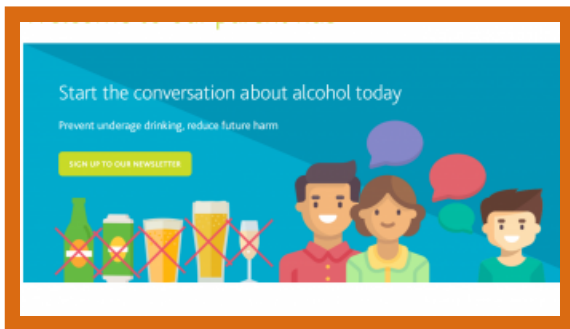


## Parents' Campaign

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**Drinkaware.ie**

**Ireland**

**2016 > Ongoing**

**#AwarenessRaising #Parents**



### Objective

To provide parents with facts and knowledge to help them have a conversation about alcohol with their children/teenagers, about alcohol.

To help children/teenagers develop a lifelong healthy attitude towards alcohol.

To delay the age at which the 'first drink' is taken and, where alcohol is consumed by a young person, to reduce the volume of alcohol consumed.

### Description

According to independent research commissioned by Drinkaware and carried out by Behaviour & Attitudes, over half (53%) of Irish parents surveyed stated that they believe it is acceptable for their children to drink alcohol at home. This contradicts emerging evidence that parental supply of alcohol is associated with increased risks. Drinkaware responded to the need for support, facts and advice to encourage parents to start a conversation about alcohol with their children.

Drinkaware recognises that parents are key "gatekeepers" of adolescent behaviour and should be an integral part of any campaign aimed at reducing underage drinking, and the parent-child relationship is important for a young person's development.

Through the Parents' Campaign, Drinkaware provides research and practical tools to support parents to have timely, informed conversations about alcohol with their children while encouraging them, as role models, to consider their own drinking habits. Having an ongoing conversation with teens about alcohol facilitates bonding, enabling the parent to influence their teen's decisions. Moreover, strong parental disapproval can help offset cultural messages promoting substance use. Early exposure to alcohol, including parental

consumption is significantly associated with adolescents' earlier initiation to and subsequent use of alcohol.

The programme is anchored on an information hub, workshops and regular communication.

### **Information Hub**

An evidence-informed, dedicated **information hub** provides parents with comprehensive facts, advice and strategies to support parents to have informed conversation about alcohol with their young people.

- A **Parent Pack** can be ordered on the hub. Each pack contains a copy of the "Talking Matters: A resource for Parents" and a copy of the "Young People, Alcohol and Mental Health" booklet. A "get the facts pack" can also be ordered from the same page which contains an "Alcohol and You" booklet, a standard drink measure cup and a drinks, calorie and sugar calculator.
- The hub also has materials available for download including three booklets "Your Children and Alcohol", "Talking Matters - A resource for Parents/Guardians" and "Young People, Alcohol and Mental Health", a poster: "Alcohol and The Body" and an activities calendar.

### **Interactive Workshops**

Drinkaware developed a one-hour workshop for parents to engage parents in a discursive and inclusive way and includes role modelling, monitoring, how to start the alcohol conversation with their teen, facts, and latest research re alcohol, listening to young people and giving them a voice, rules and consequences and myths around underage drinking. In addition, each parent in attendance receives a copy of the "Your Children and Alcohol" and "Young People, Alcohol and Mental Health" booklets. Each workshop features:

- The latest research about young people and alcohol in Ireland.
- Risks of early alcohol use on a teenager's development.
- Strategies parents can use to start the conversation about alcohol.
- Age-appropriate advice for parents to continue the conversation.
- Advice for parents on being role models, boundaries, consequences, and active communication.

### **Regular communication of the messages**

Regular communication is issued at key times such as around the Junior Cert results and Leaving Cert celebrations for example on Drinkaware's **X** (twitter) and **Facebook** accounts and on the parents hub. For example,

- In 2019, Drinkaware encouraged parents to advocate for sober curiosity and a more mindful attitude to alcohol in August. In October, the shared tips and resources to highlight the importance of pushing back on the normalisation of allowing young people to drink alcohol at home under parental supervision.
- In 2020 and 2021, Drinkaware encouraged parents to speak openly with the young people in their lives about alcohol. Topics included, house parties, mental health, the sober curious movement and the Drinkaware alcohol education programmes. In June and September, they urged parents to speak to their teenagers about how to celebrate safely, the completion, and the results, of the Junior and Leaving Certificates, advising parents to talk openly with their young adults on how deal with stress, anxiety and peer pressure.

- In 2021, blogs were posted on drinkaware.ie focussing on the importance of alcohol education, how to speak to your teen about alcohol and guest blogs provided by teachers who deliver the JC AEP. A Blog was also written for Grandparents, recognising their role and impact on the lives of their Grandchildren, especially with regards to role modelling, attitudes to and behaviour around alcohol.
- In 2022: Drinkaware encouraged parents to have conversations around alcohol and mental health with the young person in their life. In May they highlighted the increased demand for information from parents, with dramatic increases in visits to the drinkaware.ie parent hub. Ahead of both the Leaving Certificate examinations and the results, Drinkaware encouraged parents to speak to their children about alcohol, advising parents to engage with them about how to celebrate the Leaving Certificate examinations and the results in a safe manner. The parents' coverage was supported through a digital campaign in Q2. A blog was also published for International Families day and Shane Smart, BeLonG published a guest blog.

