

NDACT Annual Seminar

NDACT are to hold their 4th Annual seminar on **Wednesday 10th February 2010**. The theme of the event will be "Drugs and Alcohol, Suicide and Self Harm- Cause or Effect?". Details of venue, programme etc will be forwarded soon, and TIPSAs will highlight these on our website. These events are always very useful and informative and TIPSAs recommends registering as soon as you can after the booking forms have been released. Keep an eye on tipsa.co.uk for latest announcements regards the seminar- when we find out so will you.

TIPSAs Christmas Campaign

As many of you will be aware TIPSAs traditionally runs an awareness campaign coming up to Christmas. This year the issue we will be publicising will be mental health and the impact of alcohol and other drugs.

This is an area of concern in the mid-Ulster area, and TIPSAs will be highlighting this through press releases, posters and information events. Keep an eye on the website for further developments. Suggestions for further work regards this topic will also be welcome- use the phone, e-mail, Twitter, Facebook or call into the office if you have any requests or want more information or signposting.



Christmas wishes

TIPSAs would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone we have worked with a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

We will not patronise you all with a lecture about drinking habits over the Yuletide season, but it is worth remembering, particularly in regards to house parties, home measures tend to be a bit more generous than those in the pub, making it more difficult to keep track how much alcohol is being consumed.

Also remember that one alcoholic drink increases the chance of a driver having an accident, even if they don't feel drunk. Let's be mature this Christmas and remember that it isn't about beating the breathalyser, but about ensuring everyone's safety, so we can all enjoy our well earned festive period.

The TIPSAs office will be closed from Wednesday 23rd December at 5pm until 4th January 2010



Issue No. 15
Nov/Dec 2009

Gortalowry House, 94 Church St, Cookstown,
BT80 8HX
Telephone: 028 8676 3388
Email: info@cookstownhelp.com

TIPSAs Photo Competition Winner Announced

The winner of the TIPSAs "Alternative Highs" photo competition is Cookstown resident Karolina Urbanska, who submitted a picture entitled "Friday Night".

The photo (right) represents the choices individuals have to make on the way to a life full of enjoyment and fulfilment. The judges had a hard time making their decision due to the quality of the other entries (almost 50 in all) so special congratulations to Karolina. All entrants however should take pride in how the effort they put into interpreting the brief of the competition.



Above- Karolina's winning photo "Friday Night"

Karolina received her engraved iPod Nano from Sean O' Kane, TIPSAs chair and her photo is prominently displayed on the TIPSAs website and our Facebook page. It is also hoped to incorporate it into some TIPSAs publicity materials.

Karolina receives her prize from Sean O' Kane (Chair)



TIPSA on Facebook and Twitter

Continuing our search for effective ways of communicating with potential service users and raising the profile of the project TIPSA has entered the world of social networking. We now maintain a fan page on Facebook which can be accessed most easily by searching for "TIPSA" and clicking on it (not TIPSA Mid-Ulster which is just an admin page). If you are on Facebook feel free to become a fan, where you will be able to contribute to debate and content.



You can also keep up to date by becoming a follower on Twitter– search for the user name "Tipsamidulster" and add us to your list. This way you can keep track of the goings on in the TIPSA office and find out about latest developments as soon as they happen.



Don't forget you can still use the old fashioned (!) method of checking the TIPSA website for the latest news and information of programmes, courses and other new initiatives.



www.tipsa.co.uk

TIPSA Alcohol Information Day

On the 23rd October TIPSA held an alcohol information drop in in support of the NHS "Know Your Limits" campaign. From 2 until 7pm, Eugene and Martin operated from the foyer of Gortallowry House, handing out information and using imitation drinks to highlight the number of units each one contained. This led to a lot of surprised reactions and shows how many people still have very little knowledge about what alcohol is and how much they consume on a regular basis.

Even though certain publicity outlets let the project down by not carrying the information they had been provided with as regards the event happening, there were still a sizeable number of people who passed through and engaged with the workers. Once again thanks go to Gortallowry House and its staff for allowing us to use the foyer and for providing tea and coffee for anyone who wanted it. TIPSA are considering running such events on a more regular basis.

Good Luck James

After a 13 week placement from the Volunteer Centre come to an end, TIPSA was sad to see James Mallon moving on. The workers and management team express their thanks to James for his contribution to the project and wish him good luck for the future.

Condolences

TIPSA staff and management team wish to pass on their condolences to Mr Martin Fahy, SELB representative on the committee, on the recent death of his father Matt.

Strengthening Families Course- Expression of Interest

TIPSA is looking at the possibility of running a Strengthening Families 10-14 course, an 8 week programme that works with parents/guardians and young people in looking at issues that address behaviour, and in particular risk and protective factors.

This is a very resource intensive course and requires a lot of commitment from participants so TIPSA want to make sure it is viable to run and in what format we should deliver it.

If you, or any family you may know could possibly benefit from such a course contact the office, and depending on response, we will try and run with it at a time, location etc that suits as many people as possible.

Please note that as a pilot programme, this can only be run in the Cookstown area. However depending on uptake, interest etc future courses may be run elsewhere within the TIPSA catchment area.

You, Your Child and Alcohol

TIPSA accompanied Constable Martin Allen (PSNI), Phillip Moffett and Sean McElhatton (Cookstown Council) to hand out copies of the "You, Your Child and Alcohol" leaflet that has been recently produced. This is a useful tool that helps parents talk about alcohol with their kids while also highlighting the problems of mixed messages, particularly if the parents are not drinking within safe limits.

The booklet is available free in branches of Tesco's and TIPSA also has a few, so if you want to get a copy send an e-mail to info@cookstownhelp.com or phone 028 8676 3388. It is also available to download from the HSC PHA website.



Advisory Council on Misuse of Drugs Controversy

It has been hard to escape the furore over Professor David Nutt's sacking by the Home Secretary Alan Johnston and the many points of view being expressed publicly by a wide range of sources. This action by a cabinet minister, no matter which side of the debate individuals come down on, does raise issues around how scientific the basis for drugs policy is. The ACMD was set up under the 1971 Misuse of Drugs Act to advise the government on how current developments would impact on the act and what revisions they would recommend. In this case Prof Nutt seemed to be simply fulfilling his job description. The one positive has been the raising of the profile of the debate, but judging from some responses, it seems our society is still not yet fully able to have a mature full debate about drug policy without vested interests or populist histrionics taking centre stage.