Keeping It In The Family

Survey 2009

Parental drinking among 18-40 year olds: prevalence and impact
Introduction

- Alcohol Action Ireland commissioned Behaviour and Attitudes to conduct market research to gauge the prevalence of, and attitudes to, parental drinking amongst 18 to 40-year-olds.
- Fieldwork was conducted 3rd - 15th April 2009.
- Quotas are set on gender, age and region to ensure that the results correctly reflect the known demographics of the Republic of Ireland.
- The survey data is drawn from Telebarometer, a nationally representative survey of 1,000 adults and of this dataset 18 to 40-year-olds constituted 454.
Prevalence of Mum or Dad Drinking Alcohol During Their Childhood

All adults aged 18-40s: 454 - 1,617,000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Figures in 000’s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mum only</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dad only</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>493</td>
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(Refused 1% - 22,000)
Impact of Parents’ Drinking
All 18-40s with parents who drank alcohol at all during their childhood: 306 : 1,102,000

- **Ashamed or embarrassed of your parent’s behaviour when they were drunk**
  - Very often: 6 Drank at all, 5 Both weekly+
  - Fairly often: 3 Drank at all, 3 Both weekly+
  - Not very often: 14 Drank at all, 11 Both weekly+
  - Never experienced this at all: 76
  - Don’t know/Refused: 1

- **Witness conflict between your parents either when they were drinking or related to their drinking**
  - Very often: 5 Drank at all, 9 Both weekly+
  - Fairly often: 4 Both weekly+
  - Not very often: 16 Both weekly+
  - Never experienced this at all: 70
  - Don’t know/Refused: 1

- **Feel afraid or unsafe as a result of your parents drinking**
  - Very often: 4 Drank at all, 7 Both weekly+
  - Fairly often: 3 Both weekly+
  - Not very often: 14 Both weekly+
  - Never experienced this at all: 76
  - Don’t know/Refused: 1

- **Take on responsibility for looking after your parent(s) or brothers/sisters**
  - Very often: 4 Drank at all, 5 Both weekly+
  - Fairly often: 4 Both weekly+
  - Not very often: 9 Both weekly+
  - Never experienced this at all: 78
  - Don’t know/Refused: 1

- **School experience suffered: missed school or the quality of your school work was less than it could have been**
  - Very often: 2 Drank at all, 4 Both weekly+
  - Fairly often: 2 Both weekly+
  - Not very often: 16 Both weekly+
  - Never experienced this at all: 92
  - Don’t know/Refused: 1

[Image: alcohol action Ireland logo]
Key Findings

When parents drank...

- **71,000** 18-40s said they often felt afraid or unsafe as a result of their parents’ drinking

- **90,000** 18-40s said they often witnessed conflict between their parents either when they were drinking or as a result of their drinking

- **71,000** said they often had to take responsibility for a parent or a sibling

- Impact of parental drinking did not differ according to socio-economic class
What needs to happen?

- Use/create opportunities
  - National Combined Substance Misuse Strategy is an opportunity to put children and families at the centre
  - Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA) has responsibility for ensuring all aspects of the public service work together at national and local levels to achieve more effective and efficient delivery of children’s services. OMCYA could initiate a comprehensive examination of the extent and impact of parental alcohol problems on child welfare, and identify the implications for services, policy and legislation

- See and hear children in families affected by parental alcohol problems
  - Gather data on children affected by parental alcohol problems
  - Structure services to respond holistically to families