

FAMILIES AND UNDERAGE DRINKING

To date, most of the programs that aim to prevent underage drinking have been developed at a school level, informing students about the effects and risks of alcohol use and, to a lesser extent, they have been oriented to families and communities. On the other hand, programs addressing multiple levels are expected to be more effective for substance use prevention than single-level programs, according to current research.

The FERYA program (Familias en Red y Activas – Active Family Network) supports families in developing new perspectives of prevention through the process of empowerment. It consists in visualizing a community approach that takes advantage of parents' organizations' strengths that boosts intervention activities targeted at local substance use in young people.

The program is based on some renowned theoretical models such as the Social Development model (Catalano and Hawkins, 1996), the Bronfenbrenner Human Development Ecology Model (1981), and the empowerment development approach of organizations (Peterson and Zimmerman, 2004). EPOPS (Empowering Parents' Organizations to Prevent Substance use) emerges with the aim to adapt and evaluate a pilot implementation of the FERYA program in two European countries: Spain and Portugal.

The program is designed to train parents, by inviting them to become proactive agents for prevention, and to achieve impact on three levels: family, community, and social-political. Therefore, via the training of parents and leaders of parents' organizations, the project aims to achieve:

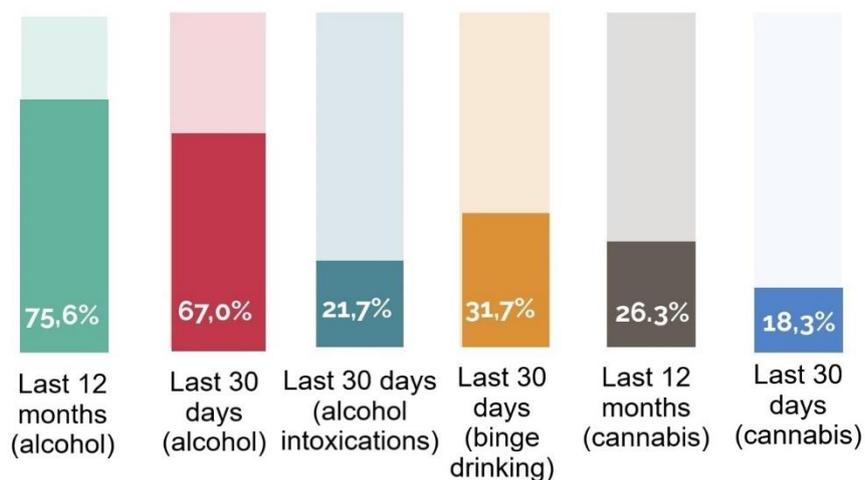
- 1) A research-based program and protocol for the prevention of substance use in children and adolescents, as well as a training program for the implementers.
- 2) An evaluation model that examines the empowerment of parents' organizations.
- 3) Tools for the assessment of the community engagement and readiness to change in communities.

WHAT KIND OF RISKS AFFECT CHILDREN?

The early onset of alcohol intake, the establishment of unhealthy lifestyles or the inclusion of new technologies and social networks on children and adolescents' development are becoming increasingly frequent. In the past years, social concern about these behaviors has increased, and many families often wonder what they can do to protect their children. However, it is getting harder to know what risks are real and how to act against them.

There is enough scientific evidence to state that alcohol use is harmful to children's health and growth. This consumption should be zero, but surveys show the opposite. Data from Europe, Spain and Portugal that will help us know about the current situation are shown below.

PREVALENCE OF CONSUMPTION (SPAIN)



