

Inform

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Alcohol Seminar

The Health Promotion Agency organised an alcohol information seminar, which took place at Malone House, Belfast on 23 March 2000. Rob Phipps, Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs Programme Manager at the Health Promotion Agency, led the seminar, which was attended by 48 delegates.

The seminar addressed some of the recent developments relevant to alcohol in Northern Ireland. Some of the issues discussed included:

- prevalence data on the drinking patterns of young people and adults in Northern Ireland;
- an overview of the current legislation pertaining to alcohol in Northern Ireland;
- an update on the progress of the Northern Ireland Alcohol Strategy.

The seminar offered professionals working in the field of alcohol-related health promotion an opportunity to consider the wider implications these recent developments may have on their work.

Get a Life, Get Active - Phase 2

The launch of the second phase of the Agency's physical activity campaign 'Get a Life, Get Active' will take place in May 2000. This year's campaign will focus on two activities - walking and cycling. As well as providing information about the benefits of both of these activities, there will be many opportunities to take part in a number of organised walking and cycling events.

Organisations including the British Medical Association (BMA), Sustrans, the Department for Regional Development (DRD) and local District Councils as represented by

Countryside Access Officers, are planning to hold numerous walking and cycling events during May and June.

Details of these events and many others will be listed in a booklet produced by the Agency in support of the campaign.

Community and voluntary organisations are also being encouraged to organise their own events to get people active.

More than 6,500 community and voluntary groups have been sent information and application forms about the Agency's grant scheme 'Get active in the Community'.

A briefing day about the campaign will be held at the end of April 2000.



Translation of the Meningitis C Leaflet

The information leaflet *Meningitis: reduce the risk for children and young people* has been translated into five ethnic minority languages - Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Hindi and Urdu. The leaflet gives information about the meningitis C vaccine and the special immunisation programme for all children under 18 years of age.

Copies of the translations are being sent to all GPs, Health Visitors and School Nurses allowing them to

photocopy the resource for parents and children whose first language is one of the five listed. The translations will also be distributed by a number of ethnic minority community groups, including the Multi-Cultural Resource Centre and the Chinese Welfare Association via their newsletter *Dragon World*.

Copies will be available from Central Health Promotion Resource Services in each Health and Social Services Board Area.

2nd European Health Promotion Awards



The Northern Ireland judging panel for the 2nd European Health Promotion Awards has selected two of the eleven entries received by the Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland, to go forward to the final stage of the Awards, which will take place in May 2000.

The judges selected the 'Limelight Project', run by the Family Planning Association for Northern Ireland and the 'Health Promoting School Award', run by Westcare Business Services, as this year's winning entries for Northern Ireland.

The 'Limelight Project' established an accredited peer education programme on sexuality, disability and equality for disabled people, enabling them to train to educate and support other disabled people on these important issues. The 'Health Promoting School Award' developed a participative programme for schools and nurseries to work with partners to promote health among students and children within the Western Health Board area, through the development and implementation of health and environmental policies and curriculum-based activities.

Both projects made a great impression on the judges for the work they have accomplished, in particular for their part in advancing the role of health promotion in these underdeveloped areas. The Health Promotion Agency would like to wish both finalists every success for the final round of this year's Award and to take this opportunity to thank all those who entered.

Public information campaigns

Alcohol Campaign

The Health Promotion Agency launched its initiative 'Alcohol Countdown', at the Botanic Inn Public House and Off-Sales, Belfast on 15 February 2000. The initiative was designed to increase public awareness of the recommended alcohol drinking limits for men and women and the safe drinking message.

Several resources were produced to help members of the public keep account of their alcohol unit intake. These included one million beermats, which were distributed to pubs, clubs and hotels.

Measuring up: Rob Phipps, Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs Programme Manager, Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland at the launch of 'Alcohol Countdown' with Bernie Clarke, Botanic Inns.



Research conducted by the Agency revealed that a significant amount of alcohol is consumed in the home, for this reason small information cards and plastic unit measures were distributed to the public through several off-sales chains throughout Northern Ireland.

Your Body, Your Life, Your Choice

'Your Body, Your Life, Your Choice', the Agency's latest public information campaign on smoking targeting 12 to 14 year olds, was launched on 1 March 2000 at Ashfield Girls' School in Belfast.

