

Inform

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June/July 2000

Inside

- European Conference
- Community Awards Scheme
- Physical Activity Resources

Draft Equality Scheme

Under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1988, the Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland is required to promote equality of opportunity between:

- persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- men and women generally;
- persons with/without a disability;
- persons with/without dependants.

Schedule 9 requires the Agency to set out an Equality Scheme of how it proposes to fulfil these duties. The Agency is committed to fulfilling all aspects of this Act and in recognition of the need for and benefit of promoting equality of opportunity for all, a draft edition of the Equality Scheme has now been produced. This document is currently out for consultation. The final edition will be available at the end of June 2000.

Physical Activity Campaign

Phase II of the Health Promotion Agency's public information campaign on physical activity was launched on 3 May 2000 at Malone House, Belfast. This year the initiative, which supports the Northern Ireland Physical Activity Strategy, focuses on two activities - walking and cycling and includes a major television advertising campaign, which will be broadcast on UTV and Channel 4 from 17 May to 14 June 2000.

Printed materials for this year's campaign include leaflets and posters promoting the benefits of walking and cycling and an A5 booklet entitled *Walking and Cycling opportunities in Northern Ireland*. A booklet with useful information on organising a walking or cycling event has also been produced to encourage members of the public to organise their own walking/cycling events. The information provided in *your guide to running a walking or cycling event* includes tips on planning and promoting an event, advice on health and safety, legal issues associated with public events, as well as some useful sources of information.

Promotional materials have also been produced for those organising a physical activity event, including blank posters which can be customised to help with publicity. Certificates and badges are also available for

giving out to event participants. These materials can be obtained by contacting the Physical Activity Coordinator in each of the four Health and Social Services Boards.

T-shirts and sweatshirts have been produced in a number of designs and can be purchased (at cost price) from the Health Promotion Agency. Two of the T-shirt designs *get a life, get walking* and *get a life, get cycling* each cost £3.50 and the *get a life, get active* T-shirt costs £5.00. A *get a life, get active* sweatshirt is also available and costs £12.00.

Further details of this campaign, as well as the necessary order form for the above materials are available by contacting the Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland directly, or by visiting our website at: www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk.

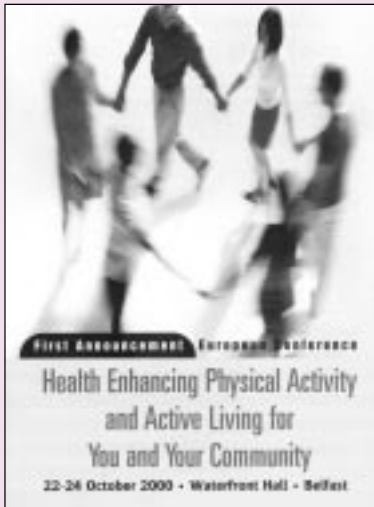


Gearing up for some physical activity: Shaun Ogle, Sports Council for Northern Ireland, with Lynn Hughes, student, at the recent launch of the second phase of the Northern Ireland Physical Activity Campaign.

European Conference

The Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland together with the Eastern Health and Social Services Board, Belfast, Belfast Healthy Cities and Belfast City Council have organised a European Conference on 'Health Enhancing Physical Activity and Active Living for You and Your Community'.

The conference, which is in collaboration with The European Network for the Promotion of Health Enhancing Physical Activity (The HEPA Network) and the WHO Healthy Cities Multi City Action Plan on Active Living, will take place from 22 to 24 October 2000 at the Waterfront Hall, Belfast.



The conference will explore the many issues influencing policy development and implementation at international and local levels, as well as identifying methods of developing and implementing policies and partnerships between agencies, Government departments and community organisations. In addition, delegates will be given the opportunity to share experiences and ideas in relation to HEPA and Active Living policy, partnerships and practice.

The fee for the conference is £150, which includes attendance, conference pack, documentation and an invitation to the conference dinner on 23 October. A limited number of subsidised places will be available at £50. Further details on these places and the full conference programme will be announced later this month.

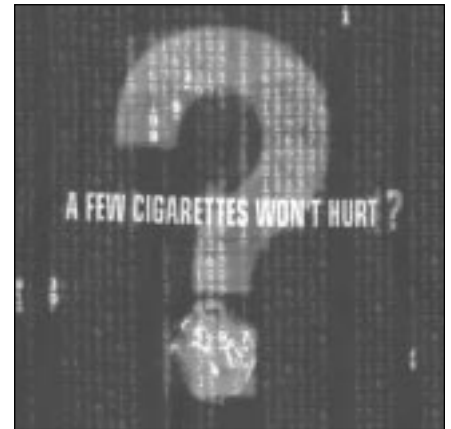
Research

Qualitative Research with Young People on Smoking

Qualitative research was recently commissioned by the Agency to gauge young people's attitudes to smoking. This was in support of the Agency's latest campaign on smoking prevention which targeted 12 to 13 year olds. The research, which consisted of a lifestyle questionnaire and focus groups, aimed to inform the nature of the campaign and to act as a qualitative baseline with which to compare its effectiveness.

