

Steps Towards Alcohol Misuse Prevention Programme (STAMPP): a school- and community-based cluster randomised controlled trial

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Plain English summary

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Plain English summary

Heavy alcohol use in young people can adversely impact on health, school performance, crime, welfare and well-being. We developed an intervention called the Steps Towards Alcohol Misuse Prevention Programme (STAMPP) that combined a school-based alcohol education curriculum with an intervention delivered at a special parents/carers evening. The programme aimed to encourage positive behavioural change in pupils, to reduce alcohol-related harms such as binge drinking or getting into fights after consuming alcohol and to help parents/carers set rules about alcohol in the family home.

Our research investigated whether or not STAMPP worked as intended and represented good value for money, whether or not pupils and teachers enjoyed and valued it and whether or not it was delivered as it was meant to be. We followed up participating pupils for over 2 years after they received STAMPP.

We showed that fewer pupils who took part in STAMPP reported binge drinking in the previous 30 days (17% of pupils) than pupils in other schools who just received their normal education (26% of pupils). However, the number of alcohol-related harms after drinking (including consequences such as getting into fights, damaging property or having a hangover) reported by pupils who had drunk alcohol in the previous 30 days was not different between the STAMPP pupils and the comparison group. Furthermore, although drinking was reduced, we did not find any reduction in pupils' use of public services.

The programme was relatively cheap to deliver (£818 per school), and pupils enjoyed taking part in the lessons and reported that they found the curriculum interesting and relevant to their lives. Teachers also believed that pupils were engaged by the programme and felt confident in their ability to deliver it. Although the curriculum was delivered well in schools, it was very difficult to attract parents and carers to attend the special parents' evening.

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