

## ALCOHOL ABUSE

By the term ‘alcoholism’ or the more specific expression ‘alcohol abuse’, we mean the recurring<sup>1</sup> and prolonged consumption of alcoholic drinks.

Surveys conducted all over the world show that the generation between the age of 15 and 24 years is the most addicted<sup>2</sup> to alcohol, especially in the United Kingdom, where alcohol abuse is widely spread.

Habitual heavy drinking leads to several negative consequences at a social level, such as inability to form relationships, failure to perform one’s duties<sup>3</sup> at school, work or at home, dangerous behaviours such as drunk driving. Equally important is the damage to health deriving from alcoholism, including long-term harm to the brain, especially in very young abusers, memory deficits, insomnia, irritability and chronic fatigue<sup>4</sup>.

But what are the causes of alcohol abuse among in youth? According to researchers, it is a complex combination of factors starting from the difficulty to cope with<sup>5</sup> the transition from childhood to adolescence. Moreover, people with a family history of physical or sexual abuse, abandoned, maltreated child hood or with parents with alcohol abuse disorders are more likely to develop addiction to alcohol later on in life. Unfortunately, adolescents are often at risk also outside their home, they have easy access to alcoholics in shops and they are influenced by peers. This happens because young people are unaware of the actual risks of alcohol abuse and they are not always offered the possibility to learn the consequences of this harmful habit, that can turn into dependence.



### GLOSSARY

- 1 occurring again after an interval
- 2 dependent
- 3 tasks, functions
- 4 tiredness
- 5 deal with and attempt to overcome problems and difficulties

### READING COMPREHENSION

● Answer the following questions.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ① What is alcohol abuse?                             | ⑤ Which factors lead to alcohol use disorders?   |
| ② Who are the heaviest drinkers?                     | ⑥ To what extent is family history responsible for the development of alcohol addiction? |
| ③ What are the social consequences of alcohol abuse? | ⑦ Where are adolescents mostly at risk?  |
| ④ What is the physical damage related to alcoholism? | ⑧ What is peers’ influence due to?   |

### ACTIVITIES



### SYNONYMS

● Read the text again and find synonyms for the following terms.

- |             |       |               |       |
|-------------|-------|---------------|-------|
| ① Precise   | ..... | ⑤ Impatience  | ..... |
| ② Extended  | ..... | ⑥ Complicated | ..... |
| ③ Defeat    | ..... | ⑦ Uninformed  | ..... |
| ④ Carry out | ..... | ⑧ Understand  | ..... |

### TEXT COMPLETION

● Fill in the gaps translating the words in brackets into English.

#### ALCOPOPS

When Sweden joined the European Union, the entire European law ..... ① (*è stata adottata*), along with several food ..... ② (*prodotti*) like alcopops.

Alcopops are flavoured alcoholic ..... ③ (*bevande*) with a sweet ..... ④ (*sapore*), now widely consumed in Sweden. As the flavour of alcohol is hidden, the introduction of this kind of drinks caused ..... ⑤ (*metà*) of the increase in alcohol use in adolescents, mostly among girls.

In that country, alcohol abuse is highly linked to adolescent ..... ⑥ (*suicidio*), which is 17 times more likely to happen than in teenagers who don’t drink.

For this reason, as a preventive ..... ⑦ (*misura*), each bottle of alcopops must carry a label that states: ‘Attention: this drink contains alcohol.’