Introduction

Questions on adults’ attitudes to the effect that parents’ alcohol drinking and taking of drugs has on their children was asked on Nfp Synergy’s Charity Awareness Monitor.

The survey was conducted online between the 12-23 July 2010. 1009 interviews were completed with UK adults aged 16+.

The Findings

Heavy drinking by a parent has a negative effect on children and families

69% of adults agree strongly (87% agree) that heavy drinking by a parent has a negative effect on children and families.

Women are more likely to agree strongly (75%) compared with men (63%). It is the 16-24 age group who are the least likely to agree strongly (62%) and most likely to disagree (18% v 9% all adults). 16 -34 year old men are the least likely to agree strongly (54%) v (16% disagree).

There is surprisingly little real difference in opinion among respondents who have children and those who do not.

A parent taking illegal drugs has a negative effect on children and families

Adults are more likely to agree strongly that this has a negative effect on children than the consumption of alcohol (80% agree strongly/90% agree).

As previous, most disagreement is among the 16-24 age group (15% disagree v 7% all adults) and least strong agreement is among men aged 16-34 (66%).

Whilst overall agreement is similar, those without children are less likely to agree strongly (73%).
A parent who drinks heavily is as harmful to a child as a parent who takes drugs

Whilst nearly 2 out of 3 adults (63%) strongly agree with this, 14% disagree, particularly men (18%) and 16-24 year olds (25%) and young men aged 16-34 (31%). Women aged 55+ are the most likely to strongly agree (80%).

Here strong agreement is less for those without children and highest among those who have children who no longer live at home.

Heavy drinking among parents is a serious problem for children in the UK

8 out of 10 adults agree of which just over half strongly agree and 17% disagree with this statement. It is again younger men aged 16-34 who are the least likely to agree and the most likely to disagree. (72% v 26%)

Those with children under 18 who are living at home are the least likely to strongly agree.

Parents taking illegal drugs is a serious problem for children in the UK

84% of adults agree of which 64% agree strongly. 15% disagree rising to 28% of the 16-24 age group.

Those without children are less likely to agree (51% strongly agree/76% agree).

Knowing illegal drug use and heavy drinking by parents are equally harmful for children would make me more concerned of heavy drinking by parents.

76% agree with this statement, 53% strongly. However 1 in 5 disagrees rising to 1 in 4 men and 1 in 3 of men aged 16-34.

Those without children are less likely to agree strongly, whereas those who children are not longer at home are the most likely to agree strongly with the statement.