

**Last reviewed:** September 2017

**Intervention website:** <http://www.talkaboutalcohol.com>

# GUIDEBOOK INTERVENTION INFORMATION SHEET

## Talk About Alcohol

Please note that in the ‘Intervention summary’ table below, ‘child age’, ‘level of need’, and ‘race and ethnicities’ information is **as evaluated in studies**. Information in other fields describes the intervention as **offered/supported by the intervention provider**.

Intervention summary	
<b>Description</b>	Talk About Alcohol is a schools-based intervention aimed at reducing alcohol related problems for children and young people aged 11 to 18 years old. It is delivered by teachers, PSHE professionals, or youth leaders to classrooms for a period of six weeks.
<b>Evidence rating</b>	2
<b>Cost rating</b>	1
<b>Child outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Preventing substance abuse<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Reduced alcohol use</li><li>- Improved knowledge about alcohol.</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Child age</b> (population characteristic)	12 to 13 years old
<b>Level of need</b> (population characteristic)	Universal
<b>Race and ethnicities</b> (population characteristic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Asian</li><li>• Black</li><li>• Mixed racial or ethnic background</li><li>• White.</li></ul>

## Foundations Guidebook – Intervention information sheet

Visit the Foundations Guidebook | [www.foundations.org.uk/guidebook](http://www.foundations.org.uk/guidebook)

Intervention summary	
<b>Type</b> (model characteristic)	Group
<b>Setting</b> (model characteristic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Secondary school</li><li>• Sixth-form or FE college.</li></ul>
<b>Workforce</b> (model characteristic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teacher</li><li>• PSHE professional</li><li>• Youth leader.</li></ul>
<b>UK available?</b>	Yes
<b>UK tested?</b>	Yes

## Model description

Talk About Alcohol is a school-based intervention designed for young people 11 to 18 years old to reduce alcohol-related harm. It equips teachers with the tools to educate students about the risks of alcohol use and supports students in making informed decisions.

The intervention aims to delay the onset of drinking, encourage responsible choices, and reduce alcohol-related antisocial behaviour and is delivered over six lessons covering the following topics: assessing knowledge, alcohol and its effects, social and physical, units and guidelines, alcohol and the law, and staying safe.

The intervention teaches young people about the harmful effects of alcohol and provides them with strategies for refraining from alcohol use, using a range of resources, including teacher workbooks, structured lesson plans, DVDs, interactive online materials, and parental engagement tools. The Talk About Alcohol intervention is designed so that teachers can ‘pick and mix’ from a range of activities and resources according to the age, ability, and experience of the group.

## Target population

<b>Age of child</b>	11 to 18 years old
<b>Target population</b>	This intervention is universal and targets the general population of secondary school students aged 11 to 18 years old.

Please note that the information in this section on target population is as **offered/supported by the intervention provider**.



## Theory of change

Why		Who	How	What		
Science-based assumption	Science-based assumption	Science-based assumption	Intervention	Short-term outcomes	Medium-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes
Alcohol consumption is a societal issue of concern, leading to negative health and social outcomes.	Young people will be more likely to delay the age at which they start drinking and refrain from drinking too much if they know about the social and physical effects of alcohol, the law, social norms, and resilience strategies.	All young people between 11 and 18 years old.	Young people are taught about the harmful physical and social effects of alcohol and are provided with strategies for making healthy balanced decisions about when to drink or if to drink, and how much to drink.	Young people are more confident in resisting the temptation or peer pressure to drink.	Young people delay the age at which they start drinking (after age 15) and will be less likely to binge drink.	Reduced risk of alcohol-related negative health and social outcomes.



