

Parliamentary Briefing

Alcohol Etc (Scotland) Bill

Scottish Parliament Stage 1 Debate – Thursday 10 June 2010

Children in Scotland is broadly supportive of this Bill's direction of travel and major provisions. We strongly support the Bill's goal of significantly reducing overall alcohol consumption, binge drinking and the associated social, economic and health costs of alcohol use and misuse. While drinking among young people is a real problem, it is far outweighed by the negative impacts of parental (and other adult) alcohol misuse upon children.

There is widespread support among our membership (of more than 400 organisations and individuals) for:

- Minimum pricing of alcohol;
- More restricted access to alcohol for children and young people;
- Greater penalties for those individuals and businesses that sell alcohol to children and young people under 18 years of age;
- Enhanced social responsibility for the alcohol industry (including all points of sale) that includes contributing a share of any increased revenues to solving alcohol-related problems; and,
- Ending the targeting of children and young people through alcohol-related marketing/advertising, sponsorships and products.

We support minimum pricing, but think that too much emphasis has been placed by all parties and the media on this single part of the solution. Specifically, Children in Scotland has two recommendations:

- Any minimum price set for alcohol must be set high enough to demonstrably and significantly discourage/reduce consumption significantly; and,
- The price of alcohol must make unhealthy consumption out of reach to children and young people under the age of 18, i.e. it should not be available at 'pocket money' prices.

Children in Scotland thinks this Bill would be even stronger and more effective in ending Scotland's 'unhealthy relationship with alcohol' if amendments to also reduce demand for alcohol are added during Stage 2. A set of specific recommendations is contained in the attached brief article from the March 2010 issue of *Children in Scotland* magazine.

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