% families permissiveness



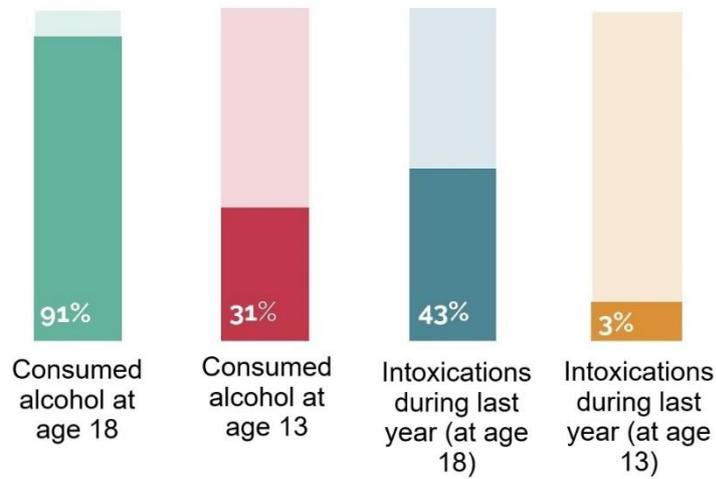
8,8% of families permit cannabis consumption

48,3% of families permit alcohol consumption



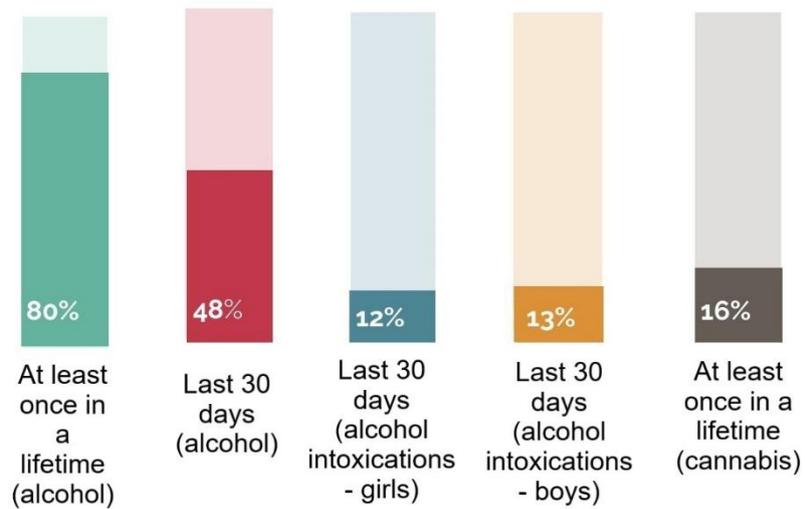
ESTUDES 2016-2017

PREVALENCE OF CONSUMPTION (PORTUGAL)



SICAD 2016-2017

PREVALENCE OF CONSUMPTION (EU)

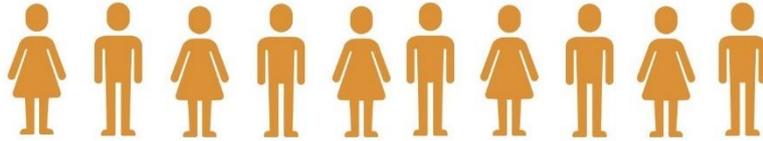


ESPAD 2015

SPANISH DATA (14-18 years old)

ESTUDES survey 2016/2017

Sex differences in alcohol use



Alcohol:
49,7 % (F)
50,3 % (M)

There are no significant differences between male and female alcohol use

ESTUDES 2016-2017

The ESTUDES survey in Spain, states that 64,8% of the students (14-18 years old) had consumed alcohol in bars, and 50% in night clubs. Moreover, 59% of the students had been able to buy it at supermarkets, 2% had consumed it at home and 28% at someone else's.

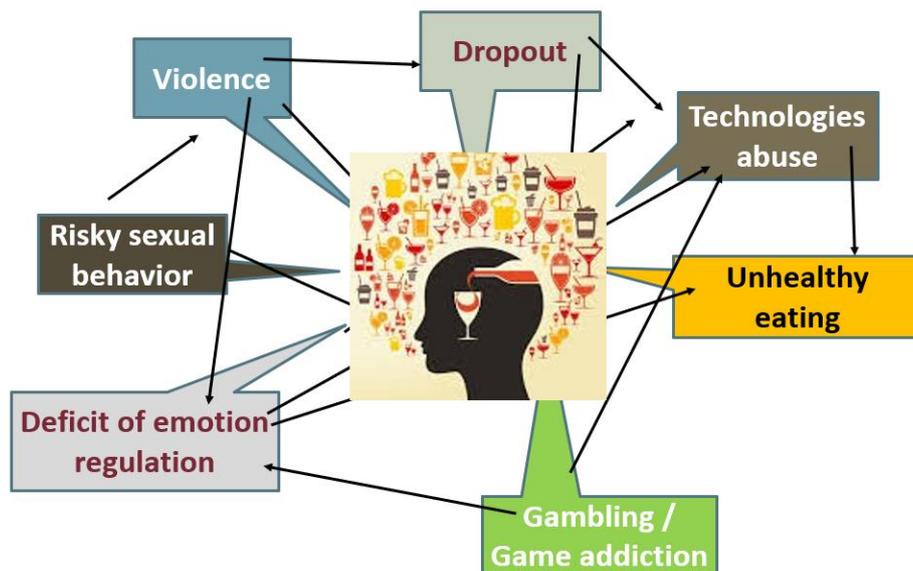
TO KNOW MORE:

