

# Promoting health and well-being

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The aim of this assignment is to carry out a health promotion campaign on an area that I feel is being publicised regularly in the media. The area that I have chosen is binge drinking as it is growing concern in today's society and by carrying out this campaign I hope to raise awareness within my chosen target group. I will look at the different aspects on binge drinking and the different campaigns undertaken by the government in order to control binge drinking. I will carry out both primary and secondary research in order to devise my health promotion campaign.

What is binge drinking?

There is no actual definition of the term 'binge drinking' although it is usually defined as drinking more than half the recommended weekly intake in one session. It is important to recognise that the majority of people do not consider themselves to be binge drinking as they may be oblivious to the recommended weekly allowance or they may be on a night out and do not realise that they are binge drinking/.

People 'binge drink for many reasons but it often caused by:

\*Peer pressure from friends

\* To escape from the pressures of life in order to relax.

\* To increase self confidence and self esteem to deal with social situations

\* To have fun

Binge drinking is also drinking with the intention of getting drunk, drinking as much as possible in a short space of time and also to the point in which you

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lose control. Binge drinking is caused by the decrease of alcohol prices so people are able to afford more. Also most people today have an increased disposable income to which they are able to spend anywhere, and most people feel spending it on drink it beneficiary.

Drinking surveys in the UK normally define Binge drinkers as men drinking eight or more units of alcohol in one drinking session and for a woman it would be six or more units. This is double the maximum recommended 'safe limit's' for men and women respectively. Many experts and institutions now use this as a definition of binge drinking. The 'National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism' defines binge drinking as a pattern of drinking that brings a person's blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to 0.08 grams percent or above. Below is a graph that shows the results of a survey carried between 1998 till 2005 of the percentage of people drinking more than the daily number of units of alcohol: ([www. sirc. org/publik/binge\\_drinking..shtml](http://www.sirc.org/publik/binge_drinking.shtml))

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Read also Six Dimensions of Health Worksheet

From this graph we can see that a higher percentage of men drink more than the recommended daily number units of alcohol than woman. But in 2004 we can see that the percentage of men binge drinking has decreased and the percentage of women has slightly decreased.

Statistics:

Binge drinking has become more and more common in today's society especially with college students as it has become the norm that they go out  
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and get drunk on a typical night out. Below are few statistics that I have found on binge drinking:

'Joseph Rowntree Foundation found that over 50% of 15 to 16 year-olds have participated in binge drinking, and another report showed that 44% of 18 to 24-year-olds are regular binge drinkers.' (<http://www.thesite.org/drinkanddrugs/drinking/problems/bingedrinking>)

" Almost one in every six female drinkers aged over 16 now drinks more than double the recommended daily amount of three units," the Joseph Rowntree Foundation found. ([http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_6783/is\\_2009\\_May\\_6/ai\\_n31616613/](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_6783/is_2009_May_6/ai_n31616613/))

These statistics are very shocking as at the age of 16 girls should not be consuming alcohol never mind drinking the double daily amount of recommended units. This shows that there are no barriers to the age that young people will start experiencing alcohol 'one third of fourteen year olds and half of fifteen years are drinking alcohol weekly' ([www.bbc.co.uk/insideout](http://www.bbc.co.uk/insideout)). If they are doing this now at such a young age then this could lead to serious implications with their health in later years.

Two in three of the 1, 600 under-18s who needed medical treatment after drinking binges last year were girls.

(<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/top-stories/2009/03/22/binge-drinking-shame-of-britain-s-teenage-girls-115875-21217342/>)

This statistic that was published by the Sunday Mirror in March of 2009 we can see from this that young women are putting themselves at risk by binge drinking.

In Northern Ireland a shocking 44% of young people admitted to having their first alcohol drink aged between 11-13 years with an unbelievable 15% of young people admitting to being just 10 or younger when they had their first alcoholic drink.

(Northern Ireland Statistics ; Research Agency) 2008

(<http://www.derrycity.gov.uk/care/alcoholcare.html>)

This statistic proves how many young people in Northern Ireland locally have had an alcoholic drink and this could lead to binge drinking very easily. We can see from this statistic that the percentage of people is increasing throughout the number of age groups.

