

# Protecting Children and Young People from Harm

Wayne Gault

Lead Officer

Aberdeenshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership

# Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005



- Purpose of the Act:
  - To regulate licensed premises
  - To regulate the sale of alcohol
- When thinking about the protection of youngsters we need to consider:
  - What goes on in a licensed premises
  - How youngsters might otherwise be affected by alcohol more generally

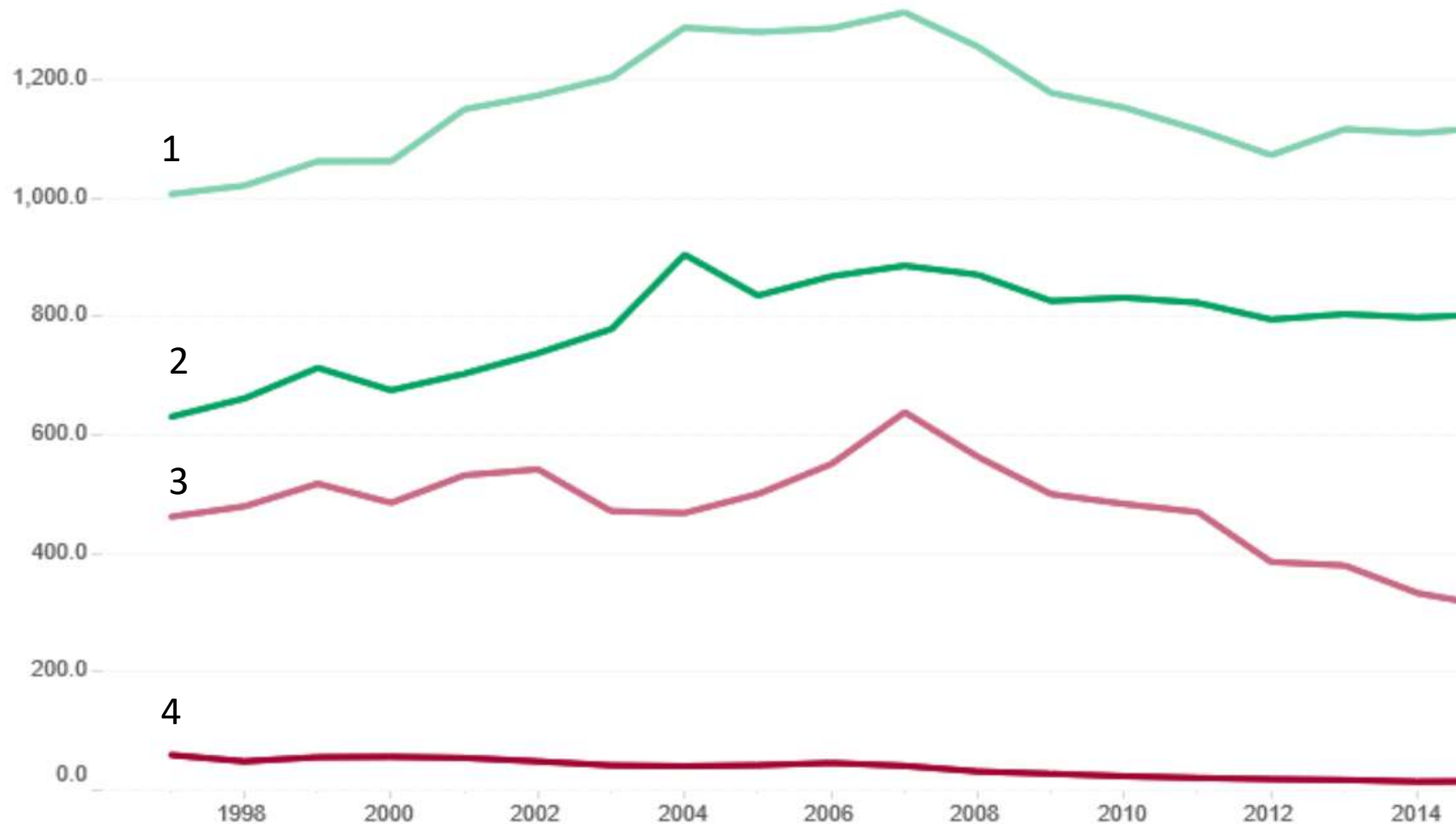
# Why Shouldn't Youngsters Drink?



- Susceptibility to alcohol poisoning:
  - More susceptible than adults to the acute effects of alcohol
  - Less susceptible to the motor effects of alcohol than adults
  - The signs we use to conclude we've had enough don't occur in youngsters until higher levels of blood alcohol are reached

# Alcohol Related Hospital Stays

Trends for Stays (General acute) by Age-group (10-yr) and financial year  
*European Age-Sex Standardised Rates (EASR) per 100,000 population*



