

## Focus

- 1 Do you drink alcohol? Do you think there is an alcohol problem among young people?

## Read about it

### When a drink with dad turns kids into drunks



Another morning, another hangover. Sarah Watson does not enjoy the experience. "It's not very nice being drunk," she says. "You get full of yourself and then you get a headache."

But Sarah is not an adult recovering from a heavy night in the pub. She is 12 and one of a growing number of young children who know the taste – and the effects – of alcohol.

Sarah is one of the lucky ones. She says her experience is relatively limited. But by the time they reach 14, most children have tried alcoholic

drinks, according to a nationwide survey on young people and drinking.

Seventy-three per cent of 13- to 14-year-old children interviewed said they had had an alcoholic drink. As many as 55% of 10- to 12-year-olds said they had tried alcohol, and 45% of seven to nine-year-olds.

Experimentation with alcohol begins at an early age, typically in the form of a glass of wine shared with parents.

Drinkline, the national helpline for people with drink problems, said the dangers of alcohol were being overlooked because of concerns about drugs.

Sarah Watson said: "Many people act as though cigarettes can do more damage, and they take time to talk about drugs, but never about alcohol. When adults do talk about it, they just say it's really bad, and that's the end of the conversation."

"I could live without alcohol," said Sharon O'Dea, 15. "But if you go to a party, it is better than taking drugs."

More English teenagers drink alcohol than their contemporaries in France and Spain, according to a report last month.

The Observer/CHILDREN'S EXPRESS

- 2 Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- a Sarah Watson doesn't like drink, but she likes its effects.   
 b 26% of children aged 14 have never tried alcohol.   
 c Almost 50% of nine-year-olds have had an alcoholic drink.   
 d Young children usually get their first drink from their brothers or sisters.   
 e According to Drinkline, everybody is now talking about alcohol problems.   
 f Sharon thinks that drugs are worse than alcohol.

**drunks** people who get drunk often  
**hangover** headache and tiredness a few hours after drinking too much  
**full of yourself** very self-confident  
**recovering** getting better after an illness  
**heavy** "heavy drinking" = drinking a lot  
**alcohol** all alcoholic drinks (eg. beer, wine, vodka)  
**helpline** a telephone number for people with problems  
**overlooked** missed, not noticed  
**concerns** worries, important considerations  
**contemporaries** people of the same age

## Key Language

Look at this sentence from the article.

... by the time they reach 14, most children have tried alcoholic drinks...

**By + time phrase** has the idea of *already*. It is used with the **present perfect** for general statements and the **past perfect** for past facts.

Examples:

*By the age of 18 most people have left school.*

*By 1997 Steffi Graf had won more than \$20 million.*

- 3 Here are some facts about the life of Claudia, who is a brilliant mathematician. Use these phrases to complete the sentences.

- learn to speak quite well
  - become a university professor
  - finish school
  - start walking
  - get a university degree
  - learn to read
- a By the age of six months, \_\_\_\_ .  
 b By the age of one year, \_\_\_\_ .  
 c By the age of three, \_\_\_\_ .  
 d By the age of thirteen, \_\_\_\_ .  
 e By the age of fifteen, *she had got a university degree*.  
 f By the age of twenty-four, \_\_\_\_ .

- 4 Complete this sentence in three different ways.

*By the age of seven, most children have \_\_\_\_ .*

Now turn to page 104 for more practice!

## Talk about it

- 5 Look at this chart. Do you have similar age limits in your country? Do you think the British limits are reasonable? Why/why not? Do a smoking/drinking survey of the students in your class.

### LEGAL AGE LIMITS IN BRITAIN

5	drink alcohol at home
16	drink soft drinks in pubs drink alcohol with food in restaurants
18	buy alcohol drink alcohol in pubs
no limit	smoke cigarettes

- 6 Drinking alcohol is an accepted social practice in most world countries. But in Libya, Saudi Arabia and other Islamic countries, alcohol is illegal. (It was illegal in the USA from 1920 to 1933 – the Prohibition era.) Make a list of positive and negative points about alcohol.

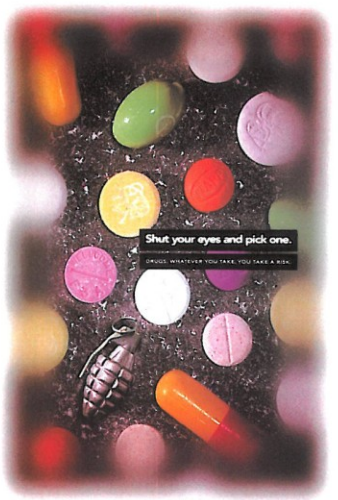
- 7 You work for an advertising agency, and you have to create a campaign against Drinking and Driving (driving a car after you have drunk alcohol). In groups, prepare a poster – with a picture and a slogan. Compare your work with other groups and vote for the best campaign.



## Tune in

1 Before you listen, think about heroin. It is derived from opium and is in the same family of drugs as morphine. What is the medical use of such drugs? Do you know anything about heroin addiction?

- 2 Now listen to Mike talking about being a heroin addict, and answer these questions.
- How does Mike take the drug?
  - How did he use to take it?
  - How long has he been taking it?
- 3 Why did Mike start taking heroin? The words in brackets will help you.
- (social)
  - (attitude to adults)
  - (school/job)
  - (feelings about himself)
- 4 Why is it hard for Mike to give up?
- (physical)
  - (social)
  - (daily life)



## Key Language

Look at these sentences from the tape.

