

Would Increasing the Price of Alcohol Help to Address the Issue of Teenage Drinking?

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Youth Category: Age 12 - 14

I believe that an increase or minimum price for alcohol should be put in place. An increase in price immediately puts people in a position where they must drink less as they cannot afford the alcohol. This would obviously be beneficial for people with drinking problems for many reasons, if they can't control themselves then their wallet restrictions should. When people consume less alcohol, the likelihood of them becoming intoxicated is slim therefore reducing problems such as minor public order offences.

As you probably know, the youth employment rate in Ireland is very low, currently at just 29.1%. If youths have no stable income, they cannot buy alcohol. Some teens use their parents as their source of income, asking for money for a taxi or the bus or clothes, etc. and going behind their backs by purchasing alcohol. Parents should be careful with requests for money like this, as this way not only are they allowing their child to drink but supporting them and unintentionally giving them the freedom to do so. Though saying this, if you have the co-operation of parents in the matter, teen drinking would most likely decrease as they simply cannot afford the alcohol that fuels their obsession.

With a price increase, unfortunately other problems might occur. For example, if you set a minimum price for alcohol, an increase also might occur in the consumption of cheap, hazardous, illegal alcohol off the black market. The truth is though, that you will always get a few here and there who manage to break the law and evade arrest...but for what good? In my opinion, to enforce a minimum price for alcohol would be a milestone in stamping out teen alcohol abuse.