# Alcohol Related Hospital Stays



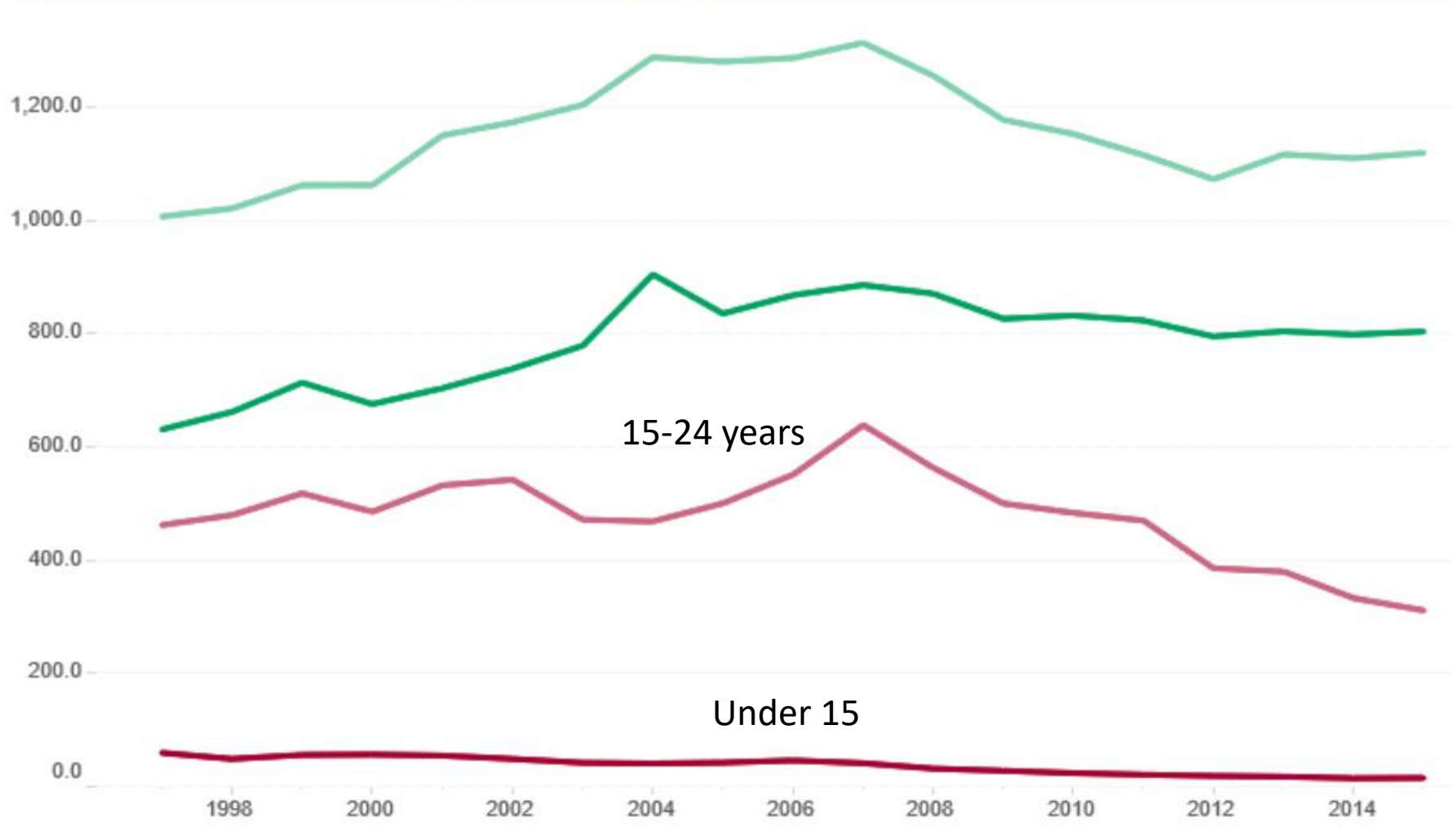
Trends for Stays (General acute) by Age-group (10-yr) and financial year  
*European Age-Sex Standardised Rates (EASR) per 100,000 population*