- ESTUDES report:
http://www.pnsd.mscbs.gob.es/profesionales/sistemasInformacion/sistemaInformacion/pdf/ESTUDES_2016_Informe.pdf
- ESPAD survey: <http://www.espad.org/report/home/>
- SICAD:
http://www.sicad.pt/EN/Publicacoes/Paginas/detalhe.aspx?itemId=135&lista=SICAD_PUBLICACOES&bkUrl=BK/Publicacoes/

RISKS ACT IN A NETWORK

There is a wide range of risks that affect youth at our society in a daily basis. Those risks are often closely linked to each other since they share common causes and solutions. Therefore, if we manage to influence on one of them, we will be also influencing the others undoubtedly.

In this sense, alcohol use holds a central role in the leisure model in a large amount of young people, acting as the epicenter of the grid of risks that can affect children and adolescents.



Preventing these risks should be considered as the best acting strategy to encourage a healthy lifestyle for our children.

To reach this objective, families become a key element of prevention and they must assume the role that belongs to them as indispensable and active agents to remove the risky behaviors that affect their childrens' lives, because parents are the ones who know them the most and can influence their decisions to a greater extent.

TO KNOW MORE:

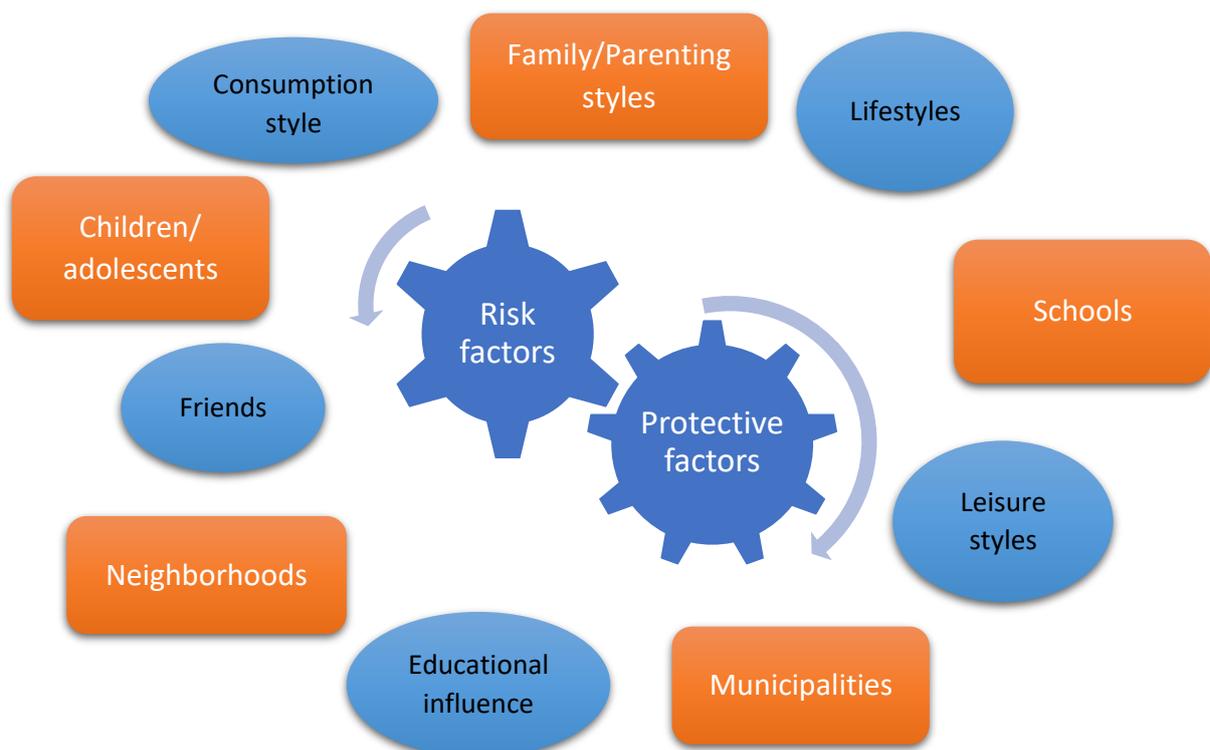
- Beyond alcohol: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14659891.2018.1510050?journalCode=ijsu20>
- The number of adolescents involved in gambling is increasing: http://www.ferya.es/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Boletin_30_juego-azar.pdf
<http://www.diputacionalicante.es/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/RESUMEN-EJECUTIVO-APUESTAS-2017.pdf>