Ireland is listed as having one of the highest levels of binge drinking among the 15-16 year age group. In a recent European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Drugs 1 in 4 young people in Ireland and the UK claim they have been drunk 20 times within the previous 30 days. (Northern Ireland Statistics ; Research Agency) 2008

Within the UK the binge drinking problem is also a major concern with " More than a third of British adults drink over the safe daily alcohol limit," (The Guardian newspaper) January 2009

(<http://www.derrycity.gov.uk/care/alcoholcare.html>)

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However the amount of adults and young people binge drinking is on the increase governments have had to put forward other ways to tackle this social problem in the form of strategies. Below are three strategies that are put in place in the UK today.

\* The know your limits campaign - This strategy was launched in 2008 by the Public Health Minister as part of a £10 million government campaign to tackle binge drinking. Its aim was to make aware to people the units in drinks so that they may be encouraged to stick to these guidelines. They advertised this campaign through adverts, radio, the press and billboards. It has a budget of £6million from 2008 and 2009 to target those at most risk of binge drinking, the 18 to 24 year olds. It provides people with guidelines of how to stick with the recommended daily units of 2-3 units a day for women and 3-4 units a day for men. As well as this it puts out there images of how binge drinking can affect the individual's health particularly through the advert on 'You wouldn't start a night like this, so why end it that way', in which the girl is shown a pouring drink all over her clothes and vomiting. (www. dh. gove. uk/en/news/recentstories/DH\_084904)

\* The safe sensible Social Strategy - This strategy was launched in 2007 by the Department of Health and Home Office. It set out goals to which they hoped to promote sensible so that harm to the person was reduced. The aims that they set out are:

\* Minimise health harms

\* Minimise violence and antisocial behaviour

\* Ensure people enjoy alcohol safely and responsibly

They aimed to encourage a safe environment by focusing on support and information for those who are at most risk.

\* The Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy - This strategy was set up for England alone by the government to decrease the harm caused by alcohol and binge drinking. It was not established to cut out drinking alcohol completely but to prevent, minimise and manage the effects of binge drinking.

Target group:

For this assignment I will be taken a sample of the population in order to carry out a questionnaire so that I am able to get their views and opinions on binge drinking. When deciding on what group I chose to target for binge drinking I took into consideration what age group and sex the health promotion campaign would benefit, will the target group be willing to participate and will they be interested in the research carried out.

I have chosen a target group which I will focus my study on and focus the types of questions I will be asking. I have chosen females between the ages of 15 - 18.

Rationale for my chosen target group:

The reason that I have chosen females between the ages of 15 - 18 was because I could relate to them as they are girls around the same age as me. I also chose this target group as they are easy to access as it relates to year

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12 to year 14 within my school. Another reason that I chose to target this age group and this sex was because, when I was looking at the statistics that I gathered both locally and nationally I found out that, over 50% of 15-16 year-olds have participated in binge drinking and almost one in every six female drinkers aged over 16 now drinks more than double the recommended daily amount of three units. Within my area in Derry it has become increasingly popular to drink at a young age and drink is very easily accessible and Fake identification is also on the increase and I would like to be more aware of these issues. So by carrying out this health promotion activity on binge drinking I feel that I can either prevent or delay them to a later age so that they are a lot more sensible and totally aware of the dangers and effects of binge drinking.

### Resources

While carry out this assignment, I have had to gather different forms of research for the chosen topic. I will now discuss the types of secondary research that I have gathered and why these are of importance:

\* Internet - I have found information regarding statistics for binge drinking rates within the UK and Derry. I have referenced the sites that I have used throughout my assignment.

\* Newspaper article - An article that was published in March of 2009 in the Sunday Mirror stating that 'Two in three of the 1, 600 under-18s who needed medical treatment after drinking binges last year were girls.'



\* Television documentary - In one of my lessons in my health and social care class I watched a programme on the effects of binge drinking that the celebrity Michelle Heaton took on in order to show the British Public what they are doing to their health and bodies. It really showed both me and the viewers the reality of the dangers of binge drinking throughout numerous weeks. It definitely portrayed the negative sides of binge drinking. I felt that it highlighted the dangers of binge drinking and the serious risks involved.

\* Health promotion leaflet regarding alcohol - Alcohol ; Young people has been put together in Northern Ireland. It includes questions and answers on alcohol and there are also useful contact details to contact in order to get advice and guidance. The leaflet was useful as it was easy read and educational for the reader.

\* A leaflet - I also used another leaflet that I found in my local hospital which clearly set out the dangers of binge drinking on the human body through a diagram. I felt that this was beneficial to me as a reader as it was easily set out.

I have used all the above resources which have enabled me to gain a greater understanding of the definition of binge drinking. I felt that this has enabled begin my health promotion campaign with a greater understanding of the term binge drinking.