Alcohol Themes

- Some Ways Living with Alcohol Dependent Parents Can Impact on Children's Development...

BELONGING

- Lack of parental presence & responsiveness can lead to insecure attachments & poor relationships at school & in the community
- The need to keep the drinking a secret can prevent children bringing friends home, reciprocating with sleep overs, having/attending parties
- Parent exclusion from parent networks diminishes social inclusion
- The impact of poor social networks increases over time & further undermines the development of social skills
- Poor family relationships & social isolation can lead to a limited sense of belonging at home, at school & in the community
- A lack of belonging can lead to children seeking connections in less safe & healthy ways & could increase risk of gang affiliation

ACHIEVING

- Child focuses on parent's drinking rather than their own achievement
- Child's sense of achievement often tied to stopping their parent drinking
- The need to keep secrets about home from others means that children learn: to keep things separate; that it is unsafe to bring things together or split things up. Can cause an 'emotional blocks' in maths tasks
- Anticipation of the drinking and what they can return home to, can impact on behaviour and concentration late afternoon, Fridays, lead up to holidays
- Transition into school and recovering from drinking requires recovery time
 mornings, Mondays, following holidays
- Children are often over-achievers or, conversely, could lack confidence

EMPOWERMENT

Lack of parental presence & alcohol being the focus of everything means that generally:

AGENCY	 Child is not listened to or consulted Child has no control over parental drinking or the
	chaos that results
	- Child may not have the freedom to make positive
	connections in the community
AUTONOMY	- Child having the freedom to make adult decisions &
	take responsibility for the home can impact on their
	response to authority & could lead to school exclusion
INTER-	- Adult not responding or providing co-regulation
DEPENDENCE	results in children with poor communication skills
SELF-EFFICACY	- Child not sure they can cope as life is unpredictable
SENSE OF SELF	- Adult unable to hold child in mind

PURPOSE

• Child's sense of purpose can change dependent on whether parents are drinking or in treatment - as drinking is a relapsable condition

When parent is drinking:

 Child is responsible for cooking washing & looking after siblings & parent

This becomes child's purpose

- When parent stops drinking: - Parent may resume parenting
- Child no longer required to take responsibility for home, siblings & parent
 - What is their purpose now?
- When parent relapses child resumes responsibility for running the home & caring for siblings & the parent
- Child is in constant transition between these states



Haringey Resilience Wheel

SAFETY

- Anticipation of what parent they are coming home to creates high levels of anxiety & makes home feel unsafe – will parent be...
 - happy / fun /angry / sad / depressed / generous / mean
- Unvetted strangers invited into the home with parent unable to protect
- All adults drinking & out of control
- Child hearing noises of adults at night creates anxiety/disrupts sleep
- Child is unable to seek help in crisis
- Child becomes responsible for creating safety - paying bills / maintaining routines / survival tasks
- The need to survive exposes them to risky choices that could lead to criminality – forging signature / stealing money to survive / responding to requests for help from younger siblings

ADVENTURE

- Having freedom to do what they want due to a lack of adult supervision can lead to inappropriate risk taking
- Taking on adult role to problem solve for themselves & their siblings can lead to criminal activity like stealing or forging
- May be drawn to the excitement of gangs and criminality to fulfil their need for high risk
- Living with unpredictability can lead to low levels of confidence leading to risk averse behaviour
- It's hard to be creative when living with uncertainty and low self esteem





What May Help...

Try...

BELONGING

- Having an adult who consistently responds with interest & care
- Identifying reliable & consistent safe adults in the child's family & friend network who can hold them in mind & provide positive relational connections
- Opportunities to have a recognised role in class or within the wider school community to feel valued & connected
- Adults who can help children identify structured clubs/activities in the community & support regular attendance
- Provide opportunities for school to model healthy family routines like eating together, including socialising & collaborative set-up/pack-up
- Support child to regularly host teas or lunches for a group of friends

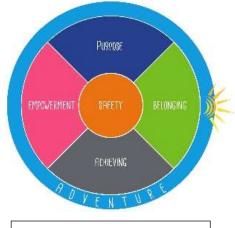
ACHIEVING

- Being encouraged to focus on their own achievement for themselves
- Opportunities to build models/jigsaws, break them down and re-build them can help children learn that they can bring things together and break them up again and survive
- Creating safety and stability is central to helping children concentrate they need a safe adult and safe space
- Creating discrete transitions between home and school, outside and inside spaces, one activity to another, including notice of upcoming change can help
- Opportunities to celebrate success with others and share knowledge

EMPOWERMENT	
AGENCY	 Knowing that they are not responsible for their parents drinking – that it's somebody else's job to help with that
AUTONOMY	 Knowing that their freedom to live their lives is not dependent on their parents stopping drinking Understanding age appropriate decisions & actions & what they can influence & what they can't
INTER-	- Knowing that healthy relationship are mutually
DEPENDENCE	beneficial & that they can be a child with safe adults
SELF-EFFICACY	 Knowing that they have developed skills to cope with life through their lived experience
SENSE OF SELF	 Knowing that their happiness is not dependent on their parent stopping drinking

PURPOSE

- Help child/young person develop a sense of purpose for themselves
- What they would like to do as an adult?
- What are the small steps they need to make to achieve their goals?
- What do they need to focus on to achieve their goals?
- What's important to them?
- What to study at school to achieve goals?
- What strengths would they like to extend, develop at school and in the community?
- How can they contribute to & be valued by their school & community?



Resilience & Wellbeing

SAFETY

Having adults who are safe because they:

- Consistently respond to children with love, interest and care
- 'Hold them in mind' and think about them even when they are not with them, and let them know
- Are consistent, predictable and fair and who always do what they say they are going to do
- Listen to them, give them time to think, and accept them for who they are
- Help them to manage when it gets tough
- Encourage and support them to try something new

Experiencing environments which:

- Create supportive environments with no bullying, sarcasm or shaming
 - Do not exclude

•

ADVENTURE

- Provide opportunities for appropriate adventure
- Provide opportunities for children to step outside their comfort zone
- Provide opportunities to be creative
 - Provide opportunities to learn something new – (recipe dish, riding a bike, taking themselves to a new place, learning an instrument).
- Work together on making their good ideas a reality
- Provide opportunities for children and their peers to engage in supervised activities independently.
- Provide an opportunity to both do an outdoor activity together - nature trail, forest park, tree-climbing, treasure hunt.