The campaign focuses on issues, which young people perceive as relevant to them, such as the unattractive smell of tobacco and its strong addictive properties. The campaign included television, cinema and radio advertising and a special telephone helpline for young people.

To overcome the difficulty of getting young people to read material on health, a magazine-style publication named *Up2You* was specifically produced for the target group. The magazine features facts on smoking and a range of other issues, which impact on health.

The information is presented informally, for example football stars are featured giving messages about not smoking. Several quizzes and competitions are included

which promote messages on sensitive issues such as self-esteem. The magazine's entertainment items on music and cinema are designed to remind young people that there are better ways to spend money than on cigarettes.

Copies of the magazine have been sent to all post-primary schools across Northern Ireland for distribution to second and third form pupils. Feedback about the publication has been very positive.

Information about smoking has also been provided on a special website for young people. The teenage website www.up-2-you.net, which is based on the magazine, contains information on the effects of smoking, tips for quitting, general health information, entertainment news and sports features, as well as several other great offers and competitions.

Keeping health in site: Left to right: Connie Martin and Helen Inglefinch from Ashfield Girls' School log on to the Health Promotion Agency's newly launched 'Up -2-You' website.



Policy development and advice

Weaning made easy

Since it was published in March 1999, the booklet *Weaning made easy - moving from milk to family meals* has been a very popular resource with both health professionals and mothers. It includes information on the practical aspects of good weaning, covering the period from when weaning begins up to the age of one year.

The resource is based on current

Government guidance about weaning, outlined in the COMA report on *Weaning and the*

Weaning Diet, 1994. It was written in collaboration with Health Visitors and Community Dietitians from the Health and Social Services Boards, the Paediatric Group Dietitians and the Regional Oral Health Promotion Group. Prior to publication the booklet was pre-tested with groups of women in the target audience to ensure that the content, language and design were appropriate.

Within the last few



months, in response to an application for 'Baby Friendly Status' by one Community Health and Social Services Trust in Northern Ireland, the UNICEF/Baby Friendly Initiative has commented that they consider the use of the phrase 'about four months' in the booklet may encourage early weaning.

The Agency's objective is to continue to provide accurate advice, which is based on the best scientific research available and which is

relevant and appropriate for mothers. The Agency believes that the weaning resource does this. However, in order to ensure that all mothers in all Health and Social Services Trusts in Northern Ireland have access to information that is relevant to them, the Agency intends to make the small but necessary amendments to the resource and reprint it within the next two months. The revised version will be available through the Central Health Promotion Resource Services in the Health and Social Services Board areas.

Healthy Eating Circle



The Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland has published the final issue of *Healthy Eating Circle News* to recognise and record the achievements of the Healthy Eating Circle.

The Circle was established by the Agency in 1989, to encourage and reward caterers for taking up the challenge of actively promoting healthy eating. Many groups including caterers, Community Dietitians, Health Promotion Officers, Environmental Health Officers and local Councils helped contribute to the success of this scheme, by enabling almost 800 catering establishments throughout Northern Ireland to deliver care, comfort and choice to the consumer.

The Agency would like to thank everyone involved for their dedication and support. If you would like to receive a copy of *Healthy Eating Circle News*, please contact Ann Marie McCann at the Agency.

Physical Activity Workshop

The Agency and the Department for Regional Development (DRD) held an afternoon workshop on walking and cycling issues, on 22 March 2000, at the Stakis Hotel, Templepatrick.

Over 20 representatives, who were nominated by local District Councils throughout Northern Ireland, met to discuss a range of initiatives relating to walking and cycling. This was in response to an approach made by the Northern Ireland Physical Activity Implementation Group (NIPAIG) to put forward a Senior Officer to act as a point of contact in walking and cycling matters.

The workshop looked at the relationships between transport and health and considered a

number of activities, which are planned for later this year, among them a 'Bike to Work Day' on 20 June.

Delegates were given the opportunity to speak to, and plan activities with, representatives from Sustrans - the Charity for Integrated and Sustainable Transport Systems, which is responsible for promoting the National Cycle Network. Activities to mark the official opening of the National Cycle Network in Northern Ireland will take place between 19 to 25 June. Delegates considered the workshop helpful and agreed that further meetings should be held at both regional and local level.

Nutrition Factsheets

Following an evaluation in autumn 1999, the Agency, in association with Dietitians from the Health and Social Services Boards and Trusts and members of the Regional Oral Health Promotion Group, has completely revised and updated its publication *Nutrition Factfile: Factsheets on Diet and Health*.

