

In the news . . .

GINA monthly e-news November 09

Alcohol Bill introduced

The SNP Government has introduced an Alcohol Bill that will tackle drink-fuelled violence and health problems. Parts of the Alcohol Bill, such as proposals to ban drink promotions, powers for licensing boards to raise the age for buying drink from 18 to 21 and introducing a 'social responsibility fee' for retailers who sell alcohol are likely to win approval from opposition parties. However proposals for minimum pricing for alcohol may be defeated by opposition parties.

Jack Law, Chief Executive of Alcohol Focus Scotland said: "Alcohol Focus Scotland is profoundly disappointed at the position Labour has taken in advance of evidence to the Health Committee. This flies in the face of all the advice and evidence from Public Health and other experts who have to deal with alcohol related harm. Establishing a minimum price for alcohol is the most important element of the range of proposals the Government is proposing in the Alcohol Bill, and its rejection by Labour is a major blow which could set back our attempts to make a positive change to Scotland's drinking culture.

If the Parliament decides to reject minimum pricing, Alcohol Focus Scotland is committed to continue this campaign as we believe that this is the single most important thing to do."

The Bill can be viewed online at www.scottish.parliament.uk

MSPs concerned over women in jail



The treatment of women with mental health problems by the justice system needs to be looked into by the Scottish government, MSPs have said. Holyrood's equal opportunities committee said ministers needed to take more action to prevent female offenders from returning to a life of crime. The committee's call came after it held an inquiry into the issue. It called for more community-based sentences to be given to female offenders. According to the committee's report, **80% of female inmates have mental health problems, almost all have problems with drug or alcohol addiction** and many have children on the outside. The committee said more should be done to tackle the drugs problem at Cornton Vale, Scotland's only female prison. The report called for a more holistic approach to female offenders which takes into account their different circumstances. About 80% of women in jail have mental health problems, and about 2% of those should be in hospital, Scottish Prisons Service director of health and care Dr Andrew Fraser told the committee.

Source: BBC.co.uk, 10/11/09

WHO: Women's health an 'urgent priority'



Societies fail women at key moments in their lives by not offering them quality health care, which undermines their ability to reach their full potential, the World Health Organization says in a new report called "Women and health: today's evidence tomorrow's agenda." **The report declares that women's health is an "urgent priority"** and says that women are shortchanged on medical care especially in adolescence and, then again, later in life. "If women are denied a chance to develop their full human potential, including their potential to lead healthier and at least somewhat happier lives, is society as a whole really healthy?" asked Dr. Margaret Chan, director-general of WHO. "What does this say about the state of social progress in the 21st century?" Much of the report focuses on sexual and reproductive health, which it says are vital to women's well-being, but it also says "harmful behaviors in relation to sex, tobacco and alcohol use, diet and physical activity" during adolescence can haunt women later in life. "Establishing healthy habits at younger ages can help women to live active and healthy lives until well into old age," says the report.

Source: CNN.com, 11/11/09

Moderate drinking while pregnant doubles risk of child becoming depressed

Researchers found that **drinking up to a bottle of wine a week in the first trimester appeared to double the chance of a child becoming anxious or depressed.** If the mother drank more than this, the risk trebled. **Drinking in late pregnancy was more likely to make the child aggressive** and alcohol also appeared to increase the risk of the child developing general aches and pains. Some of the problems did not become obvious until the child was older. Scientists at the Telethon Institute for Child

Health Research in Australia surveyed 2,000 women and children, asking about the mothers' drinking habits and their children's health at the ages of two, five and eight. Researcher Colleen O'Leary said the evidence "clearly showed" that the danger of behavioural problems increased the more the mother drank and that alcohol consumption in pregnancy affected child behaviour in different ways. "This research suggests that both the timing and the intensity of alcohol exposure in the womb affect the type of behaviour problems expressed," she said.

Source: Telegraph.co.uk, 23/11/09

In Focus online

In Focus
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR ALCOHOL FOCUS SCOTLAND • ISSUE 16 November 2009

Calling time on cheap drink in Scotland

Heavy drinker research

Welcome

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Alcohol and Aging report

promoting responsibility, reducing harm, changing culture

2009 has been a very busy year for Alcohol Focus Scotland, alcohol issues having never been higher on the national agenda. Alcohol Focus Scotland recently surveyed their members regarding 'In Focus' and the results were extremely positive and they hope to make the magazine bigger and even better in 2010.

