



Brent & Harrow Trading Standards Service
WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP



Age Restricted Products Responsible Trader Scheme

TRAINING PLAN – For all staff (don't forget yourself)

This plan gives you a framework on which to base training. It is not a comprehensive list of all matters as that will depend on the business, number of employees and types of products sold.

Product identification: Use the list of products in the Code of Practice as a guide. You may know more or have specific products that are not mentioned.

Products you sell are the most important to identify but an awareness of others is important. Solvent abuse is much wider than just “glue sniffing”. Nearly all products with a chemical propellant or solvent have the potential to be sniffed. Many domestic products, e.g. aerosol polish and cleaners, petrol and other fuels and the more extreme e.g. fire extinguishers can be “sniffed”. You need to cover the signs of abuse in relation to sales, not just the products.

Business Practice: Staff need to be made aware of the importance you place on avoiding illegal sales. What reminder notices have you put up for them and for the public. Could they be in better places? What damage could it do to the business if they did make an illegal sale?

Assessing age: It is difficult. Undertake a supervised session where they guess the age of all customers. Do you agree with their assessment, are they getting the broad age groups right? If not impolite, explain to some customers what you are doing and confirm their age. If the member of staff is poor at assessing the age should they be selling age-restricted products? Assess when they would ask for proof of age. What are the local school's rules on the wearing of school uniform, if there is a year/age limit then refusal to anyone in school uniform may be justified. Is the buyer nervous?

Proof of Age: There are many ways of proving your age. Acceptable forms would be photo drivers license, passport or a PASS approved proof of age card such as Citizen Card.

Refusing a sale: Unless very obviously under age the first “refusal” takes the form of politely asking for proof of age. Examine the proof, ask for more if needed. If there is any doubt politely refuse to sell. Get staff to practice explaining that it is the businesses policy not to serve them without proof. Be prepared to explain why any proof is insufficient. Be aware of the likely times that purchases are being attempted and have a senior person available. Be particularly alert to any young person buying only solvent based products, particularly several of the same items. They may appear slightly drunk and have spots and sores around the mouth.

Excuses and Pressure: Staff will be put under pressure to sell so make sure they know what support is available from you. Congratulate when they refuse a sale. Train them to not accept any excuses. “They are for my mother, you know her”, “Here is a note”, “ Oh come on, the owner did yesterday” etc. etc. Train them to be firm but not to argue, it is always their choice whether or not to sell a product. It may be helpful to remember the term “no ID. no sale”.

Other training and Records: Think of other issues and train your staff. Get them to complete the record form and assess whether they have really understood. If not – do it again.