

# Alcohol Use Disorder in Primary Caregivers and the Implications for Children Aged 5 to 11 Years of Age



# ‘I am what I learn’

Erikson's 4<sup>th</sup> stage of man



# Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD) aka Alcoholism



# Alcohol Use Disorder - Presenting Behaviours in Affected Primary Caregivers

- ▶ Intoxification (Jacob & Wang, 2020)
- ▶ Loss of inhibition (Alcohol.org, 2025)
- ▶ Alcohol withdrawal (DSM-5-TR, 2022)
- ▶ Physical, Mental and Emotional abuse (Sawant, 2020)
- ▶ Neglectful behaviour (Silvén Hagström & Forinder, 2022)
- ▶ Dangerous driving under the influence (Köchling et al., 2021)
- ▶ Wernicke Korsakoff Syndrome (WKS) (Palm et al., 2022)



# Implications during childhood

- ▶ Parentification
- ▶ Development of psychopathologies
- ▶ Child Neglect
- ▶ Poverty

(Masiran et al., 2023)

(Russotti et al., 2021)

(Avdibegović & Brkić, 2020)

(Ridley et al., 2020)



# Implications in the world of childhood

- ▶ Bullying
- ▶ Stereotype
- ▶ Stigma
- ▶ Self-stigma
- ▶ Experimentation
- ▶ Discrimination
- ▶ Classism



# Bullying (Armitage, 2021)

Being different to the majority is a cause for bullying the different child.

Being the bully is externalising behaviour and a sign of underlying mental disorder.

Statistically, boys are physically aggressive where girls can be emotional bullies.

Socioeconomic disadvantage gives rise to increased chance of being bullied.



# Stereotype (Burton et al., 2014)

Stereotypical thinking can be offensive when expressed in reductive terms singling out the different child into a label without the full story.



## Stigma [\(childrenssociety.org.uk, 2025\)](https://childrenssociety.org.uk)

Children of caregivers with AUD can experience stigma from peers, teachers, and others in school. This can lead to self-discrimination, anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem.

Children in families affected by AUD can be very reluctant to let people know they are experiencing difficulties. This can be due to the stigma surrounding their caregiver's alcohol misuse.



# Self-stigma (Corrigan &

Nieweglowski, 2021)

Where public stigma becomes internalised leading to negative self-concepts blocking the path to recovery.



## Experimentation (Alcoholics Anonymous, 2001)

Alcohol in the family is a determinant for the initiation of alcohol experimenting in children under 11 years old.

Breaking the rules equals friends.

Understanding the feeling from alcohol that care givers experience.

Temporary loss of anxiety and alcohol is earmarked for further use.



# Discrimination (Burton et al., 2014)

Negative discrimination can be degrading and oppressive.



# Classism (Cavallieri et al., 2023)

Classism has found to be a stressor on mental health.



# ► Lifelong Development of the Child of an Alcoholic

(Sawant, N. S., 2020)

- Internalizing symptoms
- Externalizing symptoms
- Fear and worry about their parent
- Academic difficulties
- Low self-esteem
- Abuse: Emotional, physical, verbal, and economic
- Socially inadequate
- Interpersonal problems and lower relationship satisfaction
- Poor job and work satisfaction in later life
- Becoming alcoholic in later life



## ► Alcohol-Induced Mental Disorders (DSM-5-TR, 2022)

Schizophrenia Spectrum

Bipolar Disorder

Major Depressive Disorder  
(MDD)

Anxiety Disorder



# Pre-existing co-morbid psychiatric conditions in Alcoholics

(Westermeyer, 2001)

- ▶ Schizophrenic spectrum disorder
- ▶ PTSD
- ▶ Bipolar disorder
- ▶ MDD



# Untreated Alcohol Abstinence

Where it can lead



# Transference of Addiction in the Primary Caregiver and the Implications for the Child

- ▶ Gambling Addiction
- ▶ Food Addiction
- ▶ Substance Abuse



# Gambling Addiction (Lane

et al., 2016)

Problem gambling caregivers may be more likely to physically abuse or neglect their children.

Caregivers who obsessively gamble often exhibit comorbid problems with anger and aggression.

Money for basic needs becomes a major issue



## Food Addiction (news-medical.net, 2025)

The frequency of having junk food at home can lead to obesity in fragmented families.

The child develops a craving for fast food that becomes comfort eating.

The child learns about overeating from the caregiver who may encourage the child.

Obesity at school can lead to bullying.

Multiple health problems associated with obesity in later life for the child.