- Bullying and cyberbullying: an emerging trend due to the increase of its incidence:
http://www.prevencionfamiliar.net/uploads/PDF_Boletines_Noticias/PF_Boletin_24.pdf
- The mixture between alcohol and sex occurs at very young ages:
http://www.prevencionfamiliar.net/uploads/PDF_Boletines_Noticias/PF_Boletin_22.pdf
<https://spr.confex.com/spr/spr2018/webprogram/Paper26709.html>
<http://irefrea.org/proyectos/stopsv/>
- Young people and their relationship with new technologies:
http://www.prevencionfamiliar.net/uploads/PDF_Boletines_Noticias/PF_Boletin_17.pdf
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4432862/>
- Unhealthy eating habits can be linked to increased alcohol consumption:
http://www.ferya.es/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Boletin_29-Bebidas-energizantes.pdf
<https://spinalresearch.com.au/sugar-addiction-linked-alcoholism/>

RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Risky behaviors, such as alcohol use, can be facilitated by the presence of certain factors. These are “**risk factors**” that promote their appearance, like, for example, considering night leisure as the main ludic activity for youth.

On the other hand, it is possible to delay or even prevent the development of risky behaviors when we activate “**protective factors**”, such as, for example, promoting healthy alternative leisure spaces.



Due to the interlinked nature of the risks, when one of them is activated, usually more risks arise. However, because of this condition, when we work to enhance a “protective factor”, it also has an impact on the others so we eventually obtain a preventive effect above other risks. Many aspects of young people’s lives can be affected by risk factors, but we can also activate other factors that will act in a preventive, protective way. All of them have their own representation at the different spheres of influence, where they affect one another.

PARENTING STYLES

The relationship model parents have with their children can act as a strong protective factor, but it can also constitute a risk factor for the development of risky behaviors. Improving our parenting style to transform it into a preventive factor can be a good way to start preventing the development of those risky behaviors.

It is considered that there are four main parenting styles, and some of them are more related to toxic consumptions and behaviors:

AUTHORITARIAN	DEMOCRATIC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes rules without counting on their children. Discipline based on the assertion of power over their children. Poor communication parents-children. Few displays of affection. Irritability, poor social skills, apathy, aggressiveness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demanding, but sensitive and affectionate. Inductive discipline based on reasoning. Appropriate and proportioned consequences. Open and frequent communication. Better school performance, high self-esteem, good social skills. 
UNINVOLVED	PERMISSIVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low interest on rules compliance. Few displays of affection. Gives less importance to their children’s wishes. If hostile relationship: higher incidence of disruptive behavior. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good communication Great display of affection. Discipline based on reasoning that can be inconsistent sometimes. Avoids conflicts. Independence, high self-esteem. 

