

GINA monthly e-news February 2010

In the news . . .

Middle class wine drinkers 'harming their unborn children'

Sharing a bottle of wine may put women at high risk of having a child with developmental problems, researchers have said. Drinking during pregnancy can cause foetal alcohol syndrome, which can range from mild behaviour problems, to facial distortion, growth retardation and low IQ. It is thought **around one in 100 children in Britain suffer with some form of the condition** and cases may be rising as women are drinking more. Dr Raja Mukherjee, consultant psychiatrist and expert in foetal alcohol syndrome, said the science is not clear if there is a safe level to drink that will not harm the baby so the only guarantee is not to drink at all. **"That doesn't mean all women who have the odd drink are harming their baby."** He said: "In the past men would have gone out and drunk beer and women would drink very little but now people are bringing home a bottle of wine and drinking it between them at home. If they finish the wine that is 10 or 11 units between them which is close to a binge for a woman. **If they do that two or three times a week, these women are in the high risk group.**"

Source: Telegraph.co.uk, 17/02/10

Alcohol affects 'one in three' relationships



New studies have revealed one in three relationships in Scotland are marred by alcohol. **Nearly a third (30%) of adults**

have argued with a partner because of alcohol and nearly one in five (17%) have worried about the effect drinking is having on their relationship. The research was revealed by alcohol awareness charity Drinkaware, who are challenging people in Scotland to think about the damaging effect alcohol could be having on their relationship. The group said that whether on a night out, at a local pub, having dinner with friends or on the sofa in front of the TV, drinking to excess can cause unnecessary arguments and encourage irrational and unpredictable behaviour. The Drinkaware survey of adults in Scotland also shows that **nearly one in ten (8%) endure current or previous partners flirting** with other people, while more than one in ten (14%) have suffered embarrassment when a current or previous partner has had too many to drink.

Source: STV.tv, 12/02/10

Minimum price plan for alcohol backed by children's charities

A consortium of Scottish children's organisations are urging the Government to put "children's interests at the heart of alcohol policy". The NSPCC's ChildLine service in Scotland – along with seven other organisations, Children 1st, Aberlour, YouthLink Scotland, Barnardo's Scotland, Action for Children Scotland, Quarriers and Parenting across Scotland – are submitting a joint statement. **The charities warn that excessive parental drinking impacts negatively on children through emotional stress, abuse and neglect.** A joint research project by ChildLine in Scotland and Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems found **the number of Scots children talking to the service about harmful parental drinking over a 10-year period was higher in Scotland** than the rest of the UK. Most children who talk to ChildLine in Scotland about harmful parental drinking have called the helpline to talk about physical abuse or family relationships of violence and conflict in the home. Elaine Chalmers, head of ChildLine in Scotland, said: "We know from calls that harmful drinking by a parent or carer can dominate family relationships and affect children's wellbeing in every aspect of their lives. Alcohol policy needs to implement measures that will protect children from harm."

Source: HeraldScotland.com, 01/03/10

GINA Survey

At the end of 2009 GINA carried out an online member's survey using Survey Monkey. The results from this survey have now been collated and analysed and have given us a valuable insight into who the GINA network members are, what the network is used for and what the members would like to see happen in relation to continuing gender and alcohol development work in the future. Some key findings include-

- In terms of geographical areas the vast majority of respondents came from local/regional organisations with only 18% coming from a UK wide or Scotland wide organisation.
- Over 50% of the respondents work for an organisation that provides gender related services and undertakes gender specific work.
- The monthly e-news is the most popular GINA service, followed by the website and promotional materials. 95% of respondents liked the format of the e-news and found it informative and relevant to the development of their work.
- Nearly three quarters of respondents (73%) believe that the role of gender in the development of their work allows for professional development and a better understanding of clients needs. Only 4% of respondents don't see gender as relevant to the development of their work.
- In terms of future work most respondents would like to see GINA produce more fact sheets and briefing papers.
- Common suggestions for future development work and training includes FAS/D, alcohol and gender based violence and alcohol and families. Other suggestions include
 - ⇒ Working with school age young people

- ⇒ Women, work & the impact of alcohol
- ⇒ Breaking the cycle of alcohol abuse in women
- ⇒ Alcohol and depression in older females
- ⇒ Mainstreaming gender into the work of alcohol & health services
- ⇒ An evaluation of current services by female service users.