The focus group discussions revealed a wide range of factors that can contribute to a young person experimenting with cigarettes and subsequently becoming a committed smoker. The perceived prevalence of smoking and the social pressure to increase friendship networks, particularly among girls, appeared to be key features that provoke young people to experiment with smoking.

Predictably, young people were well aware of the long-term effects of smoking on their health. However, they perceived the period of 'experimental' smoking as much longer than originally assumed by health professionals. It appeared that young smokers were unconcerned about



the risks associated with smoking. Common themes emerged from this research, in that the group did not consider themselves to be 'real smokers' and believed they could stop 'when they were older'. After considering recommendations from the research, the campaign focused on the short-term negative impacts of smoking and on the addictive nature of smoking in particular.

Similar research has been carried out post-campaign to evaluate its effectiveness. Initial findings show a positive response. Further details of the evaluation will be available later in the year.

Survey of Views and Attitudes of 18-30 year olds in respect of illicit drugs

The Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland recently commissioned quantitative research to investigate the prevalence of a drug culture among 18-30s. The survey looked at the habits, lifestyles and attitudes of just under one thousand 18 to 30 year olds in Northern Ireland.

Findings revealed differences in attitude and knowledge among this group, ranging from those who expressed 'anti-drug' sentiments to those with an apparently 'more relaxed' attitude to drugs and drug taking. The research also revealed interesting information about how this group socialise, what makes for a 'good night out', money spent, poly-drug use and driving while under the influence of drugs.

The Agency feels this research will provide a very useful insight into the

target groups which are most likely to prove challenging, in respect of drug prevention campaigns.

Evaluation of Phase IV of Public Information Campaign on Drugs

Phase IV of the public information campaign on drugs, which concluded at the end of March 2000, has now been evaluated. Although the full report is not yet with the Agency, the television advertisement featuring a decaying apple to represent the damage drugs can do, continues to achieve high awareness among the target group of 18-30 year olds.

There would also appear to be a more sophisticated understanding of the messages being given out by the campaign. The Agency is encouraged by these initial findings and hopes to include further details about the evaluation in the next issue of *Inform*.

No Smoking Day 2000 Evaluation

'Cut it Out' was the slogan for this year's 'No Smoking Day', which was held on 8 March 2000. The campaign was supported by a number of statutory and voluntary organisations, as well as professional bodies across Northern Ireland.

In continuing its support for 'No Smoking Day', the Agency produced and broadcast a television and radio advertising campaign. The aim of this advertising campaign was to raise awareness of the day and to allow smokers who wished to take part, the time to prepare to stop smoking.

Following the campaign, a survey of adults aged 16 and over was carried out in Northern Ireland. During the research period a total of 1,138 interviews were conducted. Results indicate that the Northern Ireland initiative was very successful, maintaining the high awareness achieved in recent years and achieving higher levels of awareness and participation than in Great Britain.

In Northern Ireland 81% of respondents were aware that 8 March was

'No Smoking Day'. Awareness was much higher among smokers (89%) than non-smokers (76%). In Great Britain 77% of respondents were aware of the day.

All respondents aware of 'No Smoking Day', were asked if they participated in the day. Overall 36% of smokers in Northern Ireland who were aware of the day said they participated, with 16% making a quit attempt during the day. A further 9% smoked less than usual and 15% thought about giving up smoking. Of those aware of 'No Smoking Day' in Great Britain 33% participated with 9% making a quit attempt on the day.

The proportion of respondents aware of advertising or publicity for 'No Smoking Day' in Northern Ireland remained the same as 1999 (72%). The most popular source of advertising/publicity was television advertising.

In Northern Ireland those who smoked were also asked about their interest in stopping smoking. Seventy three per cent of smokers expressed an interest in stopping smoking or had already tried to stop.

World Health Organisation

The World Health Organisation (WHO) as part of a series on 'Health, Environment and Safety in Enterprises' has recently published *Guidelines for Improving the Physical Fitness of Employees*. The Guidelines, which were written by the Health Promotion Agency for WHO, cover:

- the benefits to the employer and employee of a workplace programme;
- ten steps for implementation;
- a section outlining practical programme ideas.

The Guidelines were originally written for Eastern Europe and tested in Poland however, employers in Northern Ireland will find them relevant in the context of a holistic workplace health policy.

Millennium Babies Website

In celebrating the new millennium, the Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland launched a special initiative 'Millennium Babies' in January 2000. The project involved presenting the mothers of the first 2,000 babies born in Northern Ireland in the year 2000 with a special baby pack, which contained a host of relevant health information and an assortment of baby goods.

As well as producing these one-off packs, the Agency also created a special 'Millennium Babies' website, which is being further developed. Visitors to www.bornintheyear2k.com will soon be able to access a wide range of information including:

- relevant news articles on baby issues eg the recent controversy surrounding the use of baby walkers;
- pictures of some of our millennium babies;
- advice and information on issues such as breastfeeding, weaning, dental care, safety and immunisation;
- links to other websites, which offer advice and support to parents.

