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Plastic bottles, or plastic surgery?



Introduction

I am a statistic, a victim of crime. But crime is like a disease spreading through an entire family affecting every member. Statistics, we all know to be numbers on a piece of paper, computer screen, television etc. But behind every statistical number there is a face, a person, a family... a story.

It was Christmas Eve 2004, I was at Bar Me in Central Milton Keynes. At 00:45 Christmas Day, I heard a commotion at the front door and as I approached I saw a male attacking a female door supervisor armed with a glass bottle. I went to her aide, arm-locking the male from the rear and attempted to escort him out of the venue. Upon his ejection we both fell through the main doors, however the aggressor was still armed with a glass bottle and you can guess what's coming next.

He hit me with the glass bottle across my forehead, breaking the bottle in the process. He then drew up into my hairline narrowly missing my eyeball. Then he slashed me with the broken bottle across my cheek. At this point I rolled onto my front and tucked up covering my face. He then stabbed me in the neck missing my jugular by 1/2 inch. At this point another doorman intervened sustaining injuries himself, however he successfully detained the aggressor until the police arrived.

At hospital I received a blood transfusion after the loss of 4 1/2 pints and I was rushed into surgery lasting 4 hours, where they used 40 stitches externally and an unknown amount internally. I remained in hospital Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

The trauma of that night will never leave me or my family and it is because of this that pop-campaign was born, in the hope this would go a long way to preventing this particular crime from happening again.

Blake Golding, Milton Keynes.



The Advantage for using polycarbonate within the Licensing Trade

Polycarbonate glasses are a better insulator than glass, therefore keeping your drink colder for longer as the heat does not transfer from your hand as it does with glass.

Simple Test

Place several ice cubes into a polycarbonate glass and also into a glass alike. Leave to stand for several hours. You will see the result being much more ice remaining in the polycarbonate.

Pro's for polycarbonate

- No more accidental cut feet.
- No more public liability cases for broken glass.
- No more ruined dance floors.
- Cheaper insurance premiums.
- No more constant breakages or need for replacements.
- No more cut hands or feet for staff members.
- Staff can work quicker, safer and more efficiently during and at the end of an evening when clearing up.
- Security staff deal with issues feeling safer with no threat of glass.
- Glass collectors can carry more and also be safer.



Polycarbonate and the environment

- Nationally, 9/10 bits of glass are not recycled.
- Every year, close to 600,000 tonnes of glass bottles (a ¼ of the UK's waste glass containers) are thrown out from licensed premises and put into landfill.
- PET bottles are recyclable and do not need to be separated by colour in order to be recycled, thus saving time and money although more products can be made from them if they are separated.
- Polycarbonate glasses can also be recycled and are worth money by the ton, such as scrap metal, although venues will not make money out of this as there is very little waste.



NHS and the Justice System

A serious glassing costs the NHS alone, approximately £184,000 from start to completion of treatment and ties up approximately 40 NHS staff. This does not take into consideration costs and time for police, courts and others.

A study by P.M's Strategy Unit shows:

- 1.2 million incidents of alcohol related violence a year.
- 40% of A&E admissions are alcohol related (rises to 70% between midnight and 5am)
- Costs NHS £1.7 billion per year.

In addition to the considerable health care costs of managing glass related injuries, over a ¼ of victims of facial wounds experience a serious post-traumatic stress reaction, requiring long term follow up.

Glass is not just a convenient weapon. A survey of bar workers indicated 40% of them had sustained accidental glass related injuries (mostly while stacking & washing). 1/3 of them needed A&E treatment. *Study by A&E Dept. Royal Liverpool University Hospital.*

Craig Burnett, Consultant Ophthalmologist at Hull & East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust says *"Including the NHS bill, one single glassing incident can cost the state up to £1 million. There are often two to three operations per case and numerous ward and clinic attendances. There's the cost of a great many police and legal hours, which can include painstaking evidence gathering and barristers costs surrounding a crown court trial. Once convicted, there's the cost of keeping the offender in prison for up to six years. Since the introduction of polycarbonate glasses in Hull City Centre 8 months ago (May/June 2008) I have not had to perform any operations as a result of glassing whereas in 2007 I encountered one glassing injury per week."*



NHS and the Justice System continued...

Bournemouth ran a yearlong campaign introducing over 35 venues to polycarbonate; some are using the plastic bottle too. This when monitored, over the year, saw a reduction of 70% on a Friday and Saturday night at A&E for glass related injuries.

There are 80,000 glass and bottle attacks in the UK per year. That accounts for 4% of violent crime. (Source: House of Commons Library.)

In 2005, criminal injuries compensation paid approximately £3000 per glass attack. In 2004 they paid out £4.5 million for such cases.



Achievements to date...

The pop-campaign has worked with the police and authorities in many areas to help with the implementation of polycarbonate glasses and where possible PET bottles. Many of these areas have now received Home Office grants in order to fund the initial transformation from glass to polycarbonate. By invitation, we have given presentations many times in Bournemouth, Oxford, Reading, Northampton, Lincoln, Hull, Gwent, Norwich, Suffolk, Milton Keynes, Bishop Stortford, Nottingham, London, Peterborough, two Regional Home Office Conferences and one National Home Office Conference.

As well as many Police authorities, we have worked extensively with various councils and the South Central Ambulance Service, taking every opportunity to do newspaper, radio and television interviews around the country.

Summary

My wish for the future is that I can walk into any club or late night bar anywhere in the UK and be served with a polycarbonate glass or PET bottle and know that this initially was down to the hard work and sheer determination of me and my family. Hopefully it will prevent the same horrendous ordeal happening to someone else.



Please visit the online petition - www.pop-campaign.co.uk