

# Changing Social Norms

The reduction in binge drinking

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# Early signs of a positive shift in drinking behaviours and cultural norms

- There are now more young people (11-15 years old) who have never drunk alcohol than have
- Parents are talking to their children about the risks of alcohol; but we need to have them talk earlier
- Adults have a wider understanding of the implications of drinking over the guidelines but don't relate it to their own drinking behaviour
- Drink driving (particularly among the younger generation) is largely a social taboo

# A fifth of people aged 16+ have drunk to 'binge drinking' levels in the last week



**22%** of men have drunk to binge drinking levels (more than 8 units) at least once last week

**19%** drank 5 days or more



**15%** of women have drunk to binge drinking levels (more than 6 units) at least once last week

**11%** drank 5 days or more

**drinkaware**

# Two very different kinds of binge drinking behaviours exist

1. Heavy episodic drinking – more extreme, visible displays of drunkenness with personal and social consequences
  - particularly among **18-24 year olds**
  
2. Regularly drinking twice the recommended daily guidelines
  - particularly among **25- 44 year olds**



# Challenging social norms around heavy episodic drinking among Young Adults



# Many young adults view binge drinking as a positive social experience

- A highly social behaviour that is normalised & validated by their social groups
- **One in five** admitted drinking to binge drinking levels at least once in the last seven days
- **57%** admit 'they go out drinking with the specific intention of getting drunk'
- **76%** agree 'It's easier to enjoy a night out with friends when drinking'
- **74%** agree 'drinking gives me the confidence to meet people and make new friends'



# A new set of drinking norms fuels binge drinking behaviours at home

- **62%** admit to 'pre-loading' at home before heading out to drink in a pub, bar, club
  - Often for economic reasons
  - For social bonding
- Lack of attachment to mainstream society can fuel binge drinking behaviours
  - Over 1 million NEETS
  - Introduction of student tuition fees / cuts in Education Maintenance Grants



# Campaign messages that promote the good side of a night out work best

## Do

- Emphasise the good side of a night out
- Provide tangible harm minimisation tips and tools
- Engage through relevant channels



## Don't

- Preach or patronise
- Ask them to abstain from drinking alcohol



# Campaign results shows target audience do engage in responsible drinking messages

- **200 million** opportunities to see 'WLGTTGB?'
- **27%** (850,000 regular drinkers) recalled seeing the campaign – double that of industry norms
- **8 out of 10** claimed to be adopting at least one of the campaign tips (680,000 regular drinkers)
- **56%** claimed it made them consider drinking differently
- **11,000** unique visitors to the mobile site and **9,000** downloads of the new app



# Challenging social norms around harmful drinking among 25-44 year olds



# 4 million 25-44 year olds are regularly drinking over the recommended daily guidelines

- Substantial lack of knowledge around unit guidelines and unit equivalents
  - **41%** do not realise they are drinking over the daily unit guidelines
- At home drinking particularly wine, most popular choice of drink for 40% of adults
- Alcohol common antidote to help 'relax and unwind' after a stressful day



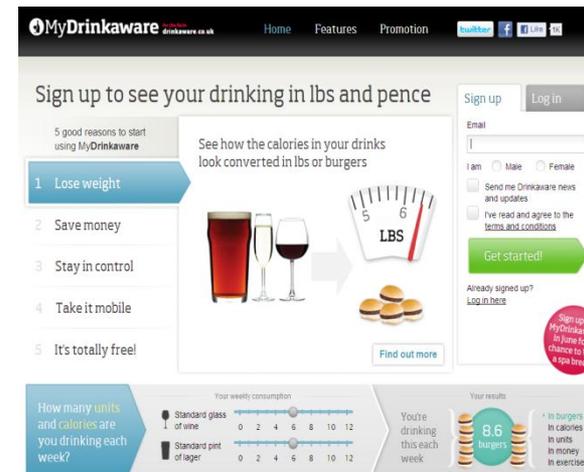
# Campaigns that ask Adults to self-reflect and empower them to take control work best

## Do

- Ask them to reflect upon their own current level of drinking
- Communicate unit guidelines and unit equivalents
- Empower them to take control of their drinking and support them in their efforts to cut back with on and off line tools

## Don't

- Preach or patronise
- Ask them to abstain from drinking alcohol



# MyDrinkaware showing it can support behavioural change

Over **120,000** people have signed up to track their drinking with MyDrinkaware

- All users increased their awareness of health harms
- **30,000** active users increased their understanding of daily recommended guidelines and unit equivalents
- **30,000** active users reduced their alcohol consumption from **5** to **3.9** units per day

The screenshot shows the MyDrinkaware website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Features', and 'Promotion' links, along with social media icons for Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn. The main heading is 'Sign up to see your drinking in lbs and pence'. Below this, there's a list of '5 good reasons to start using MyDrinkaware':

- 1 Lose weight
- 2 Save money
- 3 Stay in control
- 4 Take it mobile
- 5 It's totally free!

To the right of the list, there's a visual comparison: 'See how the calories in your drinks look converted in lbs or burgers'. It shows three glasses of alcohol (beer, wine, and spirits) on the left, an arrow pointing to a scale labeled 'LBS' on the right, and three burgers below the scale. A 'Find out more' link is at the bottom of this section.

On the far right, there's a sign-up form with fields for 'Email', 'I am' (Male/Female), and checkboxes for 'Send me Drinkaware news and updates' and 'I've read and agree to the terms and conditions'. A green 'Get started!' button is at the bottom of the form. Below the form, there's a link for 'Already signed up? Log in here' and a red circular badge that says 'Sign up to MyDrinkaware in June for a chance to WIN a spa break'.

At the bottom of the page, there's a section titled 'How many units and calories are you drinking each week?'. It features two sliders: 'Your weekly consumption' for 'Standard glass of wine' (0 to 12) and 'Standard pint of lager' (0 to 12). To the right, there's a 'Your results' section showing 'You're drinking this each week' with a stack of 8.6 burgers, and 'Your results' showing '8.6 burgers' in calories, units, money, and exercise.

# Are consumers responding to binge drinking messages?



# What are the key requirements in tackling binge drinking?

1. Young people need tangible **harm minimisation tips**, delivered through **relevant channels** so they can stay on the 'good' side of a night out
2. Adults need prompting to **reflect** on their own **drinking behaviours** and directed to tools such as **MyDrinkaware** so they can better understand the links between personal consumption and health harms
3. Parents need guidance in **talking** to their **children** earlier about the risks of drinking alcohol and support in how to model **responsible** drinking behaviours

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