# Alcohol Related Hospital Stays



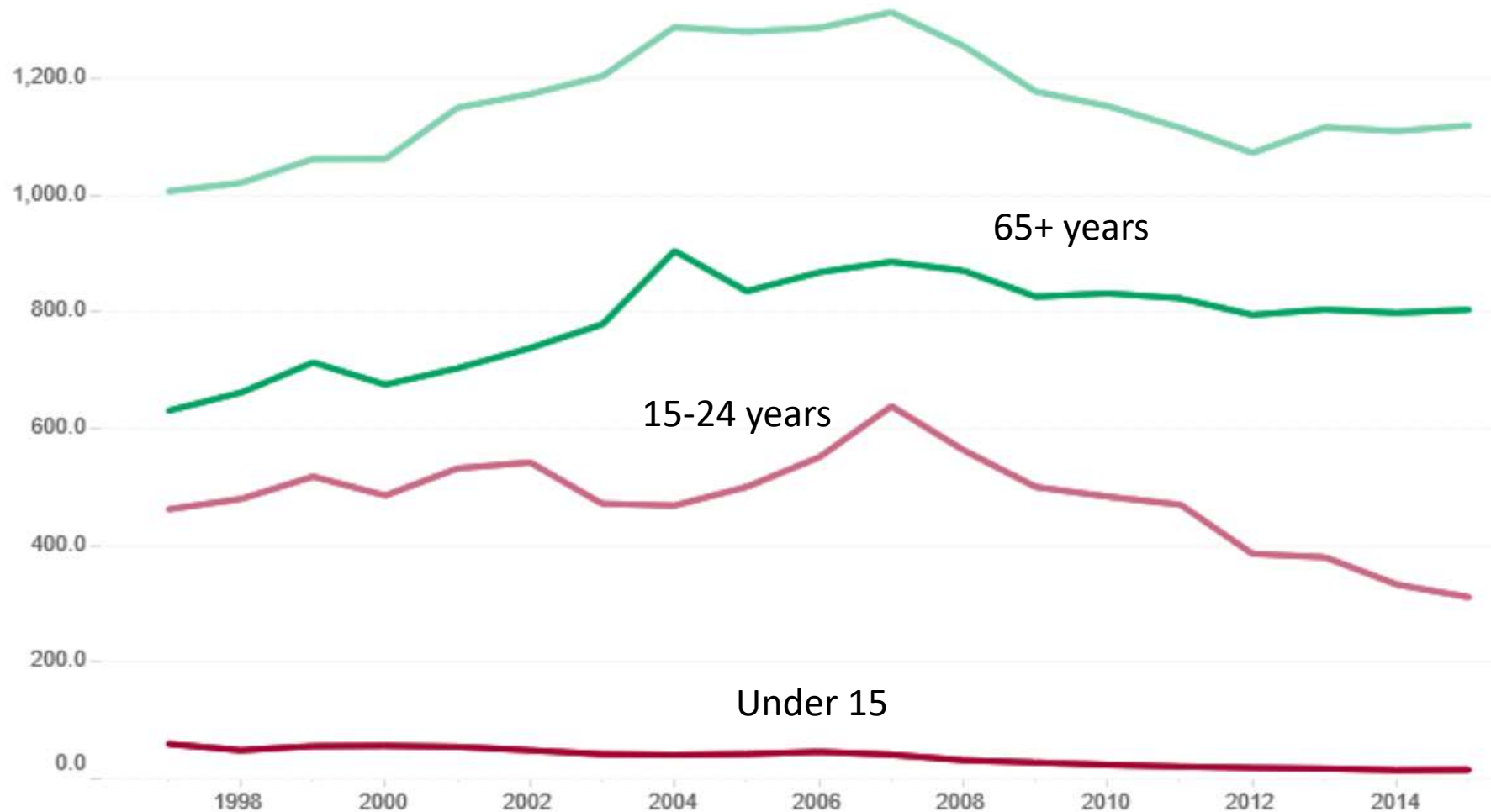
Trends for Stays (General acute) by Age-group (10-yr) and financial year  
*European Age-Sex Standardised Rates (EASR) per 100,000 population*



# Alcohol Related Hospital Stays



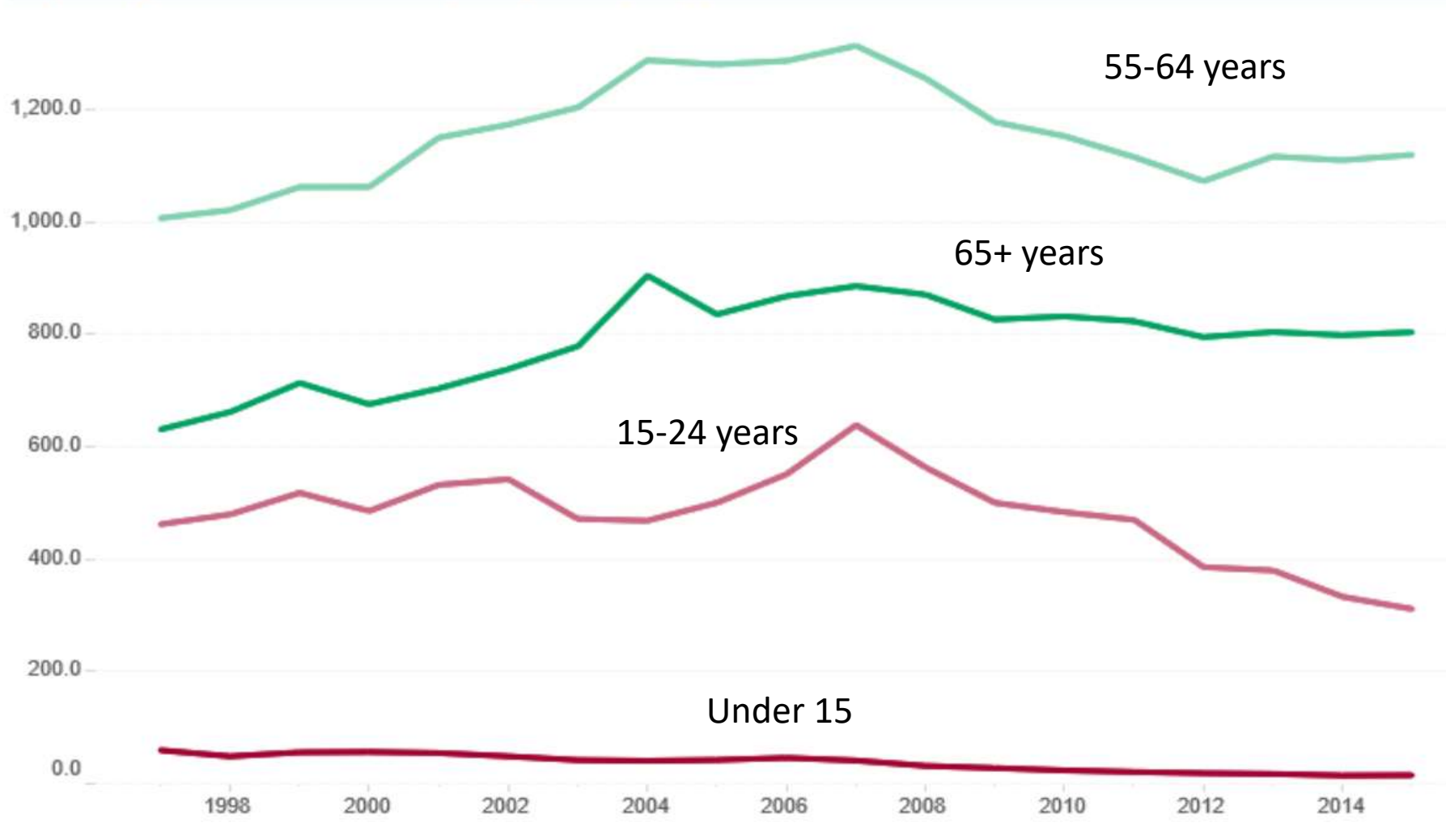
Trends for Stays (General acute) by Age-group (10-yr) and financial year  
*European Age-Sex Standardised Rates (EASR) per 100,000 population*



