

Challenge 25 is a project which aims to reduce the sale of age restricted products to underage people.

Retailers are being encouraged to refuse to sell age restricted products to anyone who appears to be under the age of 25 years old and does not have an acceptable form of photo identification.

Kent Trading Standards are working with retailers of age restricted products to help them to be more aware of the range of products, their responsibilities and the consequences of selling these products to underage customers.

The message to young people is

NO PROOF OF AGE - NO SALE

This initiative is supported by our partners in the police, primary care trust, schools and businesses and is aimed at safe-guarding the health and well-being of young people as well as reducing instances of anti-social behaviour in our communities.

Do you know?.....

- What products have an age restriction?
- How old must you be before you can purchase them?
- The maximum penalty for retailers supplying products to persons under certain ages?



Products that have an age restriction	How old you must be before you can purchase them	Maximum Penalty for retailers supplying products to persons under certain ages
Alcohol	18	£5,000 & possible review of licence. £80 fixed penalty notice for the seller. Persistently found selling to children £10,000 maximum
Cigarettes & other tobacco products	18	£2,500
Offensive weapons including knives, axes & razor blades	18	£5,000 & up to 6 months imprisonment
Aerosol spray paint	16	£2,500
Fireworks & sparklers	18	£5,000 & up to 6 months imprisonment
Caps, cracker snaps, novelty matches, party poppers, serpents and throwdowns	16	£5,000 & up to 6 months imprisonment
DVDs, videos & computer games		£5,000 & up to 6 months imprisonment
Classification 12	12	
Classification 15	15	
Classification 18	18	
Solvents/volatile substances	18	£5,000 & up to 6 months imprisonment
Crossbows	18	£5,000 & up to 6 months imprisonment
Airguns and pellets	18	£5,000 & up to 6 months imprisonment
Butane gas lighter refills	18	£5,000 & up to 6 months imprisonment
Lottery tickets & scratch cards	16	£5,000 & up to 2 years imprisonment
Petrol	16	Summary conviction - max £5,000. Indictment - unlimited fine or/and 2 years imprisonment
Tattooing	18	£1,000
Adult magazines	18	
Liqueur chocolates	16	£500

Consider the following questions

- Who is breaking the law when buying and selling age restricted products?
- Who can be fined for buying or selling alcohol?
- What are the effects of drinking alcohol?
- Why are cigarettes and tobacco products age-restricted?
- Who can be fined for buying or selling cigarettes?
- What impact does knife crime have on the community?
- What is wrong with graffiti?
- When can fireworks be set off?
- What else is there to consider about fireworks?
- What are some of the causes of anti-social behaviour?
- Is it ok to use fake ID?
- How do the authorities know if a shop is selling cigarettes, alcohol, or other age restricted products to young people?
- What is test purchasing?

Who is breaking the law when buying and selling age restricted products?

Both the seller and their underage customer are breaking the law

- The supply of age-restricted products to someone who is below the legal age is a criminal offence that can lead to prosecution.
- A retailer may even lose his licence to sell alcohol.
- The owner of a business can be held responsible even if their employee allows an underage sale to take place.
- A person who is under the legal age to buy alcohol is also committing a criminal offence.
- Trading Standards have legal responsibility for controlling underage sales.
- Although it can be difficult to identify a person's age sometimes, if anyone is in any doubt then they should not sell that item to them.



Who can be fined for buying or selling alcohol?

Both the seller and their underage customer can be fined

- The Licensing Act 2003 sets the age limit in the UK for buying alcohol. The Act sets the age at 18 years.
- If you are caught buying alcohol under the age of 18, you could be fined up to £1,000 and get a criminal record.
- The person who sells the alcohol to you can also get a criminal record and be fined up to £5,000.
- If somebody over 18 buys alcohol for another person who is under the age of 18, they could get fined up to £5,000 and get a criminal record.
- The police can confiscate alcohol from you if you are drinking in a public place – if you're underage they will also tell your parents.



What are the effects of drinking alcohol?

- **Accidents** – Alcohol makes people careless and that can be really dangerous, 40% of all household fires are linked with people who have been drinking and alcohol is a factor in at least 7% of accidental drowning. Half of all adults admitted to hospital with head injuries are drunk.
- **Hospitalisation** – About 1,000 people under the age of 15 are admitted to hospital each year with acute alcohol intoxication - that is drinking so much that your body begins to shut down.
- **Alcohol and drugs** – Alcohol reacts with some medicines and can be dangerous when used with recreational drugs. The mix of alcohol and drugs can dehydrate you even more, put extra pressure on the liver and kidneys further reduce your ability to make good judgements and even lead to coma.
- **Regretted sex** – Alcohol lowers your inhibitions so you could end up having sex that you regret the next morning. Even if you are careful and use a condom, being drunk can mean you have problems putting it on properly. This puts you at risk from sexually transmitted infections and unwanted pregnancy.
- **Mental health** –Alcohol is linked to many disorders including clinical depression and an estimated 65% of suicides.



Why are cigarettes age-restricted?

- You must be at least 18 years old to buy cigarettes and tobacco products.
- Research has shown that the longer young people are prevented from starting a habit the better their chance of not becoming addicted in later life. That is why it's important that young people's access to tobacco is restricted until they are old enough to understand the effects that smoking can have on their health. Smoking causes many serious illnesses like bronchitis, heart disease and cancer
- Once you start smoking it is hard to kick the habit as the nicotine contained in tobacco is a very addictive drug which causes changes in the brain that make people want to use it more and more.