## Implementation requirements

<b>Who is eligible?</b>	Secondary school students 11 to 18 years old
<b>How is it delivered?</b>	Talk About Alcohol is delivered in six sessions of 50 minutes' duration each by a teacher, PSHE professional, or youth leader to classrooms of children.
<b>What happens during the intervention?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers are provided with free tools to encourage students to make informed decisions and feel confidence to manage difficult situations.</li> <li>• The Talk about Alcohol intervention is designed so that teachers can 'pick and mix' from a range of activities, films, activity sheets, and resources according to the age, ability, and experience of the group.</li> <li>• Six lessons are developed under the following topics:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assessing knowledge</li> <li>- Alcohol and its effects</li> <li>- Social and physical</li> <li>- Units and guidelines</li> <li>- Alcohol and the law</li> <li>- Staying safe.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Information booklets are also made available to students and their parents.</li> </ul>
<b>Who can deliver it?</b>	The practitioner who delivers this intervention is a teacher, PSHE professional, or youth leader.
<b>What are the training requirements?</b>	Practitioner training is recommended but not mandatory. The practitioners have two hours of intervention training. Booster training of practitioners is not required.
<b>How are practitioners supervised?</b>	Practitioners (PSHE leads, teachers, and youth workers) are supported with six newsletters of updates and implementation/guidance advice each year as well as with ongoing phone/email support.
<b>What are the systems for maintaining fidelity?</b>	Intervention fidelity is maintained through the following processes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training manual</li> <li>• Other printed material</li> <li>• Other online material</li> <li>• Face-to-face training</li> <li>• Other: The TAA intervention is fully supported online via <a href="http://www.alcoholeducationtrust.org">www.alcoholeducationtrust.org</a>, organised by topic and by year group and with an interactive learning zone via <a href="http://www.talkaboutalcohol.com">www.talkaboutalcohol.com</a></li> <li>• Other: Practitioners are further supported with bi termly updates, new resources, changes in the law or policy</li> <li>• Other: They can also email or phone for advice on the intervention and its implementation or delivery.</li> </ul>



## Implementation requirements (Cont.)

<b>Is there a licensing requirement?</b>	No
<b>*Contact details</b>	<p>Contact person: Kate Hooper</p> <p>Organisation: The Talk About Trust</p> <p>Email address: <a href="mailto:kate@talkabouttrust.org">kate@talkabouttrust.org</a></p> <p>Websites:  <a href="http://www.talkaboutalcohol.com">http://www.talkaboutalcohol.com</a>  <a href="https://www.talkabouttrust.org">https://www.talkabouttrust.org</a></p> <p>*Please note that this information may not be up to date. In this case, please visit the listed intervention website for up to date contact details.</p>

## Evidence summary

Talk About Alcohol's most rigorous evidence comes from a QED conducted in the United Kingdom consistent with Foundations' Level 2 evidence strength threshold.

This study identified statistically significant improvements in knowledge about alcohol and delay in drinking onset.

Talk About Alcohol has preliminary evidence of improving a child outcome, but we cannot be confident that the intervention caused the improvement.



## Search and review

	Number of studies
Identified in search	5
Studies reviewed	1
Meeting the L2 threshold	1
Meeting the L3 threshold	0
Contributing to the L4 threshold	0
Ineligible	4

## Individual study summary: Study 1

Study 1	
Study design	QED
Country	United Kingdom
Sample characteristics	The study involved 4,410 children aged between 12 to 13 years old from 33 secondary schools in the United Kingdom
Race, ethnicities, and nationalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 72% White</li> <li>• 9% Asian</li> <li>• 5% Any other White</li> <li>• 5% Mixed racial or ethnic background</li> <li>• 4% Black</li> <li>• 2% Unknown</li> <li>• 1% Other.</li> </ul>
Population risk factors	None reported
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baseline</li> <li>• Six months post-baseline</li> <li>• 16 to 18 months post-baseline</li> <li>• Three years post-baseline.</li> </ul>



Study 1	
<b>Child outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased knowledge about alcohol (Child report)</li> <li>Reduced frequency of drinking (Child report)</li> <li>Delay in drinking onset (Child report).</li> </ul>
<b>Other outcomes</b>	None
<b>Study Rating</b>	2
<b>Citation</b>	<p><b>Study 1a:</b> Lynch, S., Styles, B., Dawson, A., Worth, J., Kerr, D. &amp; Lloyd, J. (2013) <i>Talk About Alcohol: An Evaluation of the Alcohol Education Trust's intervention in secondary schools</i>. National Foundation for Educational Research.</p> <p><b>Study 1b:</b> Lynch, S., Dawson, A. &amp; Worth, J. (2014) Talk About Alcohol: impact of a school-based alcohol intervention on early adolescents. <i>International Journal of Health Promotion and Education</i>. 52 (5), 283–299.</p> <p><b>Study 1c:</b> Lynch, S., Worth, J. &amp; Bradshaw, S. (2015) <i>Evaluation of the Alcohol Education Trust's Talk About Alcohol intervention: Longer-term follow up</i>. National Foundation for Educational Research.</p>

## Brief summary

### Population characteristics

The study involved 4,410 children aged between 12 to 13 years old from 33 secondary schools in the United Kingdom. 50% were female, and participants were predominantly White (65% in intervention group, 79% in comparison group).