A new e-mail address has also been added, which visitors can use to send comments and questions. The site will be regularly updated to include the latest news and information.

E-mail: babies@hpani.org.uk

'Get Active in the Community' Awards Scheme

For the second year running the 'Get Active in the Community' awards scheme has formed part of the Agency's Physical Activity campaign. The scheme, which was developed by the Agency in collaboration with Disability Action and the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action, has been funded by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

The awards are designed to enable community and voluntary groups to offer new opportunities for health-enhancing physical activities to their members between May and October 2000.

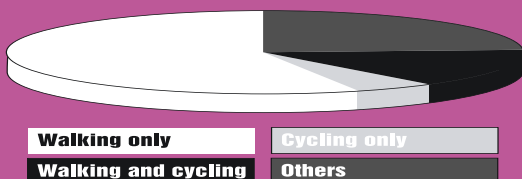
Last year's scheme proved to be a great success and allowed 79 community and voluntary groups to develop a wide



range of initiatives targeted at Northern Ireland's sedentary population. Four of these groups were invited to present an evaluation of their project at the Physical Activity Conference, Newcastle, in November 1999.

This year's scheme is well under way. A total of 96 community and voluntary groups have just been awarded grants of up to £250 to

develop new or existing initiatives to promote physical activity in the community. To tie in with this year's campaign, the judging panel gave priority to applications that promoted walking and cycling opportunities in the community. For a detailed breakdown of the award winning groups see the chart below.



Distribution of Community awards

For information on specific areas of the Agency's work contact:

Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs -
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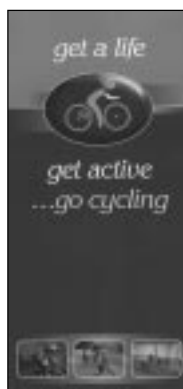
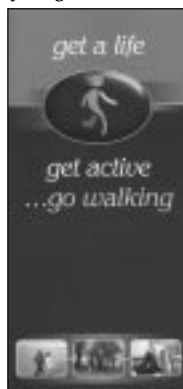
Websites:

www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk
www.bornintheyear2k.com
www.up-2-you.net
www.smoke-free.co.uk

Publications and resources

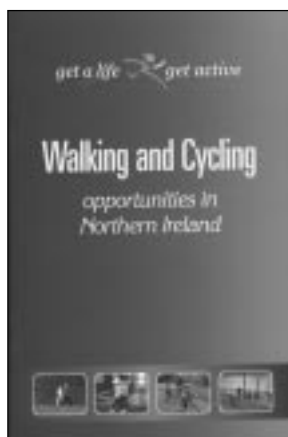
Physical Activity Resources

Get active, get walking and *Get active, get cycling*



Leaflets have been produced to support the public information campaign, which this year aims to encourage more people to take up walking and cycling. The Agency's leaflets *get a life, get active, go walking* and *get a life, get active, go cycling* outline the benefits of being more active, as well as highlighting important health and safety issues including how much time you should spend on each activity. Copies of these leaflets can be obtained by contacting the Physical Activity Coordinator in your local Health and Social Services Board.

Walking and Cycling opportunities in Northern Ireland



The Agency has produced an A5 booklet on *Walking and Cycling opportunities in Northern Ireland* to accompany phase II of the physical activity campaign *get a life, get active*. The booklet provides details of the many walking and cycling events taking place in regional and council areas throughout Northern Ireland from April to September

this year. The booklet also provides a useful directory of organisations involved in promoting walking and cycling opportunities, a guide to the Northern Ireland Country Code and a map highlighting the Cycle Network in Northern Ireland. Copies of this booklet can be obtained by contacting the Physical Activity Coordinator in your local Health and Social Services Board.

Your guide to running a walking or cycling event



The Agency has produced an A5 booklet *your guide to running a walking or cycling event* to assist the public with organising walking or cycling events. The booklet contains

information relating to legal issues, health and safety, publicity and a list of useful contacts. Copies of this booklet can be obtained by contacting the Physical Activity Coordinator in your local Health and Social Services Board.

Promoting Health Journal

The latest issue of the Agency's quarterly journal *Promoting Health* focuses on political and ethical issues in health promotion. It includes articles on the potential impact of devolution on health policy in Northern Ireland, the ethics of public health policy, and the approach taken by the Labour government in its first three years of office to reducing inequalities in health. This issue also presents selected papers from the conference 'Politics, Ethics and Health Promotion: Meeting the Challenge in Practice', which was held in April 2000.

If you would like to obtain a copy of *Promoting Health*, please contact Ann Marie McCann at the Agency.

Website: www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk

The Agency's corporate website www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk is updated on a regular basis to highlight and promote current work in all areas of health promotion including campaigns, publications/resources and research. Latest additions to the site include information about the physical activity campaign *get a life, get active*, as well as a new diary of the regional and national health initiatives supported by the Agency.