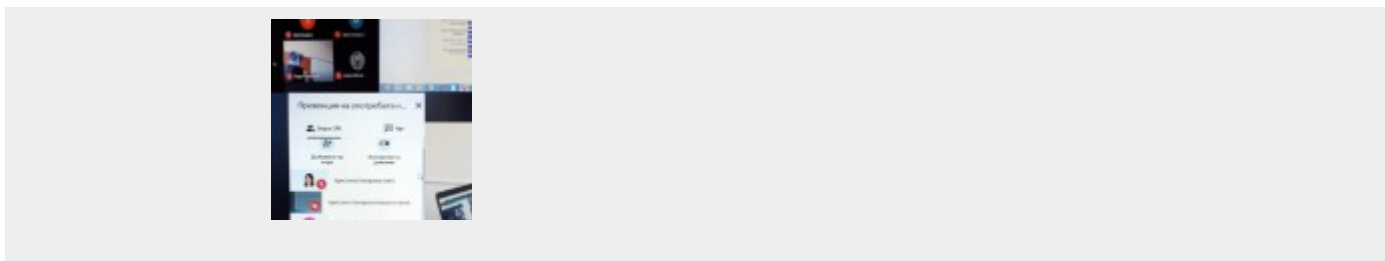
2020-2021: A quantitative & qualitative evaluation of the pilot was carried out by the Teachers in the Cloud Association. Sample: 87 respondents (17 teachers who attended a workshop, 7 teachers gave a lesson and 70 pupils aged between 12 and 14). **The evaluation results can be found in the related documents.**

Website

<https://www.predi18.org/dapogovorimzaalkohol/>

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[Documents](#)

Teacher's book 2021.pdf (pdf - 20.75 Mo)

2021 Evaluation LTAA pilot programme - February 2021.pdf (pdf - 0.37 Mo)

2021-2022 EVALUATION OF THE LTAA programme.pdf (pdf - 1.06 Mo)