



Statistics related to families affected by someone's alcohol misuse

The Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology notes that parental alcohol misuse can lead to inconsistent and unpredictable parenting, children having to care for their parent or younger siblings, impacts on school attendance and homework, and physical and mental health impacts.

Hedges, S. & Kenny, C. (2018) Parental Alcohol Misuse and Children. Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology.

There is evidence of an association between high risk parental alcohol misuse and externalising difficulties through conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, attention difficulties, and violent and rebellious behaviour.

McGovern, R. et al (2018) Addressing the impact of non-dependent parental substance misuse upon children: A rapid review of the evidence of prevalence, impact and effective interventions. Public Health England.

In other cases, alcohol misuse can lead to children being taken into care. Around 61% of care applications in England involve the misuse of alcohol and/or drugs.

Hedges, S. & Kenny, C. (2018) Parental Alcohol Misuse and Children. Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology

Support for people with a family member who drinks heavily improves outcomes for both the person drinking and their loved ones; yet these services are being cut along with services for those who drink.

Andersson, C. et al. (2017). Understanding recovery from a family perspective: a survey of life in recovery for families. Alcohol Research UK.

There are around 600,000 dependent drinkers in England, and around 200,000 children living with an alcohol dependent parent or carer.

Public Health England (2017). Estimates of alcohol dependent adults and alcohol dependent adults living with children.

Research has also shown that recovery has significant benefits for families affected by alcohol. When a dependent drinker gets help that works, family members feel less stressed and anxious, do better at work, and have improved relationships.

Andersson, C. et al. (2017). Understanding recovery from a family perspective: a survey of life in recovery for families.

Other research indicates that compared to other children, children with a parent misusing alcohol are twice as likely to experience difficulties at school, three times more likely to consider suicide, and five times more likely to develop eating disorders.

APPG on Children of Alcoholics (2017) Children of Alcoholics: A Manifesto for Change. APPG on Children of Alcoholics.

A study found that as a result of their parent's drinking: 18% of children had felt embarrassed, 11% had felt worried, 12% said their parents paid them less attention, and 15% said that their bedtime routine had been disrupted.

Foster, J., Bryant, L. & Brown, K. (2017) "Like sugar for adults" - The Effect of Non-Dependent. Parental Drinking on Children and Families. Institute of Alcohol Studies, Alcohol and Families Alliance & Alcohol Focus Scotland

Children often have a better grasp of their parent's drinking than is recognised, with 11 and 12 year olds describing parents drinking to "solve their problems".

Foster, J., Bryant, L. & Brown, K. (2017) "Like sugar for adults" - The Effect of Non-Dependent. Parental Drinking on Children and Families. Institute of Alcohol Studies, Alcohol and Families Alliance & Alcohol Focus Scotland

Where the families of a loved one with alcohol problems are supported, there are significant benefits: improvements in personal relationships, greater participation in society, productivity at work, and health and wellbeing.

For children, there are improvements in their aspirations for the future, self-confidence and esteem, ability to deal with change, and educational attainment.

Adfam (2017) Support for families and carers affected by someone else's drug or alcohol use: Making It Happen. Adfam