# Substance Misuse

([learning.nspcc.org.uk](https://learning.nspcc.org.uk), 2025)

Caregivers with substance misuse problems can behave in a way that's irrational, unpredictable or withdrawn, which may frighten their children.

Some caregivers who use drugs may lose consciousness, leaving no other responsible adult present to care for their child and ensure their safety.



# Conclusions and Treatment Hopes

- ▶ Trauma is generationally handed down if untreated
- ▶ Children go on to suffer AUD or become extreme caretakers
- ▶ They will need support in adulthood
- ▶ Medication for AUD related mental disorders alongside therapy is widely used
- ▶ CAMHS have a range of interventions for child and adolescents
- ▶ Self-help groups for alcoholics, children of alcoholics and spouses of alcoholics  
- Alcoholics Anonymous, Alateen and Al-Anon
- ▶ “There are those, too, who suffer from grave emotional and mental disorders, but many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest.” [\(Alcoholics Anonymous, 2001, p.58\)](#)



# References - Pictures

[https://rehab.am/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/depositphotos\\_78238966\\_l-2015.jpg](https://rehab.am/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/depositphotos_78238966_l-2015.jpg)

<https://www.makwanas.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/The-Legal-Aspect.png>

[https://www.crisisprevention.com/contentassets/aa97c2d1ad6a4d74a688c072feb84619/bullytrauma\\_498574384.jpg?format=webp&anchor=5](https://www.crisisprevention.com/contentassets/aa97c2d1ad6a4d74a688c072feb84619/bullytrauma_498574384.jpg?format=webp&anchor=5)

<https://www.alamy.com/a-boy-of-10-in-his-school-uniform-drinking-lager-alcohol-showing-the-image61620794.html>



<https://cdniladl.el.nitrocdn.com/DlqWqEQyyusjrvVeFtQqAhgAFBFmQkNH/assets/images/optimized/rev-f597f5a/stopabusecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/The-Ugly-Truth-About-Mental-Health-Stigma.png>

<https://depressionals.com/ezoimgfmt/i0.wp.com/depressionals.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/What-is-self-stigma.webp?ezimgfmt=ng%3Awebp%2Fngcb8%2Frs%3Adevice%2Frscb9-1&ssl=1&w=800>



[https://i.guim.co.uk/img/media/228a8c2fd93a9cfdb2c1d45fb37a28cfdca22044/0\\_71\\_3021\\_1813/master/3021.jpg?width=620&dpr=1&s=none&crop=none](https://i.guim.co.uk/img/media/228a8c2fd93a9cfdb2c1d45fb37a28cfdca22044/0_71_3021_1813/master/3021.jpg?width=620&dpr=1&s=none&crop=none)

[https://www.google.com/imgres?q=discrimination%20against%20children&imgurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.shutterstock.com%2Fimage-photo%2Fonely-sad-africanamerican-schoolgirl-crying-600nw-2044430357.jpg&imgrefurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.shutterstock.com%2Fsearch%2Fdiscrimination-children&docid=Z0tGYLjKTy\\_XzM&tbnid=zsJwROU31NoOYM&vet=12ahUKEwiqyL2\\_nPqKAxWSUkEAHY\\_XI4oQM3oECEYQAA..i&w=600&h=400&hcb=2&ved=2ahUKEwiqyL2\\_nPqKAxWSUkEAHY\\_XI4oQM3oECEYQAA](https://www.google.com/imgres?q=discrimination%20against%20children&imgurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.shutterstock.com%2Fimage-photo%2Fonely-sad-africanamerican-schoolgirl-crying-600nw-2044430357.jpg&imgrefurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.shutterstock.com%2Fsearch%2Fdiscrimination-children&docid=Z0tGYLjKTy_XzM&tbnid=zsJwROU31NoOYM&vet=12ahUKEwiqyL2_nPqKAxWSUkEAHY_XI4oQM3oECEYQAA..i&w=600&h=400&hcb=2&ved=2ahUKEwiqyL2_nPqKAxWSUkEAHY_XI4oQM3oECEYQAA)