The resource contains 14 factsheets that provide an overview of a range of nutritional issues. Topics covered include:

- nutrition for various life stages, eg preconception, pregnancy, childhood, adolescence and older age;
- information on the prevention of diet-related diseases such as heart disease and cancer;

- information on the management of conditions, eg diabetes and eating disorders.

The factsheets are fully referenced and provide guidance on additional reading as well as organisations that may be contacted for further information.

The resource is relevant to the Home Economics Programmes of Study at Key Stages 3 and 4 and also to the GNVQ Health and Social Care syllabus. Copies will be distributed to all post-primary schools by mid April. They will also be sent to all Health Promotion and Dietetic Departments and to the libraries of the Central Health Promotion Resource Services.



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Publications and resources

Activate News

The Agency has just published the Spring issue of *Activate News*.

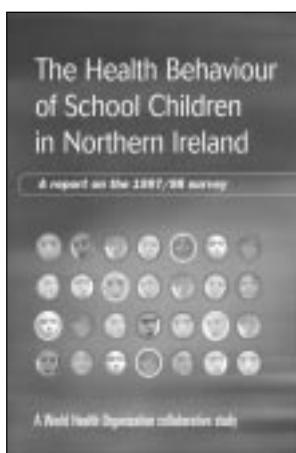
Breastfeeding resource



The Agency has been working with a special sub-group linked to the Northern Ireland Breastfeeding Strategy Group, to design and publish a resource prepared by the group,

on breastfeeding for mothers of ill or premature babies. The leaflet contains advice on how mothers can maintain their milk supply while their baby is in a special care unit and encourage the baby to feed once he/she is well enough. The leaflet also describes techniques for expressing milk, illustrated with photographs. The resource will be distributed to mothers directly via special care units.

Health Behaviour of School Children in Northern Ireland



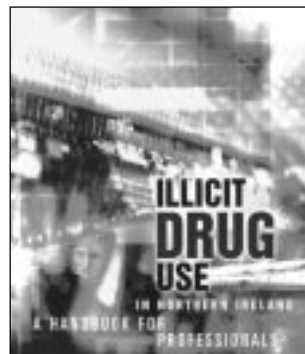
(HBSC). The HBSC study gives new insight into understanding how behaviour and lifestyle can affect young people's health. The report will be distributed to schools during April.

If you would like to receive a copy of any of these publications or resources, please contact Ann Marie McCann at the Agency.

Website: www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk

The Agency's website features a range of information about the Agency and its work. The site will be regularly updated to provide a current source of information for anyone with an interest in health promotion. Any comments you may have, or suggestions for additional information you would like to see on the site, will be very welcome.

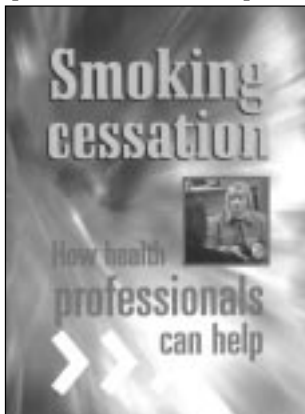
Illicit drug use in Northern Ireland: a handbook for professionals



The Agency has published a new and updated edition of this drugs resource for the year 2000. The revised edition incorporates up-to-date statistics on drug use in Northern

Ireland and data from surveys carried out since the last update in 1998. New information is provided on topics including risk factors for drug use, prevention strategies and new approaches to drug education. The sections on sources of information and drug education resources have also been updated.

Smoking cessation: How health professionals can help



The Agency has produced a leaflet on smoking cessation for health professionals on behalf of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS). The leaflet entitled *Smoking cessation*

- *How health professionals can help*, looks at the role that all health professionals can play in helping smokers to stop smoking and lists the latest evidence-based smoking cessation interventions. It also contains a leaflet on Nicotine Replacement Therapy. The DHSSPS are distributing these leaflets direct to all health professionals.

In addition, the Agency has developed a separate website on smoking for health professionals and teachers. The site www.smoke-free.co.uk is a comprehensive resource on all aspects of smoking and has links to anti-smoking sites and organisations as well as several factsheets, which can be downloaded. A section dedicated to teachers, provides a selection of useful links to on-line educational resources on smoking.