Alcohol and harms to children

A historical perspective

Dr James Nicholls, Alcohol Research UK
William Hogarth (1751) *Gin Lane*
‘But now our common people are so infatuated with Geneva, that ... in less than an age, we may expect a fine spindle-shank’d generation.’

Daniel Defoe, Augusta Triumphans (1728)

“What must become of the infant who is conceived in gin ... Are these wretched infants ... to become our future sailors and our future grenadiers.”

Henry Fielding, An Inquiry into the Cause of the Late Increase in Robbers (1751)
This is to certify that

by Divine Assistance I will abstain from all intoxicating drinks as beverages and discontinue all the causes and practices of intemperance.

Signed: [Name]
Date: [Date]

Wine is a wicked, nipping drink in making and in drinking, it is received whereby it is not wise.

Prevention is better than cure.

Lead us not into temptation.
GEORGE CRUIKSHANK
THE BOTTLE
THE PIOUS PUBLIC-HOUSE.
(Where you may get adulterated beer and gin.)

A place in which the great brewers don't see any particular harm.
Legislative controls
(Jennings, P. (2008) *The Local*)

1839: Sale of spirits to under-16s for consumption in London pubs banned

1872: Ban extended to whole of England and Wales

1886: Sale of any alcohol to under-13s banned

1901: Minimum age raised to 14

1902: Sale of alcohol to under-14s in sealed bottles banned
‘The offspring of drunken fathers and mothers inherit not only a tendency to vice, but they come into the world physically and mentally unfit to conquer in life’s battle … The country’s asylums are crowded with pauper idiots and lunatics, who owe their wretched condition to the sin of the parents.’

George Sims, *How the Poor Live* (Chatto and Windus, 1889: 22)

‘Some, and I count myself among the number, would make it their first object to improve the character of the places where alcohol is sold.’

‘It might therefore seem to have been a waste of good effort to pass [The Child Messenger Act], when so many of greater importance are sadly required.’

Charles Booth, Life and Labour of the People of London, Notes on Influences and Conclusion (Macmillan, 1902: 103 and 68)
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1908: Under-14s banned from public houses

1994: ‘Children’s Certificates’ allow under-14s where food is served

2003: Restrictions removed
Social, cultural and political context

Retail environment

Direct sources

Harms
WELL BEHAVED CHILDREN WELCOME
THE REST WILL BE MADE INTO PIES!
Is it okay for my child to drink alcohol?

The UK chief medical officers recommend that an alcohol-free childhood is the healthiest and best option.

The below links contain the advice from each country's chief medical officer:

England and Northern Ireland
Scotland
Wales

Family party

The 'continental approach'
Celebrating life, today and tomorrow

People celebrate with our brands - and by doing so becoming a link in a chain that connects rivers and fields, distilleries, breweries and vineyards, transport networks, the hospitality industry, communities and everyone who works in and around them. The sustainability of this chain depends in part on the actions Diageo takes today and every day.
Quarter of parents reward GCSE students with booze to celebrate results

Aug 16, 2014 21:19  By Jo McFarlane

A shocking study reveals many 16-year-olds will be handed beer, cider and spirits to take to celebration parties after exam results are published on Thursday
Not Early Drinking but Early Drunkenness Is a Risk Factor for Problem Behaviors Among Adolescents from 38 European and North American Countries

Emmanuel Kurtzbach, Ingrida Rosanov, Brucia Simon-Hersh, Tammie Bead, Aimee Kishner, and Emmanuel Grubbs

Background: Many studies have reported that the earlier the age of first drink (AFD) or the higher the level of drinking tends to increase the risk of problem behaviors. However, there is no evidence showing the health and social consequences of early drunkenness. This study aims to examine the relationship between early drunkenness and problem behaviors, controlling for social, economic, and educational factors. More specifically, the study investigates the link between AFD and problem behaviors among a large sample of adolescents from 38 countries who were 13 to 18 years old.

Methods: A cross-sectional survey was conducted based on a sample of 4,000 adolescents aged 13 to 18 years old from 38 countries. Adolescents' responses to questions about their drinking behaviors were analyzed using logistic regression models.

Results: Early drunkenness was a significant predictor of various problem behaviors at the age of 13-18, even after controlling for other factors such as family background, socioeconomic status, and school performance.

Key Findings:
- Early drunkenness is a stronger predictor of problem behaviors than AFD alone.
- Early drunkenness is associated with a higher risk of problem behaviors among adolescents from different countries.

Limitations:
- The study's findings may not be generalizable to other populations or settings.
- The cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causality.

Implications for Practice:
- Early drunkenness should be considered a significant concern for public health interventions targeting adolescents.
- Schools and communities should develop strategies to prevent and address early drunkenness among adolescents.

Acknowledgments:
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References:

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Celebrating life, today and tomorrow

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Summing up

Concerns over harms to children reflect actual conditions, but also wider social frameworks

The ‘normalisation’ question is longstanding (and unresolved)

Direct influences (e.g. parenting) are critical, but cannot be abstracted from wider social and retail environments