[https://www.google.com/search?q=classism+in+kids&sca\\_esv=7bed40ccab09c1d6&udm=2&biw=1920&bih=911&ei=9\\_ulZ6\\_gKsmvhbIPqLPz4AQ&ved=0ahUKEwjvt-G1n\\_qKAxXJV0EAHajZHEwQ4dUDCBE&oq=classism+in+kids&gs\\_lp=EgNpbWciEGNsYXNzaXNtIGluIGtpZHNI7zFQ1QpY9yBwAXgAkAEAmAGOAaABrgaqAQM2LjK4AQzIAQD4AQQYAgegAosFwgINEAAYgAQYsQMYQxiKBclCBhAAGAcYHsICBRAAGIAEwgIIEAAYBxgKGB7CAgoQABiABBhDGloFwgIMEAAYgAQYQxiKBRgKwglIEAAYHsICBhAAGAgYHsICCBAAGAgYChgemAMAiAYBkgcDNS4yoAezIA&sclient=img#vhid=9A\\_57t\\_5STqaIM&vssid=mosaic](https://www.google.com/search?q=classism+in+kids&sca_esv=7bed40ccab09c1d6&udm=2&biw=1920&bih=911&ei=9_ulZ6_gKsmvhbIPqLPz4AQ&ved=0ahUKEwjvt-G1n_qKAxXJV0EAHajZHEwQ4dUDCBE&oq=classism+in+kids&gs_lp=EgNpbWciEGNsYXNzaXNtIGluIGtpZHNI7zFQ1QpY9yBwAXgAkAEAmAGOAaABrgaqAQM2LjK4AQzIAQD4AQQYAgegAosFwgINEAAYgAQYsQMYQxiKBclCBhAAGAcYHsICBRAAGIAEwgIIEAAYBxgKGB7CAgoQABiABBhDGloFwgIMEAAYgAQYQxiKBRgKwglIEAAYHsICBhAAGAgYHsICCBAAGAgYChgemAMAiAYBkgcDNS4yoAezIA&sclient=img#vhid=9A_57t_5STqaIM&vssid=mosaic)

<https://www.healthychildren.org/SiteCollectionImagesArticleImages/problems-with-peers.jpg?RenditionID=3>



[https://www.google.com/search?q=sex+addiction+in+adults+and+the+impact+on+children&sc\\_a\\_esv=7bed40ccab09c1d6&udm=2&biw=1920&bih=911&ei=fQKJZ\\_fXCfCChbIPwflHyQE&ved=0ahUKEwi3iunRpfqKAXVwQUEAHUH5MRkQ4dUDCB&eq=sex+addiction+in+adults+and+the+impact+on+children&gs\\_l=lp=EgNpbWciMnNleCBhZGRpY3Rpb24gaW4gYWR1bHRzIGFuZCB0aGUgaW1wYWN0IG9uIGNoaWxkcmVuSIJuUNkSWNxZcAF4AJABAjgB8AGgAdYYqgEHMTQuMTAuM7gBDMgBAPgBAZgCAqACbMICBBAAGB6YAwCIBgGSBwMxLjGgB-EJ&sclient=img#vhid=qyrL5ozS3IUzSM&vssid=mosaic](https://www.google.com/search?q=sex+addiction+in+adults+and+the+impact+on+children&sc_a_esv=7bed40ccab09c1d6&udm=2&biw=1920&bih=911&ei=fQKJZ_fXCfCChbIPwflHyQE&ved=0ahUKEwi3iunRpfqKAXVwQUEAHUH5MRkQ4dUDCB&eq=sex+addiction+in+adults+and+the+impact+on+children&gs_l=lp=EgNpbWciMnNleCBhZGRpY3Rpb24gaW4gYWR1bHRzIGFuZCB0aGUgaW1wYWN0IG9uIGNoaWxkcmVuSIJuUNkSWNxZcAF4AJABAjgB8AGgAdYYqgEHMTQuMTAuM7gBDMgBAPgBAZgCAqACbMICBBAAGB6YAwCIBgGSBwMxLjGgB-EJ&sclient=img#vhid=qyrL5ozS3IUzSM&vssid=mosaic)

[https://www.algamus.org/hubfs/Imported\\_Blog\\_Media/Blog%20Cover%20\(5\)-2.png](https://www.algamus.org/hubfs/Imported_Blog_Media/Blog%20Cover%20(5)-2.png)

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/children-consumption-fast-food-semsindia>



<https://www.recoveryranch.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/effects-of-parent-drug-abuse-on-young-children-1024x683.jpg>



# References

Jacob, A., & Wang, P. (2020). *Alcohol intoxication and cognition: implications on mechanisms and therapeutic strategies*. *Frontiers in neuroscience*, 14, 102.

| <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnins.2020.00102>

<https://alcohol.org/health-effects/inhibitions/>

DSM-5-TR. (2022). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). American Psychiatric Association Publishing

(DSM-5-TR, 2022)

(DSM-5 TR, 2022. p.564)



Sawant, N. S. (2020). *Children of alcoholics: Are they vulnerable or resilient?*. *Annals of Indian*

*Psychiatry*, 4(2), 111-114. DOI: 10.4103/aip.aip\_122\_20

Silvén Hagström, A., & Forinder, U. (2022). *'If I whistled in her ear she'd wake up': children's narration*

