

ShowCase

Sub21

Topic: Alcohol

Organisation: North Tyneside PCT;
Lamerton Swales

Location: North Tyneside (North East)

Dates: March 2007 to March 2010

Budget: £64,000

Website: www.sub21.co.uk

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Overview

This award-winning social marketing project aimed to reduce underage street drinking and antisocial behaviour in North Tyneside.

Research with young people and off-licences identified three main drivers for underage street drinking: lack of suitable alternative activities; cheap, easy supply of alcohol; and social norm of young people drinking on the streets. Proxy sales of alcohol were also a particular problem.

From these findings, a two-pronged approach was developed, under the brand Sub21. The intervention provided a rolling programme of out-of-hours activities designed by and for local young people as an alternative to street drinking. Alongside this, a campaign was developed to support off-licences in reducing illegal and proxy alcohol purchases.

Results:

- Reduction in the most harmful types of drinking among females, including binge drinking, drinking to the point of being sick, and drinking on the street or other outdoor locations
- Among male respondents, there does not seem to have been much change in behaviour, but findings suggest they experienced greater difficulty accessing alcohol in the area, post intervention
- Most young people surveyed had heard of Sub21 and a third reported attending Sub21 activities

1. BEHAVIOUR

- **Young people** – Reduce the occasions of drinking alcohol on the streets, the amount drunk, and the number of attempts to purchase alcohol illegally
- **Retailers** – Implement a ban on alcohol sales to under-21s at peak times (Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights)

2. CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

- Desk-based secondary research
- Interviews with youths, parents, retailers, residents and trading standards lead
- Participant observation sessions
- Audit of out-of-hours youth provision
- Consultation and focus groups with retailers
- Workshops and focus groups with young people

3. THEORY

- Drinking on the streets symbolises free time and start of weekend
- **Diffusion of Innovation Theory:** Using early adopters to lead the way

4. INSIGHT

- Lack of out-of-hours leisure provision
- Normalisation of drinking and importance of friends
- Low cost and easy availability of alcohol
- Youth activities should have a developmental element
- Desire from retailers for more supportive, rather than punitive measures

5. EXCHANGE

- **For young people** – Dedicated place to hang out with friends, take part in free, fun and exciting activities
- **For retailers** – Less proxy purchases, vandalism, theft and intimidation outside shops, leading to more customers and long-term profits; Support from police, trading standards and licensing

6. COMPETITION

- **Young people** – Sophisticated alcohol marketing; Cheap alcohol deals
- **Retailers** – Lack of time and enthusiasm; Lack of commitment and persistence from local authority

7. SEGMENTATION

Primary audience:

- Young people aged 13 to 17
- Living in areas of Wallsend, Battlehill and Howdon
- Likely to drink on the streets

Secondary audience:

- Local retailers in the three pilot areas

8. METHODS MIX

- Rolling programme of out-of-school activities offered on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights
- Package of support to help retailers tackle illegal and proxy alcohol sales
- Promotion – Face-to-face, school assemblies, off-licence visits, viral marketing, SMS, website, Facebook page, posters, flyers, PR, press and TV coverage