Who can be fined for buying or selling cigarettes and tobacco products?

- If a shopkeeper or one of the shop assistants sells cigarettes or tobacco products to anyone under 18, they are committing an offence and both could be fined up to £2,500.
- It is illegal for somebody over 18 to buy cigarettes for another person who is under the age of 18.
- Selling cigarettes which have been split from a pack to any adult or child is also an offence which carries a fine of £1,000.

Knife crime - the impact on the community

- Fatal stabbings have a dramatic impact on the victim's family, friends and the local community. Even where violent crime does not result in death or serious injury, victims and family often suffer long term trauma.
- Police are routinely issued with stab-proof vests, however in a worrying sign of the times in some parts of the country even paramedics are issued with stab-proof vests.



Knives - the law

- Every year many people are badly injured or killed by knives. Such items are age-restricted because of the number of crimes involving the use of offensive weapons.
- It is illegal for any shop to sell a knife of any kind (including cutlery and kitchen knives) to anyone under the age of 18.
- If someone sells a knife to a person under 18 they commit an offence and could be fined up to £5000 or sent to prison for up to six months.
- The maximum penalty for carrying a knife is four years in prison and a fine of £5000.
- It is an offence to carry a knife in public without good reason or lawful authority (for example, a good reason is a chef on the way to work carrying their own knives).
- If a knife is used in a threatening way (even a legal knife, such as a Swiss Army knife) it is regarded as an 'offensive weapon' by the law.
- Police have 'Stop and Search' powers and have the right to search any person or vehicle, if they suspect a possible offence - including carrying an offensive weapon.
- School staff in England have the power to search, without consent, any pupil they suspect of carrying a knife or other weapon in school, or on an educational visit.

What is wrong with graffiti?

- The ban on the sale of spray paints to under 16's was made to prevent vandalism and graffiti and to promote safe, secure and attractive communities and tackle anti-social behaviour.
- Some people think graffiti is an art-form but it can be an eyesore - especially when it spoils our public places.
- Graffiti is a criminal offence. Police may confiscate spray paint found in the possessions of someone under 16.
- Spray painting or 'tagging' someone else's property leaves them with a mess to clear up. If the graffiti is offensive, then this could cause additional distress.
- If you have damaged someone's property in this way, and if you're under 18, your parents will be informed.



Who can be fined for selling or using spray paint?

- Anyone caught using spray paint to carry out graffiti, risks being fined.
- This criminal offence carries large fines given out by a magistrate, or up to £80 fixed penalty notice issued by the local authority or police.
- If you are under 16 and buy spray paint, the person who sold it to you is committing an offence and could be fined £2500.

When can fireworks be set off?

- If you're under 18, the answer is never.
- If you're over 18, fireworks must not be let off between 11pm to 7am.
- The only exemptions to this law are on 5 November when you can set them off until midnight and New Year's Eve, Chinese New Year and Diwali when they can be set off until 1am.
- If you set fireworks off in the street, you can be arrested and/or fined.



What else is there to consider about fireworks?

- Remember that fireworks are dangerous explosives and should be handled with care. Always read the instructions carefully and follow them.
- Sparklers can reach temperatures of up to 2,000 degrees C - that's 20 times the boiling point of water!
- Fireworks and the noise caused by them can be anti social – especially if the fireworks are set off outside of the permitted hours.
- Have consideration for your neighbours when setting fireworks off, and make sure that you are not damaging anyone's property.
- It would also be a good idea to tell your neighbours if you are planning on having a firework party so that they can take precautionary action, for instance, keeping their pets indoors.



What are some of the causes of anti-social behaviour?

- The effects of an increase in alcohol consumption across the nation are beginning to show. Alcohol can make you feel aggressive resulting in violent or anti-social behaviour, which has a bad effect on the community.
- Substance misuse and an increasing addiction to gambling amongst young people are both issues that make our local communities worse places to live in and have a lasting and detrimental effect on health.
- Many young people play truant from schools and steal to support their habit.

Is it ok to use fake ID?

- No, this is a criminal offence under the Identity Cards Act 2006.
- Even if the card is purchased from a website which says that the cards are intended as a novelty, if you use them as proof of age, you are committing an offence.



How do the authorities know if a shop is selling cigarettes, alcohol, or other age restricted products to young people?

- Your local Trading Standards department will carry out a series of test purchasing surveys over the course of the year, this involves getting youngsters to try and buy age restricted products such as alcohol, fireworks, cigarettes and spray paint.
- We also rely on the public informing us.

What is Test Purchasing?

- Your local Trading Standards Authority may be looking for people aged between 13 and 16 to take part in Test purchasing exercises.
- For the purposes of their investigations, Trading Standard Authorities need to be able to demonstrate that a business has sold age-restricted products to a young person.
- The most effective way of doing this is for a young person to buy age restricted goods e.g. alcohol, tobacco, DVDs etc whilst under the supervision of a Trading Standards Officer.
- Your identity will remain confidential to Trading Standards throughout the whole procedure. Whilst it is our aim to avoid the young person being called as a witness, it is possible that a court may require them to attend.
- Everyone who has taken part in the past has had great fun; participation in this exercise is a very positive real life experience to quote on future job or university applications.
- If you are interested please contact your local Trading Standards Authority and ask to speak to the Officer who deals with age-restricted sales. Telephone either 01233 898825 or 01732 525291.