### Study design

This study adopted a quasi-experimental design. 2,142 participants were assigned to the intervention group and 2,268 to a service-as-usual comparison group via propensity score matching, based on observable characteristics. This ensured that school-level characteristics of both groups matched as closely as possible. Comparison and intervention schools were matched according to region, percentage of students eligible for free school meals, urban/rural, and Ofsted school effectiveness.

Service-as-usual schools did not receive Talk About Alcohol sessions, but did receive lessons concerning alcohol.



## Measurement

Assessments took place for all measures at baseline, 6-months post-baseline, 16 to 18 months post-baseline, and three years post-baseline.

- **Child report measures** included survey questionnaires concerning onset of drinking, knowledge of alcohol and its effects, and frequency of drinking

## Study retention

### *Six months post-baseline*

100% (33) schools and 97.5% (4,298) of children participated in the 6 months post-baseline assessment, representing 100% (16) of TAA schools and 103% (2,203) of TAA children, and 100% (17) of control school and 92.4% (2,095) of control children.

### *16 to 18 months post-baseline*

90.1% (30) schools and 88.9% (3,919) of children participated in the 16 to 18 months post-baseline assessment, representing 93.8% (15) of TAA schools and 94.1% (2,015) of TAA children, and 88.2% (15) of control school and 84.0% (1,904) of control children.

### *Three years post-baseline*

57.6% (19) schools and 46.4% (2,046) of children participated in the 3 years post-baseline assessment, representing 56.3% (9) of TAA schools and 42.0% (900) of TAA children, and 58.8% (10) of control school and 50.5% (1,146) of control children.

Surveys were sent to classes at each timepoint and student numbers present in class varied; as a result, there were more responses from the intervention group at 6 months post-baseline than at baseline.

## Results

### *Data-analytic strategy*

Multilevel modelling was used to assess the interventions effectiveness on the intended outcomes. An intent-to-treat approach was used, but their approach to missing data was not specified.

### *Findings*

Children in the intervention group showed statistically significant improvements in their knowledge about alcohol at both 6 months and 16 to 18 months after the baseline assessment. They were also significantly less likely to have ever had an alcoholic drink at 16 months post-baseline and at 3 years post-baseline.



## Limitations

The conclusions that can be drawn from this study are limited by methodological issues pertaining to the treatment and comparison groups not being generated by sufficiently robust methods and unequivalent groups, this is why a higher rating has not been achieved.

## Study 1: Outcomes table

Outcome	Measure	Effect size	Statistical significance	Number of participants	Measurement time point
Child outcomes					
Knowledge about alcohol	Survey items (child report)	0.17	Yes	4,298	Six months post-baseline
Knowledge about alcohol	Survey items (child report)	0.15	Yes	3,919	16 to 18 months post-baseline
Knowledge about alcohol	Survey items (child report)	Not reported	No	2,046	Three years post-baseline
Onset of drinking	Survey items (child report)	Not reported	No	4,298	Six months post-baseline
Onset of drinking	Survey items (child report)	Not reported	Yes	3,919	16 months post-baseline
Onset of drinking	Survey items (child report)	Not reported	Yes	2,046	Three years post-baseline
Frequency of drinking	Survey items (child report)	Not reported	No	4,298	Six months post-baseline
Frequency of drinking	Survey items (child report)	Not reported	No	3,919	16 months post-baseline
Frequency of drinking	Survey items (child report)	Not reported	No	2,046	Three years post-baseline



## Other studies

The following studies were identified for this intervention but did not count towards the intervention's overall evidence rating. An intervention receives the same rating as its most robust study or studies.

Gutman, L, (2016) *An evaluation of the Alcohol Education Trust 'Talk about Alcohol' programme in three areas of England where alcohol related indices of harm are highest for under 18's (LAPE)*. Institute of Education, University College London.

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**Note on provider involvement:** This provider has agreed to Foundations' terms of reference (or the Early Intervention Foundation's terms of reference), and the assessment has been conducted and published with the full cooperation of the intervention provider.