

Daily Mail

Health

How adverts fuel underage drinking: Teenagers are FIVE times more likely to buy alcohol after seeing it promoted on TV

- **'Strong link' between what under 18s saw on TV and alcohol consumption**
- **Study found young people are also influenced by magazine adverts and were 36 per cent more likely to drink alcohol if they read about it**
- **Doctors: Alcohol abuse among the young is 'major public health problem'**

By [Daniel Bates For The Daily Mail](#)

Published: 12:37 EST, 22 October 2015 | Updated: 19:30 EST, 22 October 2015

Underage drinkers are more than five times more likely to buy alcohol after seeing it advertised on TV, a study has found.

Researchers discovered a strong link between what the under 18s saw on television and how they drank in the month afterwards.

They were also influenced by magazine adverts and were 36 per cent more likely to drink alcohol if they read about it.

The study said that alcohol abuse among the young is a 'major public health problem' that needs to be addressed.



There is a 'strong link' between what underage drinkers see on TV and how much alcohol they consume

The report comes as the government is considering the 'sugar tax' on sweets and banning buy-one-get-one-free deals to tackle obesity, especially among children and teens.

The study from Boston University looked at already published advertising data by analysts Nielsen on how much underage children were exposed to advertising by different brands between 2011 and 2012.

The researchers compared that to their own national youth alcohol brand survey which looked at drinking habits of 12 to 20-year-olds.

The study said: 'Underage youth were more than five times more likely to consume brands that advertise on national television and 36 per cent more likely to consume brands that advertise in national magazines.'

'These findings strongly suggest that alcohol advertising influences an important aspect of drinking behaviour among underage youth who consume alcohol'

The study, published in the American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse, could serve as a wake up call in Britain, which has one of the highest underage drinking rates in Europe.



The study warned alcohol abuse among the young is a 'major public health problem' that must be addressed

Figures from the Office for National Statistics shows that 43 per cent of 11 to 15-year-olds have drink alcohol at least once in the last year.

That number rises with each year and by the age of 15 some 74 per cent of children admit to having had a drink in the previous 12 months.

Campaign group Alcohol Concern has called for a ban on all alcohol advertising at music and sports events because many young people recognise more drink brands than ice cream.

Cigarette advertising on TV was banned in 1965 and all other tobacco advertising was banned in 2003.

The move was because studies showed that a smoker who begins at 15 is three times more likely to die from cancer than one who takes their first drag in their mid-20s.

As a result of the bans the proportion of children who have smoked at least once has declined to 18 per cent of 11 to 15-year-olds, the lowest level since records began in 1982.