

Alcohol abuse and violence among young people in Europe

9 October, 12:45 – 13:30

Mercedes-Benz Room

PDG Franco Marchesani, MD 108

Summary:

Our focus is on the problem of alcohol-fuelled violence among young people in Europe. We ask Lions and Leos to bring this topic up at their club meetings or to initiate their own actions as part of the Lions Quest programme.

Key message

For many years, scientific studies have shown that there is a strong correlation between alcohol abuse and crime. The misuse of alcohol is now recognised as a serious social problem.

This is the background of a study that was carried out to examine the relationship between alcohol and crime, and the effect on victims, focussing on young people between the ages of 12 and 16 of both sexes in 25 European countries. The study looked primarily at the way and manner in which alcohol is consumed and analyses who this behaviour is determined by how personal circumstances (age, sex, lifestyle, social circle, personality). Alcohol consumption is widespread among teenagers, and particularly among young people who have committed criminal acts or who have been victims of crime. It has been shown that the abuse of alcohol among young people is closely associated with criminal behaviour and with being the victim of crime.

A high-risk lifestyle, low self-control, a tendency to violent outbursts and socialising with groups that are prone to criminal behaviour are strongly correlated with increased alcohol consumption. The above study shows that there is a clear correlation between alcohol consumption by young Europeans and involvement in criminal behaviour. On the other hand, victims of crime also tend to drink more, and binge-drink, which further fuels criminal behaviour.

Given these facts, Lions are highly motivated to implement the Lions Quest programme, especially since first positive results have been reported from Finland.

RECOMMENDATION:

Given the gravity of the problem, we ask the Lions European Council to support us: Recommendation regarding MDs, Ds and clubs outside of districts, and Leo Clubs:

- Encouragement of clubs to talk at their meetings about alcohol-fuelled violence and criminal behaviour among young people.
- Implementation of own programmes of suitable services.
- Cooperation with local schools to provide such services as part of their own programmes and activities.

This appeal to the European Council was approved by the members present at the meeting.