

From Dr A Majid Katme

Alcoholic who made video warning of the dangers of drink dies of liver cirrhosis aged just 29

- **Matthew Stiebrins began drinking bottles of vodka aged just 15**
- **He was drinking half a litre of cider a day even in run-up to his death**

A tragic young alcoholic who issued a desperate warning to teenagers of the dangers of binge drinking from his hospital bed has died, it emerged yesterday.

Matthew Stiebrins, 29, began drinking bottles of vodka at the age of 15 with his friends before his habit spiralled out of control.

His alcohol abuse was so bad the alcohol started eating away at his brain and and left with irreversible cirrhosis of the liver.

Today his mother Dawn Titterington revealed he was still drinking half-a-litre of cider every day in the weeks leading up to his death.



Tragic: Matthew Stiebrins's alcohol abuse was so bad the alcohol started eating away at his brain and and left with irreversible cirrhosis of the liver. He is pictured with his mother Dawn, in hospital, last year

He passed away just three months before his 30th birthday - as doctors grimly predicted - because his organs were so badly damaged.

Ms Titterington, 51, today echoed her son's warning for youngsters to avoid his mistakes and keep their drinking under control.

She said: 'He suffered so much and so am I. But I hope his story helps someone.'

She said at his worst her son would drink more than five litres of cider every day on top of vodka, but it was hard for her to keep track of his addiction.

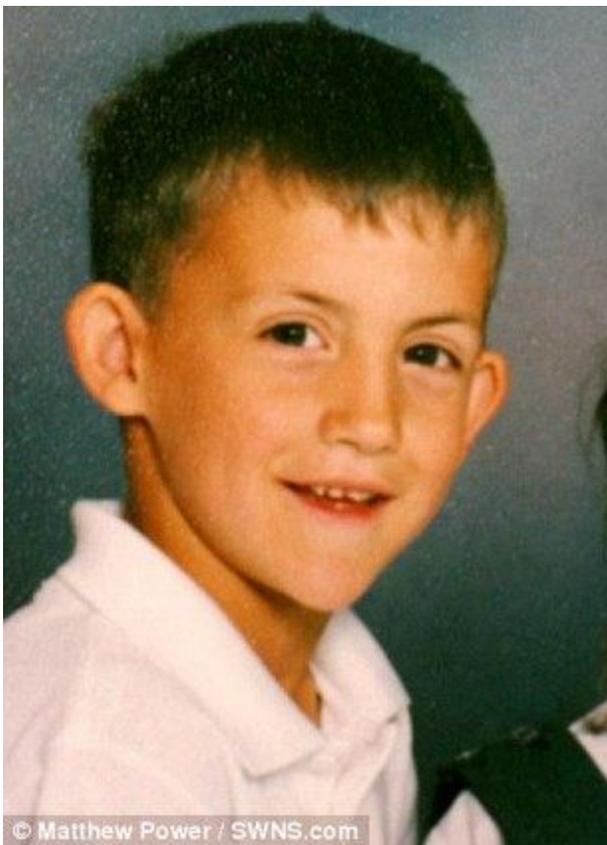
She said: 'The alcohol turned him into a little old man.'

'He told me he was going to ring me on the night of his death, but he never did. When I went to his house he was dead. He died from pneumonia. His body was so weak.'

'Nobody should have to see their child die before them.'

Speaking from his bedside, in February last year, Ms Titterington said: 'When he was 15 he got into a crowd that liked going out drinking, like many teenagers do.'





Addicted: Matthew, pictured left aged 15 when he began drinking bottles of vodka with his friends before his habit spiralled out of control. He is pictured right as a young school boy. At 18 he turned to shoplifting

'The others grew out of it but Matthew didn't, he didn't stop. In the end it just didn't matter what we said - all the warnings we gave.

'He would say 'it's only a few, it won't do me any harm, everyone drinks.'

She added: 'These teenagers say it's boring not to drink but they don't realise that it is slowly affecting their health.

'There's not enough about the dangers of alcohol, always campaigns about smoking and drugs. There is no substitute like nicotine patches for alcoholics.

'Teenagers think they can give it up but their bodies won't let them. You would never have guessed that Matthew would have been the one from his group of friends to become hooked.'

Mr Stiebrins, from Haverhill, Suffolk, began started bunking off school to drink aged 15 and by the time he was 18 he was addicted and shoplifting to fund his habit.

In the months before his death on February 5, this year, he was in and out of Addenbrookes Hospital, Cambridge, and doctors predicted he would not live to see his 29th birthday, on May 4, 2012.

Ms Titterington, who works as a seamstress and remarried after she left her son's father ten years ago, said she worried about drugs more than alcohol when her children were young.

Now she is campaigning for more support for alcoholics in a bid to prevent other parents going through similar heartache.