



Eurocare

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Alcohol and the Family in Europe

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Eurocare Family Report

ALCOHOL PROBLEMS IN THE FAMILY

A report to the European Union





Alcohol Problems in the Family

Alcohol problems in families are important because:

- **Families are important**
- **The numbers affected**
- **The nature of the problems**
- **Transmission from one generation to the next**
- **Families can be allies and enablers**



"The Forgotten Children"

- **UK 1998 - "The needs of children and families will be taken into account in the national strategy on alcohol misuse now being prepared."
(Minister of Public Health)**
- **2004 - "Between 780,000 and 1.3 million children are affected by parental alcohol problem. Marriages where there are alcohol problems are twice as likely to end in divorce" (Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for England)**

The Ostrich response



Alcohol Problems in the Family

Obstacles to an Effective Response:

- Ignorance
- Stigma
- Family alcohol problems generally low priority
- Pessimism regarding outcome
- Uncertainty regarding who is responsible for providing help
- Lack of training and support
- Difficulties of crossing boundaries:
 - Alcohol/family, professional/voluntary
 - Confidentiality
- Lack of a coherent national alcohol policy



Eurocare Recommendations

- **Promote consistency/complementarity in policy making**
- **Increase public awareness**
- **Increase knowledge of contribution of alcohol to range of family/child problems**
- **Improve availability of services**
- **Improve skills of practitioners**
- **Disseminate expert knowledge**
- **Implement comprehensive alcohol harm reduction strategy**