One of the most interesting results of the survey is that the majority of members would prefer to receive 'In Focus' by email rather than post. This would be a great saving to Alcohol Focus Scotland and of course to the environment. From now on GINA members will no longer receive a copy of In Focus in the post, and will instead receive the quarterly newsletter by email. However if

you wish to continue receiving 'In Focus' by post please inform us by writing to us or emailing - enquiries@alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk or telephone 0141 572 6700

Untold Damage

New research reveals that a high number of calls to ChildLine from young people concerned about their parents harmful drinking come from children in Scotland compared to the rest of the UK. The study carried out by ChildLine and SHAAP highlights children's accounts of the severe negative impacts of harmful parental drinking on their lives including emotional stress, physical abuse and neglect.

Dr Evelyn Gillan, Director of Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems and co-author of the study added: "We know that increased alcohol consumption in Scotland is driving an increase in health and social harm but what is often not acknowledged is the harm this causes to people other than the drinker."

The report, 'Untold Damage: Children's accounts of living with harmful parental drinking', can be downloaded at www.shaap.org.uk

Girls Attitudes survey



Girlguiding UK
girls in the lead

Girls' Attitudes is a survey of girls from across the United Kingdom aged 7-21 years on their attitudes towards key social, political and economic issues carried out by Girlguiding UK. The survey consisted of five categories, which girls within the guiding movement had previously identified as the most interesting areas to question their peers on:

- family and relationships
- education, training, skills and careers

- society, culture and community
- the environment
- health and wellbeing.

The health and wellbeing category looks at the issue of alcohol, revealing that 22% of girls surveyed had drunk so much alcohol that they had thrown up or lost control and that more than one in five felt that binge drinking was the most serious health issue facing their peers. The results can be viewed at

<http://girlsattitudes.girlguiding.org.uk>

Funding

Grants for Women's Projects 2009/10

The Scottish Community Foundation aims to help Scotland's communities become stronger, believing that stronger communities will be more successful communities, with a better quality of life for everyone. Women play a crucial role in creating and sustaining strong communities but there are often barriers which prevent their participation or engagement with local opportunities, or stop them fulfilling their potential to play a role within the broader community.

The Foundation established the Women's Fund for Scotland in 2002, to focus resources on projects that seek to address these barriers at a local level and enable women to develop themselves and their communities and to improve their own quality of life. Grants will be available to:

- Organisations predominantly run by and for women
- Organisations with women-only projects, which seek to support and empower women.

To apply or to get further information, groups can either contact the Scottish Community Foundation grants team on 0141 225 6670 or visit

www.scottishcf.org/grantsforwomen

to download an application form for a main grant. Groups are encouraged to apply in advance of the deadline of **Friday 11 December 2009**.

Training

Saturday 20 – Sunday 21 February 2010, On the Move: A National Training Event for Young Leaders, Stirlingshire

Girls on the Move is running a residential training event over the course of a weekend. This event is aimed at young women, aged 16 - 25, who would like to develop their leadership skills in dance, sport or physical activity. The event will run from mid morning on the Saturday to mid afternoon on the Sunday. The event offers a series of training and workshops (depending on level of experience), networking opportunities, relaxation sessions and the Moving Forward Award ceremony.

Places are limited and will be awarded on a first come first served basis. For more details please contact Jo MacDonald on 0131 5542561 email girls@youthscotland.org.uk or visit www.girlsonthemove.org.uk

Resources

Improving safety, Reducing harm: Children, young people and domestic violence

This toolkit provides specific information about children, domestic violence and related issues; an overview of Every Child Matters and the tiers of intervention; principles of commissioning services; risk assessment and safety planning information; guidance for schools; clear explanations of key standards and policies; sample forms and key fact sheets. The toolkit can be downloaded at www.dh.gov.uk

GINA festive party tips leaflet



GINA's festive party tips leaflet offers women sensible tips and advice about how to stay safe while celebrating during the festive season. Please email gina@alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk if you would like to order a supply of these leaflets.

Do you have any information you would like to share with the GINA network?

We would love to hear from you if you have examples of best practice, studies of interest, information on services or up coming events etc. If so please get in touch.

The next GINA newsletter will be distributed in December 2009.

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