

Alcohol and advertising

Curricular Area:	Social Studies
CfE Level(s):	Third & Fourth
CfE Experiences & Outcomes:	HWB2-39a/HWB 3-39a SOC 3 -17b SOC 4 -16b
Learning Intention:	To examine the extent to which young people's choices and decisions around alcohol consumption can be influenced by advertising.
Success Criteria:	Young people will examine the evidence and discuss the influence of alcohol marketing/advertising on their choice to consume alcohol.
Duration:	50 minutes

Background

"There is good evidence that alcohol advertising encourages children to start drinking earlier than they otherwise would and to drink more when they do so" (Professor Gerard Hastings, Social Marketing Expert, Stirling University).

Suggested Activities

The power of advertising

Ask the young people to discuss what alcohol advertising they are aware of (a selection of magazines and or newspapers can be used to support this activity).

Discuss with the class to find out if they feel alcohol advertising is aimed at young people (what type of drinks are advertised, where can advertising be found, what methods are used? Social media, television, films).

Ask the young people to describe what influence they feel advertising has over the choices they make.

Young people who start drinking alcohol are affected by a range of influences. What other influences can the young people identify? (friends, family members, famous people in the media, sport personalities).

Should there be a ban on alcohol advertising?

A recent survey showed that children as young as 10 are more familiar with some alcohol brands and adverts than those for popular foods and snacks. The Alcohol Concern survey of 401 children found twice as many children recognised Carlsberg as an alcoholic brand than Mr Kipling cakes as foods. The campaigning group said it showed the power of marketing, prompting it to renew its call for tougher rules. However, ministers and the industry said the current regulations were strong enough.

Divide the class into two groups and ask them to debate the pros and cons of banning all alcohol advertising.

Pupils could consider what happens in other countries: e.g. The Loi Évin legislation was introduced in France in 1991. It places restrictions on alcohol advertising, as well as banning sponsorship of cultural and sporting events, which often have a particular appeal to young people. Where alcohol advertising is permitted in France, it must be strictly factual and refer only to the characteristics of the products, such as strength, place of origin and ingredients. Since the legislation came into force, there has been a host of court cases against advertisers and the legislation was credited with stopping alcohol firms playing a major role in sponsoring the 1998 football World Cup.

What is the class decision? Alcohol advertising should it be banned?

For further information:

BBC News: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-17369359>

Societal costs of alcohol

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/12/29122804/9>

Cost of alcohol use and misuse in Scotland

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/05/06091510/4>