## Results

Since its launch in April 2016, the Drinkaware Parents' Campaign has reached over 2.5 million parents in Ireland through a dedicated parent website, social media, workshops and resources.

- In 2022, a parent workshop was delivered to 56 Parents in Bristol Myer Squib (BMS). The new Parent Information flyer was sent to 35 newly trained teachers in January along with a link for the video clip on Parents' role in alcohol education
- In 2021, 1 online parent workshop was delivered at Royal School, Cavan, Parent AGM attended by 30 parents. Also, there were 14,471 visits to the parents' pages on drinkaware.ie and an increase for education and parent resources of 297%. In addition, over 10 Blogs were posted.
- In 2020, 4 of the 9+ anticipated parent workshops were delivered due to COVID-19. These were attended by 83 parents in total. Also, there were 14,214 visits to the parents' pages on drinkaware.ie.
- In 2019, 9 parent workshops were delivered and there were 21,342 pageviews in the parents' pages on drinkaware.ie.
- In 2018, 41,729 parents visited the parent hub, and 613,621 parents were engaged through the Facebook page. 7 parent workshops were delivered. Orders of the Parents Pack accounted for 29% of all resource orders in 2018. 8,698,759 were reached through media campaigns.
- In 2017, 12,050 parents visited the parent hub, and 650,000 parents were engaged through the Facebook page. 15 parent workshops were delivered. Over 7,000 Your Children and Alcohol booklets were ordered and disseminated to individuals and organisations working with parents. 5,723,802 were reached through media campaigns.

## Measurement & evaluation

Survey results from parents post workshop attendance found increased awareness and consciousness of parents regarding role modelling and alcohol. Parents also had increased intention, motivation, and capability to have a conversation with their children.

Examples of comments from parents:

- “Fantastic workshop which every parent/guardian should attend. The delivery of the presentation was fantastic and was both engaging and informative” (Parent, Mayo, 2021).
- “As parents, we can give hidden messages about alcohol without realising.” “Essential information for parents, delivered in a non-patronising way” (2018)
- “I definitely feel more confident talking to my son about alcohol now and I see the benefit of starting that conversation sooner rather than later” (Parent, Meath, 2017).
- “This workshop has highlighted to me how I need to be conscious of the messages that my children are getting at home about alcohol” (Parent, Dublin, 2017).
- “Very informative and so helpful. It should be compulsory for every parent to attend this workshop.”
- “The parent is the role model so be very mindful of drinking habits.”
- “It is never ok to allow kids drink alcohol. Set expectations.

In 2018, Drinkaware parent research was conducted by Behaviour & Attitudes with 503 parents to identify the main contributory and influencing factors on young people’s attitudes towards alcohol. It found that:

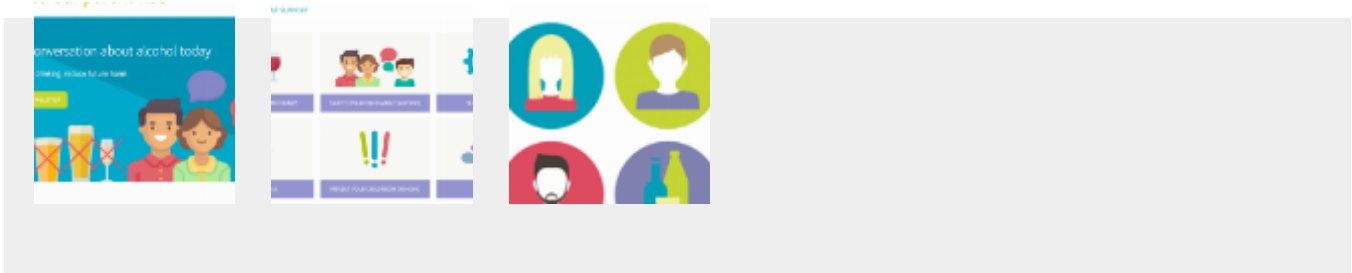
- 20% of parents consider alcohol’s impact on mental health as the most important topic to include when talking about alcohol with their young people, compared to 10% in 2015.
- 24% obtained information before having a conversation about alcohol, compared to 11% in 2015.
- 61% of parents are very confident in their ability to talk effectively to their children about alcohol, compared to 75% in 2015.
- 14% of parents believe it’s acceptable for their children to drink at home before the age of 15 years, compared to 9% in 2015.
- 50% of parents consider it is acceptable for children to drink alcohol at home before the legal age of 18 years.
- 25% of parents do not know the rules about alcohol set by the parents of their child’s friends. The same number have not communicated their rules to the parents of their child’s friends.
- One-fifth of parents would allow their child to drink at a friend’s house under the age of 18 (fathers are more likely to allow this).
- 78% of parents state young people are more likely to see them consuming alcohol at family celebrations such as weddings and communions than any other location.

## Website

<http://www.drinkaware.ie/parents>

## Downloads

## Photo gallery



## Documents

**Talking Matters 2023 booklet** (pdf - 1.98 Mo)

**Young people and mental health 2017 booklet** (pdf - 0.15 Mo)

**Your children and alcohol 2016 booklet** (pdf - 0.21 Mo)

**Alcohol Expectations Smart Agreement** (pdf - 0.7 Mo)

**Alcohol and the body poster** (pdf - 0.74 Mo)