# Alcohol Related Hospital Stays



Trends for Stays (General acute) by Age-group (10-yr) and financial year  
*European Age-Sex Standardised Rates (EASR) per 100,000 population*



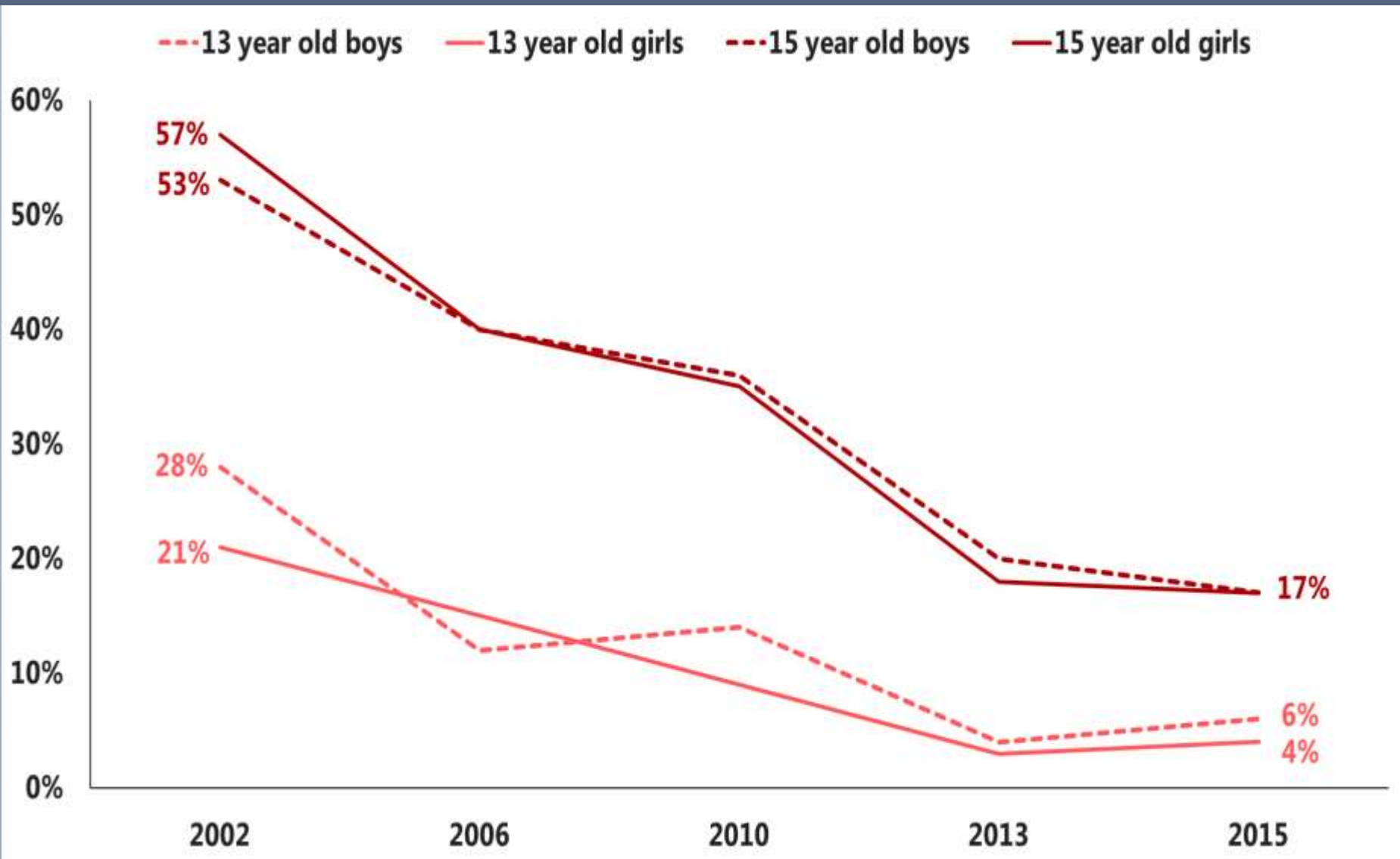


# Why Shouldn't Youngsters Drink?

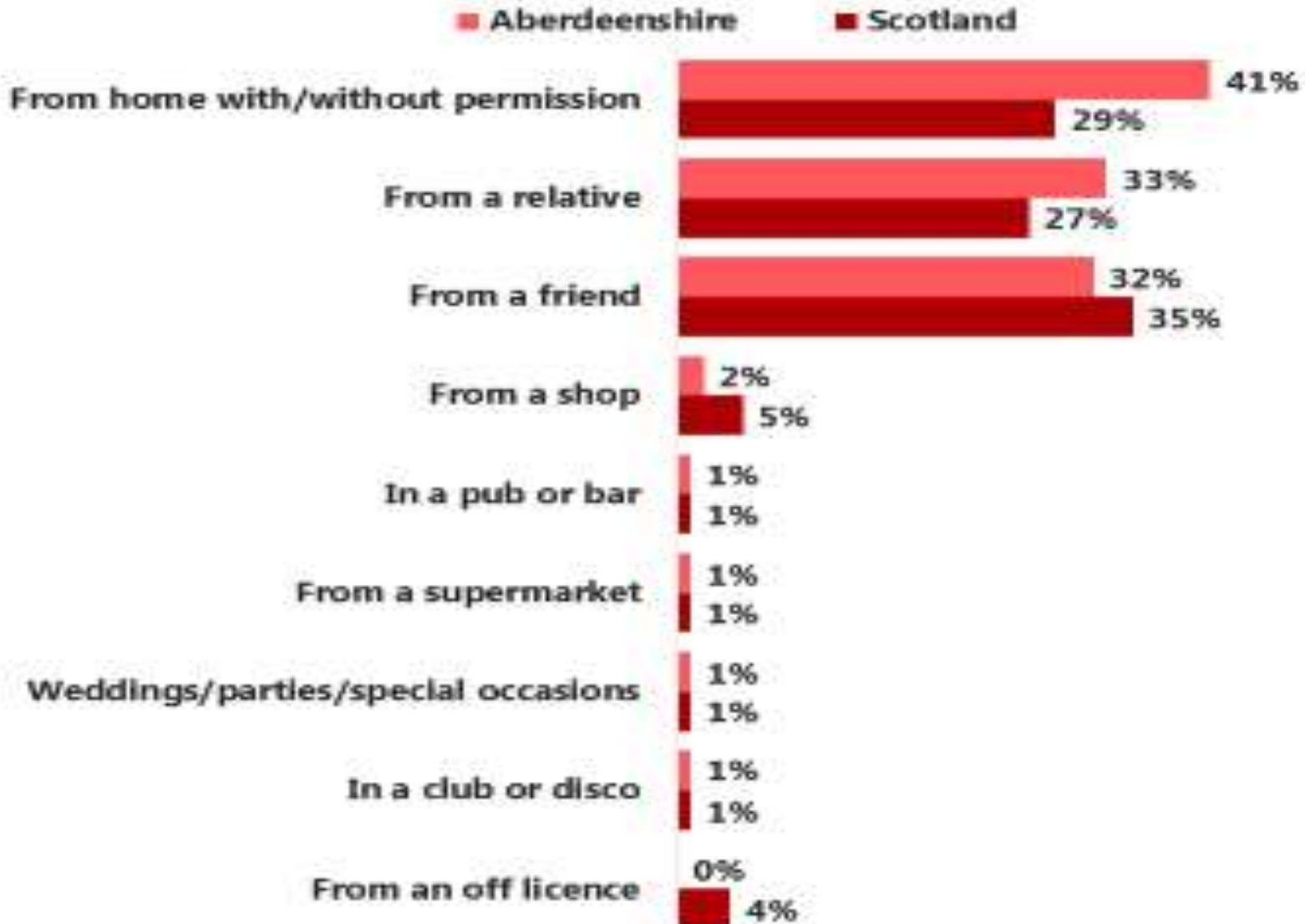


- Brain developmental impairment
  - Brain still developing until mid-20s
  - Permanent effects on attention, memory, self-control, learning and problem solving
- Development of alcohol dependency
  - Earlier/ heavier a youngster drinks, more chance of alcohol disorder later in life
- Other
  - Long-term cancer risk for mouth, larynx , throat, oesophagus, breast, liver and bowel
  - Risky sexual activities, accidents, violence, crime, regrettable texting