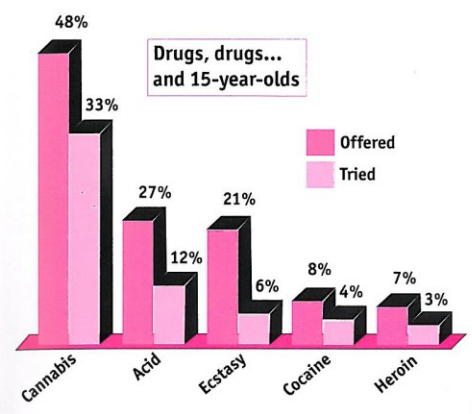
"We'd, you know, dropped out of school..."  
 "I mean, that's what they did in the evening..."

In spoken English, people use quite a lot of "fillers" like *you know* and *I mean*. Both these phrases give the speaker time to think. *You know* sometimes shows doubt: it means "Am I using the right word here?"

- 5 In which of these sentences do the phrases have their original meaning – and in which are they fillers?
- I mean Washington state, not Washington, D.C..
  - I mean, they've got, you know, strange ideas.
  - Do you know my sister?
  - She's, you know, a paramedic or something.
  - You know, it's a really good job.
  - I mean, the money's not great, but she likes it.
- 6 Read out this text, adding some fillers. (Note: *I mean* usually goes at the beginning of a sentence. *You know* can go almost anywhere.)
- "I started smoking when I was about 13. Lots of kids at school were already smoking by that age. I used to have a puff of my mum's cigarettes. She didn't mind. Then I started buying my own. In the end I was spending all my pocket money on cigarettes."

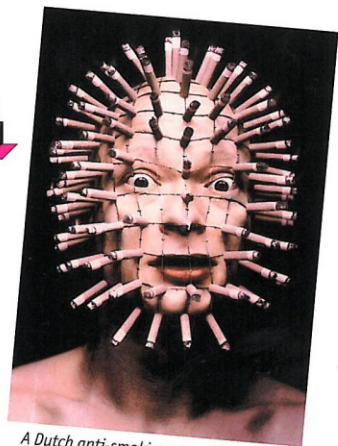
## Over to you

7 The chart below seems to show that cannabis is the biggest problem. But people worry more about ecstasy, cocaine and heroin. Why?



8 "Addictive" means "very difficult to give up". Do you think nicotine (in cigarettes) is addictive? Why is tobacco legal, when most of the other drugs on the chart are illegal? Would it be a good idea to make tobacco illegal?

9 Some people say that it would be better to legalise all drugs. In that case, you could buy cannabis and other drugs from shops. What would be the advantages and disadvantages of such a change?



A Dutch anti-smoking campaign poster

## Write about it

10 Design an anti-smoking poster for schools or colleges. Sketch a picture or use photos from a magazine; write a slogan and a couple of sentences to go with it.

11 A friend of yours has a problem with alcohol or drugs. Write a letter to the problem page of a magazine, asking for advice. Start like this:

Dear \_\_\_\_,  
 I'm really worried about my friend Tony (that's not his real name)...

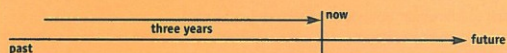
**Perfect tenses**

Look at the text below.

In 1997, my life was a mess. I was an alcoholic, and I could not give up. I had seen five different doctors and none of them had been able to help me. By 1999, I had lost my job and my wife and children. At the age of 26, I nearly died and spent several weeks in hospital. Then I tried the Mind Method, and it worked. What a change! Now I don't drink and I haven't smoked a cigarette for three years! Today, life is great!

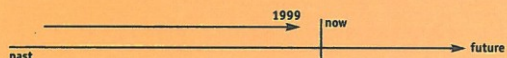
**Perfect tenses** have the idea of *up to a moment in time*. If we are talking about a time up to the present, we use the **present perfect** (*have/has + past participle*).

*I haven't smoked a cigarette for three years. (three years until today)*



If we are talking about a period of time up to a moment in the past, we use the **past perfect** (*had + past participle*). We use the preposition **by** to refer to that time.

*By 1999, I had lost my wife and children. (up to 1999)*



To talk about something that happened at a specific time in the past, we use the **past simple** tense.

*In 1997, my life was a mess.*

**1** Underline the correct verb form in the sentences below.

- Example: a Yesterday I had seen/saw the doctor.  
 b At the age of six I had started/started school.  
 c My dad was in the army, and by 1996, we had moved/moved seven times!  
 d I can't give you a lift - I haven't had/didn't have a car for years!  
 e I've been married/was married for 10 years, before my wife left me last year.  
 f The letter had arrived/arrived by nine o'clock this morning.  
 g We haven't seen/didn't see them since last week.

**2** Work in pairs. Read each sentence and decide if it is correct or not. If it is not correct, circle the mistake and correct the sentence. (The mistakes can be of use or form.)

- Example: a I've lived in this house ten years (by today). *I've lived in this house ten years.*  
 b Mum and Dad had been married for eight years before they had their first child.  
 c I moved house in 1976 and I lived there ever since.  
 d By the end of the night, George had spent nearly all his money.  
 e By the time they are 20, most people in Britain have tried alcohol.  
 f After a wonderful three week-holiday, we finally came home.  
 g By dinner time, Lucy had already ate all her chocolates!