

Alcohol's impact on children and families. A population survey

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Resumen

Introduction: Alcohol is widely used among young families, and leisure time is frequently family time. Heavy alcohol consumption can adversely affect children. The objective of this work is to measure the harm to others in Chile.

Subjects and method: This descriptive and probabilistic study forms part of a collaborative research funded by Thai Health and WHO. The survey was adapted by co-researchers and applied to a nationally representative sample of 1500 Chileans over 18 years of age.

Results: A total of 408 respondents (27.2%) lived with children at home. Of this total, 10.5% felt that the use of alcohol by any member of the family had adversely affected a child. The most common adverse effects were verbal violence (29.7%), domestic violence (23.1%), unsupervised homes (18.7%), lack of money to provide basic needs of the child (14.3%), and physical violence (7.7%). Furthermore, in 6.6% of the cases child or family services agencies became involved. In almost half of the cases (46.3%), the drinker was the father, mother or step-parents. This was followed by other relatives (24.4%) and brothers (4.9%), or guardian of the child (2.4%).

Conclusion: These data support the clinical observation that alcohol is common in Chilean homes. Its consumption not only damages the physical and mental health of the drinker but also those around him. Verbal violence and witnessing serious physical violence are frequent issues, as well as economic problems that end up with the inability to provide the child with its basic needs. (C) 2016 Published by Elsevier Espana, S. L. U. on behalf of Sociedad Chilena de Pediatría.

Palabras clave

Palabras clave de autor: Alcohol, Alcoholism, Drinkers; Family; Children; Collateral damage

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