Although GINA will sadly no longer be funded as of March 31st, Alcohol Focus Scotland are endeavouring to ensure that GINA will not completely disappear. At this point Alcohol Focus Scotland are working towards at least maintaining the e-news which will continue to keep GINA members up to date with relevant news and information from Scotland and further afield. We will confirm the decision regarding this as soon as possible. In the meantime, Alcohol Focus Scotland remains committed to raising awareness and developing work around gender issues and its impact on alcohol consumption and will continue to keep the important issue of women and alcohol on the agenda at a national level. The findings of the survey will not be wasted however and will be passed on to the Alcohol Focus Scotland Board who will look at possible ways to put some of your ideas and suggestions for future work into action. **Thanks to all those who took time to complete the survey. Your valuable contributions are very much appreciated.**

New Glasgow YWCA Programme



Launched at the beginning of February the 'New Bright Futures Programme For Young Women' at Glasgow YWCA aims to build young women's confidence and support

them to get more of what they want out of life. As part of the programme they offer access to youth literacies group, computer qualifications, as well as confidence building activities, opportunities to volunteer and outdoor activities. A free crèche for young women with children is available as well as the possibility of a contribution towards transport costs. The group will meet every Thursday afternoon from 1 - 3pm. If any young women you know is interested she can self refer or be referred via an agency to Gabrielle Macbeth, Building Women's Capacity Officer, Glasgow.
YWCA Tel: 0141 248 5338
Email gmacbeth@ywcaglasgow.org

Events

Tuesday 23 March, Be careful what you wish for: Families, Drugs and Alcohol: involvement or support, London

Since it was established in 1984, Adfam has worked to support families affected by substance misuse. Over the past year, it has been evolving into an umbrella organisation, committed to representing the views of its supporters to policy makers and opinion shapers. As part of this development, Adfam has consulted with professional and volunteers across a wide range of sectors to gather information about the issues which are crucial to the future of family support. These issues inform Adfam's manifesto, and reveal the challenges and debates for anyone who works with families where substance misuse is a matter of concern. For more information and to book please visit www.pavpub.com

Tuesday 13 April Drugs & Alcohol Today, Business Design Centre, London

Price: £20 in advance, £25 on the day, £80 for five tickets. This is a one day event featuring:

- 50 stands from organisations working across drug and alcohol misuse

- 12 seminars exploring the future direction of policy and practice
- Arts Zone
- New Drug Awareness Zone
- Training and Development Zone
- Networking with 1,000 drug and alcohol workers

For more information and to book please visit www.pavpub.com

Glasgow Women's Library Spring Events Programme



The Glasgow Women's Library spring events programme is now available. The Calendar of events includes:

- One Small Step: An event for organisations and groups interested in engaging more women in healthy activities;
- Firebrand Women: a programme of talks about some really inspirational women campaigners;
- A Way With Words: a special exhibition for the launch of Glasgow Women's Aid publication "A Way With Words" from women who have left abusive men.

Information about these events and many other events can be found on the website www.womenslibrary.org.uk

Resources

On Line Toolkit on Equalities

The toolkit has been designed with community learning practitioners in mind. However it is general enough to be of benefit to a wider range of people for training purposes, or for reference. The toolkit can be accessed on the following website

<http://equalities.glasgowlearning.org.uk>

Choice, Control and Recovery: A Guide to Self-Directed Support

This booklet has been produced by the Mental Health Foundation and Voices of Experience in partnership with the Scottish Government to provide accessible information on Self-directed support (SDS) tailored to people who experience mental health problems. The booklet can be downloaded at www.mentalhealth.org.uk

NHS: Dimensions Of Diversity

Published in January 2010 by the NHS, this publication offers a concise overview of basic information about a range of population groups in Scotland, linking users to further sources of information. 13 groups (age, asylum seekers and refugees, carers, disability, ethnicity, language, literacy, migrants, poverty, prisoners, religion and belief, sex and gender, and sexual orientation) were selected for inclusion. To download this document please visit www.healthscotland.com

Websites of Interest

www.healthscotland.com/equalities

www.isdscotland.org/equalityhappytoaskdvd

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 upcoming events etc. If so please get in touch.

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