

Alcohol: the missing piece in the social exclusion jigsaw

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Alcohol Concern

www.alcoholconcern.org.uk



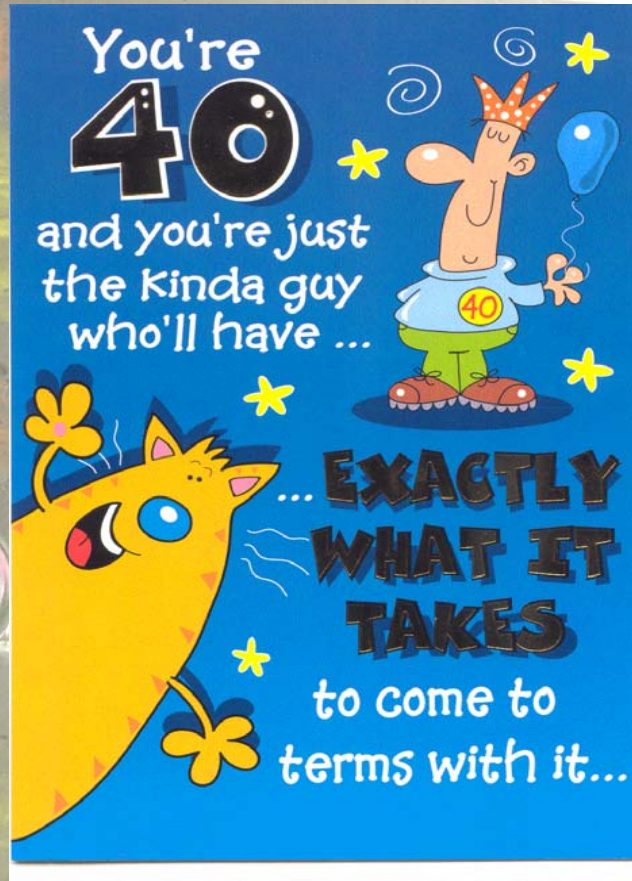
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I will cover

- Context
- Alcohol and social exclusion
- Services
 - Structural issues
 - What's there & what's not
- Solutions



The real problem



...about 14 pints!!



happy 40th!



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Context

- Between 8 million and 12 million problem drinkers
- Cost to society of £20 billion
- 5x as many children affected by parental alcohol abuse than parental drug abuse
- Worrying trends in children's drinking



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Alcohol and socially excluded families

Impact on family

- Finances
- Relationships between family members
- Conflicts and disputes
- Domestic violence
- Quality of parenting



Alcohol and socially excluded families

Impact on children

- Emotionally isolated from parents
- Take on “advanced” responsibilities
- See or experience violence
- L.T. psychological impact
- Guilt



Children say...

“Mum keeps hitting me. She drinks. She won't understand I love her.”

Gillian, 15

“Mum and Dad...spend all their money on drink. There's no soap in the house and all my clothes are too small. I lost girlfriend because she said I smell.”

Paul, 14



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The issues - policy

- Alcohol is not integrated into family and social exclusion policy – nationally and locally
- Policy framework supporting alcohol issues is weak
- No money, no targets, no drivers
- No-one is accountable



Services – the issues

- 17/18 can't get alcohol treatment (19/20 in SE)
- Limited after care
- 59 projects for children and families affected by alcohol
- Family services and alcohol services are not properly integrated



Barriers to accessing services

Relating to services

- Insufficient service provision
- Insufficient resources, e.g. time and training
- Fear of professionals of opening the floodgates



Barriers to accessing services (cont)

For potential clients

- Lack of awareness that their situation is a problem
- If alcohol abuse is cultural norm
- Stigma
- Need for parental consent to work with children
- Lack of awareness amongst families of services available



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Solutions - policy

- Integrate alcohol into social exclusion and family policy
- Take holistic approach to service development and family assessment
- Training for key front-liners



Solutions - services

- Drivers to give impetus for improvements
- Local targets
- National and local champions
- Better partnerships across services
- Ongoing monitoring of need and provision



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Recognition of alcohol's role in social exclusion



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