*about their experiences of growing up in alcoholic families*. *Journal of family studies*, 28(1),

216-238. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13229400.2019.1699849>

Köchling, J., Geis, B., Chao, CM. et al. *The hazardous (mis)perception of Self-estimated Alcohol*

*intoxication and Fitness to drive—an avoidable health risk: the SAFE randomised*

*trial*. *Harm Reduct J* **18**, 122 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12954-021-00567-4>



Palm, A., Vataja, R., Talaslahti, T., Ginters, M., Kautiainen, H., Elonheimo, H., ... & Koponen, H. (2022). *Incidence and mortality of alcohol-related dementia and Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome: A nationwide register study. International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, 37*(8).

<https://doi.org/10.1002/gps.5775>

Masiran, R., Ibrahim, N., Awang, H., & Lim, P. Y. (2023). *The positive and negative aspects of parentification: An integrated review. Children and Youth Services Review, 144*, 106709.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2022.106709>

Russotti, J., Warmingham, J. M., Duprey, E. B., Handley, E. D., Manly, J. T., Rogosch, F. A., & Cicchetti, D. (2021). *Child maltreatment and the development of psychopathology: The role of developmental timing and chronicity. Child abuse & neglect, 120*, 105215.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2021.105215>Get rights and content



Avdibegović, E., & Brkić, M. (2020). *Child neglect-causes and consequences*. *Psychiatria Danubina*, 32(suppl. 3), 337-342.

Ridley, M., Rao, G., Schilbach, F., & Patel, V. (2020). *Poverty, depression, and anxiety: Causal evidence and mechanisms*. *Science*, 370(6522), eaay0214. DOI: [10.1126/science.aay0214](https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aay0214)

Armitage, R. (2021). *Bullying in children: impact on child health*. *BMJ paediatrics open*, 5(1).  
doi: [10.1136/bmjpo-2020-000939](https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjpo-2020-000939)

Burton, M. et al. (2014) *An introduction to Child and Adolescent Mental Health*. Sage Publications Ltd

(Burton et al., 2014)

(Burton et al., 2014, p.210-211)

[https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-10/young-carers-of-parents-who-misuse-substances\\_0.pdf](https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-10/young-carers-of-parents-who-misuse-substances_0.pdf)



Corrigan, P. W., & Nieweglowski, K. (2021). *Difference as an indicator of the self-stigma of mental illness. Journal of Mental Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638237.2019.1581351>

Alcoholics Anonymous (2001). "Big Book" of Alcoholics Anonymous. (4<sup>th</sup> ed.) Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.

(Alcoholics Anonymous, 2001)

(Alcoholics Anonymous, 2001, p.310)

Burton, M. et al. (2014) *An introduction to Child and Adolescent Mental Health*. Sage Publications Ltd

(Burton et al., 2014)

(Burton et al.,2014, p.212)

Cavallieri, K. E., Willyard, A., & Phillippi, J. C. (2023). *The effects of different types of classism on psychological outcomes: Preliminary findings. International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 45(3), 422-440. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10447-023-09511-6>



DSM-5-TR. (2022). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). American Psychiatric Association Publishing

(DSM-5-TR, 2022)

(DSM-5 TR, 2022. p.567)

Westermeyer, J. (2001). *Alcoholism and co-morbid psychiatric disorders among American Indians*. *American Indian and Alaska Native Mental Health Research: The Journal of the National Center*, 10(2), 27-51. [http://www2.uchsc.edu/ai/ncaianmhr/journal\\_home.asp](http://www2.uchsc.edu/ai/ncaianmhr/journal_home.asp)

Lane, W., Sacco, P., Downton, K., Ludeman, E., Levy, L., & Tracy, J. K. (2016). *Child maltreatment and problem gambling: A systematic review*. *Child abuse & neglect*, 58, 24-38.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2016.06.003>

<https://www.news-medical.net/health/How-Fast-Food-Affects-Childrens-Health.aspx>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/children-and-families-at-risk/parental-substance-misuse>



# AI Google Scholar Search Titles and Dates

17-18/01/25 - alcohol intoxication - Physical, Mental and Emotional abuse on children of alcoholics - Alcoholics neglecting their children - dangerous driving by alcoholics - Wernicke Korsakoff Dementia - parentification of children - development of psychopathology in children - trauma due to neglect in children - anxiety of poverty in children - bullying in school aged children - self stigma children with mental health - classism and mental health - Pre-existing mental health conditions in alcoholics - gambling disorder in adults affecting children