THE IMPORTANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

Environmental factors concern regulation and direct or indirect promotion of consumptions. The huge amount of current advertising on media, on the streets, on social networks or in local celebrations is a determining factor of the beginning and consolidation of alcohol use as a habit in adolescents and young people. Advertising has evolved, now including public role models that use a more interactive advertising style, clearly intended to reach a younger public. In fact, children and adolescents usually follow these public role models (influencers).



Tourism and night leisure industry turns into great economic benefits for the organizations and establishments set aside for alcohol consumption, but the current model of management does not protect young people against the dangers that are linked to alcohol and other substances use, so it is necessary to motivate the creation of regulations that really protect youth from the great impact that alcohol implies for their health.

During the last years, some preventive experiences have been implemented successfully in Europe, oriented to the regulation of alcohol use in young people at a community level. The STAD project, for example, outlines the implementation of an intervention model at leisure establishments at seven European countries to regulate underage drinking, based on the responsible beverage service.

Likewise, certain habits and behaviors that are socially accepted perpetuate a leisure model still linked to alcohol consumption and they are a strong influence for youth and an obstacle to invert the tendency of youth consumption.

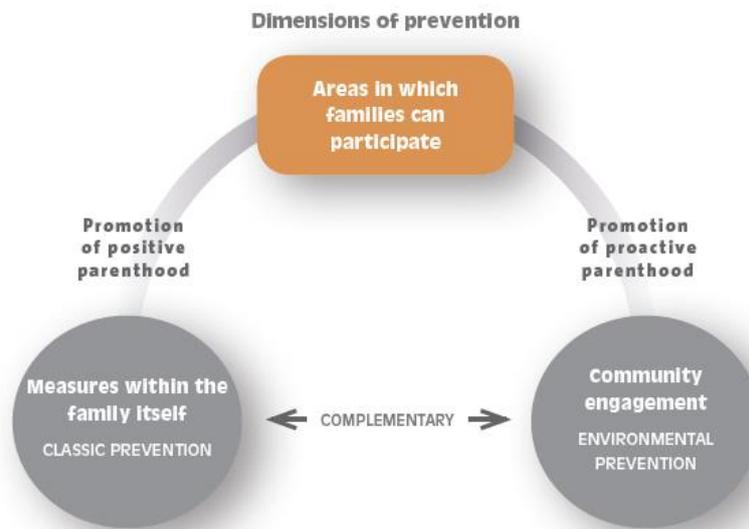
TO KNOW MORE:

- Prevention policies:
http://www.prevencionfamiliar.net/uploads/PDF_Boletines_Noticias/PF_Boletin_23.pdf
<http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/system/files/publications/7882/Environmental-substance-use-prevention-Interventions-in-Europe.pdf>
<https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/MINDSPACE.pdf>
STAD in Europe: <http://stadineurope.eu/project/>
- Management of night leisure and local celebrations:
http://www.prevencionfamiliar.net/uploads/PDF_Boletines_Noticias/PF_Boletin_25.pdf
- Advertising and alcohol:
http://www.prevencionfamiliar.net/uploads/PDF_Boletines_Noticias/Boletin26.pdf
http://www.prevencionfamiliar.net/uploads/PDF_Boletines_Noticias/Boletin27.pdf
http://www.prevencionfamiliar.net/uploads/PDF_Boletines_Noticias/Boletin28.pdf
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28930054>
<https://euspr.hypotheses.org/921>

THE PREVENTIVE ROLE OF FAMILIES

Families are now the ones that must step forward, as a driving power that “co-leads” the social prevention from an integrative, eco-systemic and organic dimension. The needed step to achieve this change begins by starting to change our attitude about our role at the society and by participating in a more proactive way at every sphere of influence we can.

Parents must get actively involved in families’ organizations, organize themselves, learn to develop communicative skills and establish synergies through networking with other organizations and administrations. The development of networks will be the greater strength for families. By avoiding isolation, the feeling of helplessness will decrease when they see themselves embraced and supported by the group.



To begin a real social change, it is essential to have the support of other institutions, administration, professionals of prevention, and other families' organizations. The technical collaboration, through the advice of the existing preventive programs or the development of acting strategies, as well as the administrative support are necessary to make these demands heard at a political level, and so that those people with enough resources, can take actions to start a real change.



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