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Evaluation of a school-based alcohol education program for secondary school students in Belgium

Submission date 28/03/2025	**Recruitment status** No longer recruiting	[_] Prospectively registered [_] Protocol
Registration date 28/03/2025	**Overall study status** Completed	[_] Statistical analysis plan [_] Results
Last Edited 28/03/2025	**Condition category** Other	[_] Individual participant data [_] Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
Drinking alcohol among adolescents is a worldwide public health concern. Also in Belgium, adolescents drink alcohol frequently. And if they drink, they often do so heavily. Although the age limit for beer and wine is 16 years old, the average age at which individuals start drinking is 14 years old. Because alcohol use has many risks for the health of adolescents, both in the short and the long term, effective preventive measures are needed. Therefore, in this study a school-based educational lecture on alcohol for secondary school students in Flanders (Belgium) will be developed and evaluated. The study aims to raise the awareness of secondary school students about the risks of alcohol and to reduce problematic alcohol use among them.

Who can participate?
Secondary schools that are interested can apply for the educational lecture. The lecture is intended for third- and fourth-grade students (14- and 15-year-olds), both from regular and vocational education. The intervention is a universal prevention intervention, so all students from the participating classrooms can participate.

What does the study involve?
All schools that want to participate will receive the intervention. Therefore, no control schools will be included. Measurements will be conducted among the participating students before and after the intervention. These measurements are surveys questioning alcohol use, social norms regarding alcohol use, opinions about the intervention and the perceived effect of the intervention.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
Benefits: The intervention might reduce the (problematic) alcohol use among participants or postpone the start of drinking alcohol.
Risks: There are no risks associated with participating in the intervention.

Where is the study run from?
University of Antwerp (Belgium)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
January 2023 to December 2025

Who is funding the study?
University of Antwerp (Belgium)

Who is the main contact?
Prof. Nina Hermans, ggameproject@uantwerpen.be

Contact information

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Public, Scientific

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Additional identifiers

Protocol serial number
SHW_2022_127_1

Study information

Scientific Title
Evaluation of a school-based alcohol education program for secondary school students in Belgium to reduce problematic alcohol use

Acronym
GGAME

Study objectives
The developed school-based alcohol education lesson will raise the awareness of risks of alcohol among participants and will decrease their alcohol misuse.

Ethics approval required
Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)
Approved 07/02/2023, University of Antwerp Ethics Committee for the Social Sciences and Humanities (Middelheimlaan 1, Antwerp, 2020, Belgium; +32 (0)3 265 90 63; eashw@uantwerpen.be), ref: SHW_2022_127_1

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design
Quasi-experimental study with a pre- and post measurement

Study type(s)
Prevention

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Prevention of alcohol misuse among third- and fourth-grade secondary school students of regular and vocational education

Interventions
A quasi-experimental design will be used for this study, in which all students at the participating schools in Antwerp/Flanders (Belgium) will be offered the intervention: an education lecture on alcohol. Differences in alcohol use will be measured before and after the intervention within the same population. In this regard, the students serve as their own control. No control schools will be included in the study. Additionally, no randomization will take place: all schools that request the intervention and are willing to participate in the study will be offered the intervention. The education lesson will be taught by four researchers from the University of Antwerp, who are considered experts in the field of youth and alcohol.

Secondary students from grades 3 and 4 (mainly 14- and 15-year-olds) from regular or vocational education are eligible for participation. Recruitment will take place via promoting the educational lesson on the University of Antwerp's website on a subpage intended for secondary schools where activities for secondary school students are presented. Additionally, the Department of Communication at the University of Antwerp will spread the information on the intervention in its monthly newsletter to secondary schools.

To measure whether the intervention will reduce problematic alcohol use, the primary outcome will be the score on the AUDIT-C questionnaire. Anonymous surveys will be developed for the purpose of this study and will be administered immediately following the educational lesson (T1) and again at follow-up 3 months later (T2). In these surveys, sociodemographic variables will also

be questioned, as questions regarding the process evaluation. The intervention effect on the primary outcome will be assessed using Pearson's chi-squared test for change in the proportion of students below and above the cutoff score on the AUDIT-C score.

Intervention Type
Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)
Problematic alcohol use is measured using the AUDIT-C Score (short version of the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test) immediately following the educational lesson (T1) and again at follow-up 3 months later (T2)

Key secondary outcome(s)
1. Subjective self-reported change in alcohol-drinking behaviour measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 'totally disagree' to 'totally agree' measured at follow-up 3 months later (T2)
2. Subjective effect of the intervention on thinking about own alcohol use, thinking about the alcohol use of people in their surroundings and talking about alcohol use (yes, no, or irrelevant), measured at follow-up 3 months later (T2)

Completion date
31/12/2025

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
Third- and fourth-grade students from regular or vocational education in secondary schools in Flanders (Belgium)

Participant type(s)
Learner/student

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Child

Lower age limit
12 Years

Upper age limit
18 Years

Sex
All

Key exclusion criteria
Participants decline consent, which is the first question of both surveys

Date of first enrolment

22/03/2023

Date of final enrolment
01/09/2025

Locations

Countries of recruitment
Belgium

Study participating centre
University of Antwerp
Universiteitsplein 1
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Sponsor information

Organisation
University of Antwerp

ROR
https://ror.org/008x57b05

Funder(s)

Funder type
University/education

Funder Name
Universiteit Antwerpen

Alternative Name(s)
University of Antwerp, UAntwerp, Universiteit van Antwerpen, Uantwerpen

Funding Body Type
Private sector organisation

Funding Body Subtype
Universities (academic only)

Location
Belgium

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan
The dataset generated during and/or analysed during the current study will be available upon reasonable request from Hanna van Roozendaal (ggameproject@uantwerpen.be)

IPD sharing plan summary
Available on request