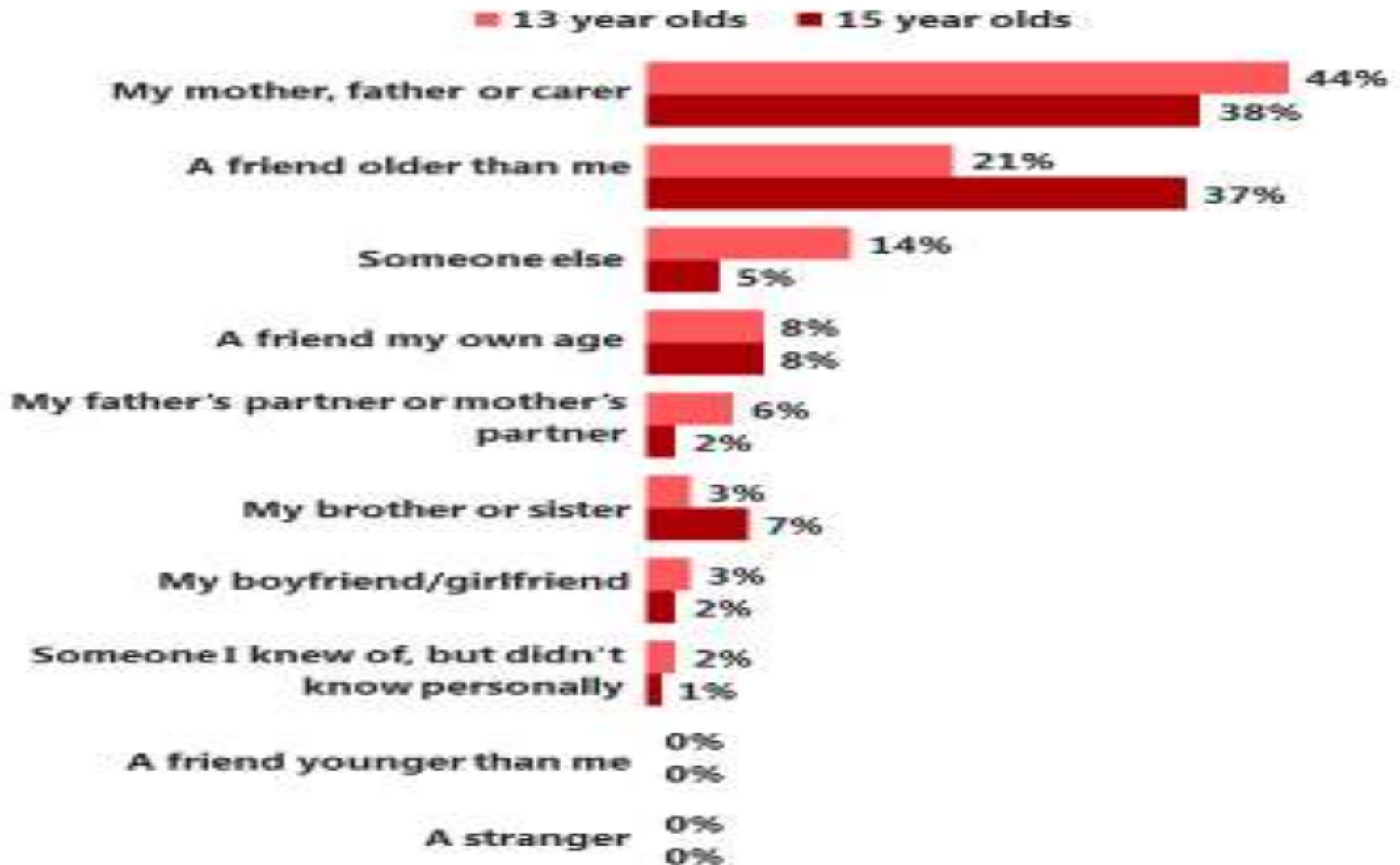
# Shire Youth Drinking (in the last week)



