ENDING THE SILENCE AROUND PROBLEM ALCOHOL USE IN THE HOME

AWARENESS RAISING TOOLKIT FOR ISSUES FACED BY GROWING UP WITH PROBLEM ALCOHOL USE IN THE HOME

#ENDTHESILENCE
At least 200,000 children in Ireland are currently living with the trauma of parental problem alcohol use and a further 400,000 adults are living with its legacy, sometimes experiencing lasting difficulties with emotional, mental and physical health. Yet despite these large numbers this Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) remains a deeply hidden aspect of Ireland’s relationship with alcohol.

There are many reasons for this including family dynamics, shame and the wider societal conflict between our image of Ireland as a country which identifies strongly with drinking yet knows there is a huge price to pay for our alcohol use. This toolkit is an awareness raising resource for anyone who works with children, families and adults who have who have experienced this trauma.
This toolkit aims to provide awareness and understanding to the issues people who grow up with problem alcohol use in the home may face.

It is also for anyone interested in learning more about problem alcohol use and its impact, including people who have experienced it themselves.

This resource does not aim to be a therapeutic intervention, but simply provides information and good quality resources based on best evidence available on this issue.

The toolkit was created by AAI with input from experts by experience from our Silent Voices initiative and professionals who work in this field.
Children

Research shows that about 1 in 6 young people in Ireland grow up with problem alcohol use in the home.

These resources have been compiled to help young people but may also be of interest to parents and professionals.
Currently in Ireland around 400,000 adults are living with the legacy of parental problem alcohol use.

These resources are designed to help you start a journey of understanding and healing.
**Professionals**

Many different professionals come into contact with children and families and that is why it’s important that all professionals can recognise how ACEs can impact young people and respond accordingly.

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**The phrase “Adverse Childhood Experiences” (ACEs) is used to refer to stressful experiences occurring during childhood that directly harm a child or the environment in which they live.**

Growing up with parental problem alcohol use is an ACE. We know now from neuroscience that when a child experiences strong, frequent, and/or prolonged adversity this creates a lot of stress. When this stress response occurs continually, or is triggered by multiple sources, it can in some cases have a cumulative toll on physical and mental health – for a lifetime.

For example, adverse events, such as physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect, parental problem substance use, parental separation, are all ACEs that can cause biological changes that may have lifelong effects on both physical and mental health.

People who have experienced significant adversity (or many ACEs) are not irreparably damaged. For those who have experienced ACEs, there are a range of possible responses that can help, including therapeutic sessions with mental health professionals, meditation, physical exercise, spending time in nature, and many others.

Reducing stress, building responsive relationships, and strengthening life skills are the best way to prevent the long-term effects of ACEs.

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**CLICK TO WATCH VIDEO**

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**CLICK TO DOWNLOAD THE PROFESSIONALS INFORMATION PACK**
Science shows that adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) can cause toxic stress which is harmful for a child's development. 600,000 children and adults are affected by parental problem alcohol use in Ireland.

About ACEs

These fact sheets are available for download to help spread the word about this issue in an accessible manner.

Join us in helping to #endthesilence around PPAU, a widespread issue and potentially harmful adverse childhood experience.

About How to use Children Adult children Professionals PPAU is an ACE