Sub21

**Topic:** Alcohol  
**Organisation:** North Tyneside PCT; Lamerton Swales  
**Location:** North Tyneside (North East)  
**Dates:** March 2007 to March 2010  
**Budget:** £64,000  
**Website:** [www.sub21.co.uk](http://www.sub21.co.uk)  
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**Overview**

This award-winning social marketing project aimed to reduce underage street drinking and antisocial behaviour in North Tyneside.

Research with young people and off-licences identified three main drivers for underage street drinking: lack of suitable alternative activities; cheap, easy supply of alcohol; and social norm of young people drinking on the streets. Proxy sales of alcohol were also a particular problem.

From these findings, a two-pronged approach was developed, under the brand Sub21. The intervention provided a rolling programme of out-of-hours activities designed by and for local young people as an alternative to street drinking. Alongside this, a campaign was developed to support off-licences in reducing illegal and proxy alcohol purchases.

**Results:**

- Reduction in the most harmful types of drinking among females, including binge drinking, drinking to the point of being sick, and drinking on the street or other outdoor locations
- Among male respondents, there does not seem to have been much change in behaviour, but findings suggest they experienced greater difficulty accessing alcohol in the area, post intervention
- Most young people surveyed had heard of Sub21 and a third reported attending Sub21 activities

[www.thensmc.com](http://www.thensmc.com)
### 1. BEHAVIOUR
- **Young people** – Reduce the occasions of drinking alcohol on the streets, the amount drunk, and the number of attempts to purchase alcohol illegally.
- **Retailers** – Implement a ban on alcohol sales to under-21s at peak times (Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights).

### 2. CUSTOMER ORIENTATION
- Desk-based secondary research
- Interviews with youths, parents, retailers, residents and trading standards lead
- Participant observation sessions
- Audit of out-of-hours youth provision
- Consultation and focus groups with retailers
- Workshops and focus groups with young people

### 3. THEORY
- Drinking on the streets symbolises free time and start of weekend
- **Diffusion of Innovation Theory**: Using early adopters to lead the way

### 4. INSIGHT
- Lack of out-of-hours leisure provision
- Normalisation of drinking and importance of friends
- Low cost and easy availability of alcohol
- Youth activities should have a developmental element
- Desire from retailers for more supportive, rather than punitive measures

### 5. EXCHANGE
- **For young people** – Dedicated place to hang out with friends, take part in free, fun and exciting activities
- **For retailers** – Less proxy purchases, vandalism, theft and intimidation outside shops, leading to more customers and long-term profits; Support from police, trading standards and licensing

### 6. COMPETITION
- **Young people** – Sophisticated alcohol marketing; Cheap alcohol deals
- **Retailers** – Lack of time and enthusiasm; Lack of commitment and persistence from local authority

### 7. SEGMENTATION
- **Primary audience:**
  - Young people aged 13 to 17
  - Living in areas of Wallsend, Battlehill and Howdon
  - Likely to drink on the streets
- **Secondary audience:**
  - Local retailers in the three pilot areas

### 8. METHODS MIX
- Rolling programme of out-of-school activities offered on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights
- Package of support to help retailers tackle illegal and proxy alcohol sales
- Promotion – Face-to-face, school assemblies, off-licence visits, viral marketing, SMS, website, Facebook page, posters, flyers, PR, press and TV coverage