# Shire Sources of Alcohol

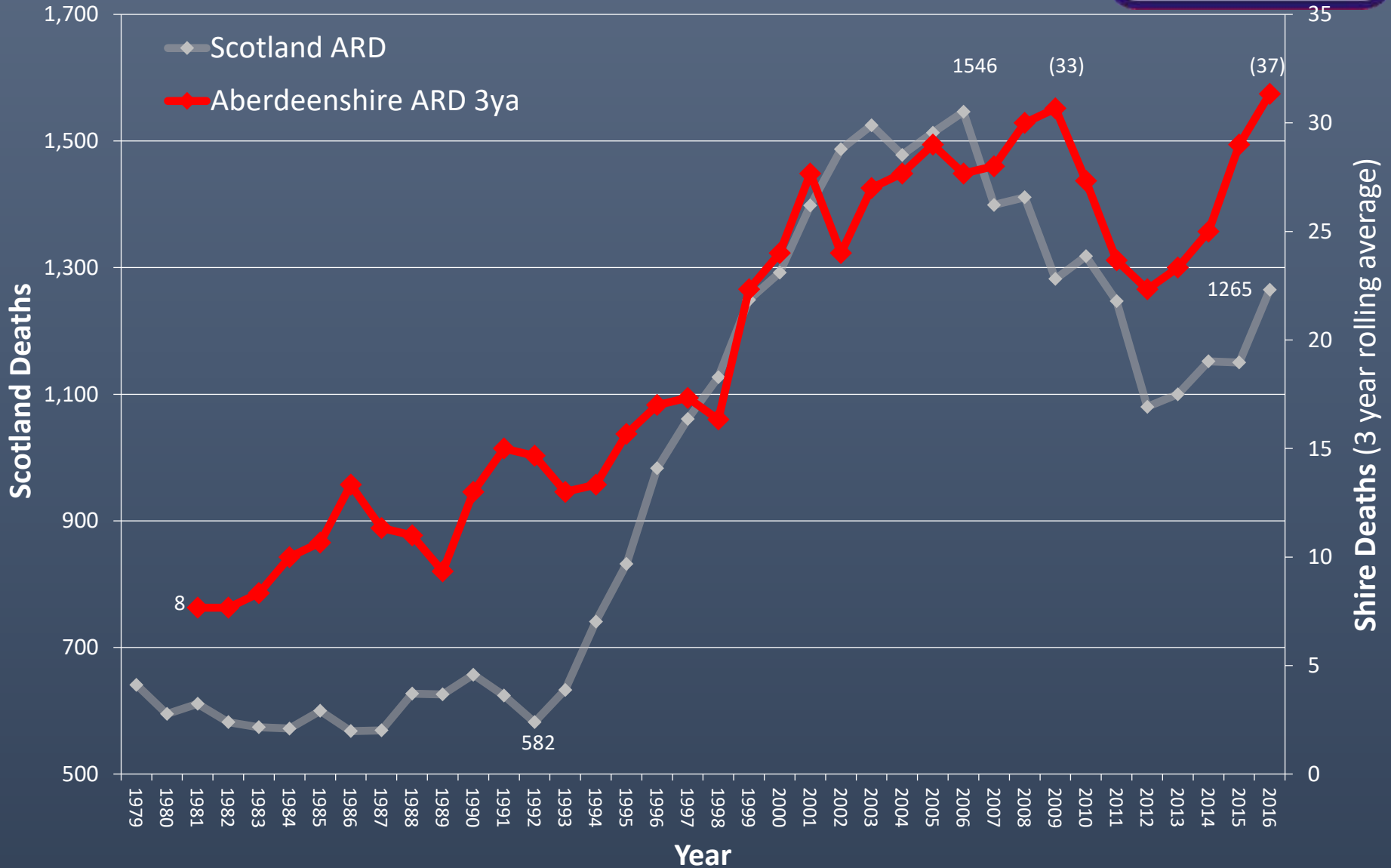


# % Shire Proxy Purchases



# Alcohol Related Deaths

(National Records of Scotland)



# Other Alcohol Related Harms



- Marketing of alcohol
- Poor parental role modelling
- Children Affected by Parental Substance Misuse
- Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)
- Case study

# Marketing of Alcohol



- Alcohol present in all aspects of youngsters lives
- Alcohol advertising associated with earlier and more drinking in youngsters
- The policies the Shire public want to reduce alcohol harm relate to marketing & exposure controls
  - Aberdeenshire Citizens Survey 48

# Parental Role Modelling



- Parental drinking can have subtle effects on youngsters
  - Family life revolving around alcohol
  - Disturbed routines (bed time; weekends; holidays; emergency response)
- ‘Like Sugar for Adults’
  - Kids don’t differentiate between seeing a parent tipsy or drunk
  - Negative impacts are not confined to higher levels of consumption
- Impacts include:
  - Emotional (embarrassment, anxiety, anger, fear)
  - Adds to child’s problems and the pressures of growing up



# Children Affected by Parental Substance Misuse



- For some the effects are less subtle and seriously affects their ability to parent
- Immediate impacts include:
  - Abuse or neglect harming physical, social and emotional development and wellbeing
  - Reversal of roles: providing care, support and protection
  - Fear and confusion can leave youngsters feeling mentally and physically broken
  - Poverty can lead to hunger & homelessness

# Children Affected by Parental Substance Misuse



- Prevalence

- 36-51,000 Scots youngsters live with alcohol dependent parents/carers
- Takes longer to come to attention than drug cases
- Alcohol the most frequently mentioned problem when children call ChildLine about a 'significant other'
- A direct factor in 25% of Shire child protection registrations

# Children Affected by Parental Substance Misuse



- Adverse Childhood Experiences
  - ACEs are stressful or traumatic events
  - ACEs change DNA and contribute to a wide range of health problems throughout a person's lifespan affecting
    - Brain, heart disease, lung disease, depression, cancer
    - & another 40 conditions
  - ACEs are strongest predictor of adult disease and early death
    - (as much as 20 years)

# Children Affected by Parental Substance Misuse



- Compared to other youngsters, children of parents who are alcohol dependent are:
  - Twice as likely to experience difficulties at school
  - Three times more likely to consider suicide
  - Four times more likely to become dependent drinkers themselves
  - Five times more likely to develop eating disorders

