



17 May 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

We all acknowledge that the last 14 months has been incredibly challenging for everyone and especially for our young people, with COVID-19 restrictions limiting their ability to meet up with friends. As restrictions are gradually eased, we all welcome the increased opportunities that young people have to spend time with each other and to socialise. We want to ensure that young people are able to do so in a safe manner which does not adversely impact on them or people living in our local communities. We know that the vast majority of young people behave responsibly, with respect for others and the environment.

Unfortunately both Police Scotland and Council officers have recently been called out to an increased number of gatherings of young people, where alcohol is often being consumed resulting in anti-social behaviour. This has been happening in a number of East Lothian communities and can be concerning and intimidating to local residents.

Excessive consumption of alcohol can be harmful in a number of different ways. While a lot of work has taken place to prevent the sale and supply of alcohol to those who are underage, we have recently seen large quantities of bottles, cans and packaging discarded in known areas where young people gather. Apart from the risks to the health and wellbeing of those taking part, the mess left behind for others to clear up is completely unacceptable. A police presence has been increased in affected areas, but officers can't do this alone. This is not simply a 'rite of passage' or 'part of growing up.' We need to protect our young people from serious harm.

Although we appreciate that it is a relatively small number of young people involved in such disorder, their behaviour can spoil things for others. Preventing offending in the first instance is always our aim and the support of our parents and carers and families is key to this.

We are very grateful to you as parents and carers for any help you can provide – for example, by speaking to your young person to highlight these concerns and the impact that anti-social behaviour can have on them and the lives of others.

We want to reinforce the importance of responsible young citizens being safe while out and about as well as being respectful to others. We would also ask that you alert the Police to any issues of concern, such as the inappropriate sale or consumption of alcohol. By doing so, we can keep our communities safe for everyone and look forward to enjoying a fantastic East Lothian summer.

Yours sincerely,

Neil Mitchell

**Chief Inspector
Local Area Commander (EL)
Police Scotland**

Yours sincerely,

Lesley Brown

**Executive Director
Education and Children's Services
East Lothian Council**