# Children Affected by Parental Substance Misuse

- Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)
  - Scottish system to safeguard, support and promote wellbeing of youngsters
  - Requires services to shift focus to early intervention and prevention
  - Requires all of us to look out for children in difficulty
- Concerns?
  - Speak to school, health visitor, police or social work



# Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder



- Alcohol can cause FASD if consumed during pregnancy
- A range of life-long physical, mental, learning and behaviour abnormalities
- Affected children can have very poor outcomes
- Damage is permanent and 100% preventable
- Many pregnancies are unplanned and women may not know they are pregnant

# Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder



- Prevalence:
  - UK 4th highest in world for drinking in pregnancy (40%)
  - FASD more prevalent than all other congenital conditions combined
  - In NE, estimate 50-200 cases per year
- Concern about FASD is widespread
- Key advice: If you could get pregnant, avoid drink. If you are drinking, avoid getting pregnant
- Normalisation of alcohol creates a dilemma for women

# Shire Case Study

aberdeenshire  
alcohol & drug  
partnership





# What do we Need to do?

- Continue good work in Aberdeenshire
- Support the 'whole population' approach
- Avoid marketing to children
- Properly inform alcohol consumers
- De-normalise alcohol over-consumption
- Avoid sales to problematic drinkers
- Promote Alcohol Services
- Don't think what goes on outside a licensed premises is nothing to do with you!

# Continue Good Work in Shire



- School educational efforts are having an impact
  - Lowest rates of underage drinking in 15 years
- Continue to implement 'Challenge 25'
  - Especially at functions like 18<sup>th</sup> birthdays
  - Be aware of fake IDs
- 'Undetectable' off-sales to 13 & 15 year olds and 1% on-sales is excellent!

# Support Whole Pop<sup>n</sup> Approach



- There is a direct relationship between availability, excess consumption and harm
- The problem of alcohol in the home means we have to reduce overall population level consumption
- Licensing policy about to be reviewed:
  - Increasing alcohol related deaths
  - 10x risk of youngsters being admitted to hospital for alcohol compared to drugs
- We have sufficient off-sales alcohol outlets
- Effective overprovision policy is fundamental to improving outcomes for youngsters

# Avoid Marketing to Youngsters



- Help reduce the exposure of youngsters to alcohol advertising
- Shire public want:
  - Don't stock products that appeal to youngsters (91%)
  - Cinema alcohol adverts only at '18' certificate movies (90%)
  - No licenses in or near places normally associated with youngsters (88%)
  - A clear separation of alcohol in off-sales premises (85%)

Source: Aberdeenshire Citizens Survey 48

- Please don't apply for occasional licenses for:
  - School sports day beer tents
  - On-sales in a soft play area or supermarket

# Properly Inform Customers



- Little information available to consumers at point of sale or on labels
- Up-to-date accurate information is needed to enable an informed choice
- You can help get the message out
  - ADP can supply free materials
  - Board local conditions require licensees to display health information

# De-normalise Alcohol Over-consumption



- Preference for on-sales vs. home drinking
  - Don't allow intoxicated people on the premises
- Family friendly on-sales operating plan
  - Diversification: food & alcohol
  - Address anti-social behaviours
- Minimum unit pricing

# Don't Serve Problematic Drinkers



- Dependent drinkers can be parents too
- Do not serve people who are intoxicated
  - Police and LSOs will be clamping down on illegal sales to intoxicated customers as part of Aberdeenshire's Community Planning priorities

# Promote Alcohol Services



- To protect youngsters society needs to reduce the number living with a problematic drinker
- Recovery services help people recover
- Youngsters describe the weight off their shoulders when parents go into treatment
- Only 10% of the estimated 10,200 dependent drinkers in Shire are in treatment
- Licensees could:
  - Help guide people to services
  - Display promotional materials (eg scratch cards)



# What goes on Outwith your Premises is your Business!



- The public expect licensed premises to play their part
- GIRFEC: Act if you have concerns about a youngster
- Do what you can to help people talk about :
  - Harm caused by Scotland's unhealthy relationship with alcohol
  - Impact on youngsters
  - Moderating excess consumption
  - Seeking help

# "WET" OR "DRY"

"VOTE WET  
FOR MY  
SAKE!"



"VOTE DRY  
FOR  
MINE!"



**Shall the Mothers and Children  
be Sacrificed to the Financial  
Greed of the Liquor Traffic?**

**IT IS UP TO YOU, VOTER, TO DECIDE**

**VOTE DRY**

## Conclusions

aberdeenshire  
alcohol & drug  
partnership

- This has long been a contentious issue but every child has the right to grow up safe

*"Those with the privilege to know have the duty to act"*

- Einstein

# The Act Prohibits:

- Sales to children (<16 y)
- Sales to young people (16<18)
  - OK to drink beer, wine, cider or perry if accompanied by a meal
- Proxy sales to youngsters
- Proxy supply to youngsters
  - For consumption in a public place; or
  - In a private place not lawfully accessed
- Receipt of home alcohol deliveries by youngsters
- Breach of a licence condition
- Youngsters accessing a licensed premises unless allowed in an approved operating plan:
  - Specifying age, times and area of premises they are allowed into