Children and Young People’s Health

1. According to a review of the evidence by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) the drinking behaviour of children and young people is influenced not only by marketing and peers, but is also significantly influenced by parenting style and family cohesion. The evidence suggests that family interventions are effective at reducing risky behaviour. The review’s conclusion is that what is needed is an integrated, planned and implemented community prevention system.


2. The Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families Ed Balls has announced that personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education will be made compulsory in schools from September 2011. It will become part of the National Curriculum and will cover: leading healthier lifestyles; body image and health issues; managing personal finance; careers education; avoiding harm from alcohol and drugs; and sex and relationships.


3. The DH has updated its Healthy Child Programme guidance.

‘The Healthy Child Programme: Pregnancy and the first five years of life’ focuses on a universal preventative service, providing families with a programme of screening, immunisation, health and development reviews, supplemented by advice on health, wellbeing and parenting. ‘The Healthy Child Programme: From 15 to 19 years old’ sets out the recommended framework for universal services for children and young people in order to promote optimal health and wellbeing.

http://tinyurl.com/yfynfve

http://tinyurl.com/yfykh59

4. The Department of Health (DH) has announced that it has commissioned a review of the cultural barriers to improvement in children’s services. Sir Ian Kennedy will look at areas
such as: the care of children outside paediatric settings; health visiting and community services; the pathways of care; primary care including A&E; arrangements to safeguard children; the management of the transition to adult care; how the NHS works with its partners to support children; and how the NHS responds to the needs of families as well as individuals.

http://tinyurl.com/yk3ck39

**Employment and Health**

5. A study by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, comparing recent policy assumptions about work and worklessness with people’s experiences of living in deprived communities, has found that there is often a significant gap between the assumptions embedded in policies and the experiences of residents. The study explored four themes: the availability of work; the benefits of work; work and family life; and occupational mobility.


6. Barbara Hawkes has been appointed as the Health, Work and Well-being Coordinator (HWWC) for the South East. Barbara will facilitate an integrated approach to health and employment in the region by: developing and encouraging partnerships between employment and health networks; co-ordinating Health, Work and Well-being (HWWB) strategies and activities within the SE and across regions; and promoting best practice and encouraging innovation – in particular using the HWWB Challenge Fund.

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7. The Department for Work and Pensions’ (DWP) Challenge Fund is a competitive scheme to fund innovative projects that improve employees’ health and welfare at work and is aimed at local partnerships and small and medium sized businesses. It is available until March 2011. Applications can be made now until 31 December for an award in April 2010 and between September 2010 and December 2010 for an award in April 2011. For further information about the fund and how to apply go to the Working for Health website.


8. As part of its commitment to help local areas to develop Fit for Work Services (FFWS) aimed at supporting people to stay in or return to work more quickly when they develop a health condition or impairment, the Government is funding a programme of pilots, which it says will be robustly evaluated. In the South East, East Kent and Coastal has been chosen to be a pilot area. All FFWS pilot sites were chosen because of their potential for fulfilling the objectives of the programme which includes a focus on addressing health inequalities.


9. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has issued public health guidance for 'Promoting mental wellbeing at work'. The guidance which is aimed at those who have a direct or indirect role in, and responsibility for, promoting mental wellbeing at work, focuses on interventions to promote mental wellbeing through productive and healthy working conditions.

http://guidance.nice.org.uk/PH22
Health Inequalities

10. The Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) has published its ‘Annual Report on Poverty Statistics 2009’. Fuel poverty is defined as a household that spends more than 10 per cent of its income on fuel to maintain an adequate level of warmth. The estimated number of households in fuel poverty in the UK rose between 2006 and 2007 by 0.5 million, to around 4 million (about 16% of all households). The rise has been blamed on high fuel prices. Statistics (2006) for low level geographies such as Government Office (GO) region and Local Authority (LA) area, are available on the DECC website.


11. The Department of Health (DH) has published its second report on the Communities for Health Programme. The programme aims to help disadvantaged communities take control of their health and well-being by funding local initiatives that focus on tackling health inequalities. The report provides a ‘shop window’ overview of initiatives in over 80 Local Authorities. The programme is supported by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA).

http://tinyurl.com/ygeh9g

Health Policy / Scrutiny

12. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has published the ‘NHS Performance Ratings 2009’ for all NHS Trusts in England. There are regional analyses of performance by Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area. The picture in the South East is mixed.

http://tinyurl.com/ycn5ovk

Later Life

13. A ‘Solutions’ paper by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) says that the social care system needs to ensure older people get the information, advice and advocacy services they need to remain independent. The paper, based on work in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne to develop ways to make existing systems more ‘older person friendly’, highlights the need to persuade local partners that information and advice “is not an add-on to the day job. It is the day job”.

http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/information-advice-advocacy-for-older-people

14. The Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR) has produced a report which opens up the policy debates surrounding population ageing beyond the traditional realm of healthcare and pensions. It explores how the well-being of older people can be incorporated into four other areas: relationships, work, learning and the built environment. The report provides examples of policies and programmes that have been successful in other countries.

http://www.ippr.org.uk/publicationsandreports/publication.asp?id=707
Lifestyles

15. A YouGov poll of 2000 people, commissioned by the British Society of Gastroenterology, reveals that nearly half 49% believe alcohol consumption will continue to rise. Almost half 59% of those surveyed said that they exceeded the recommended limits and yet more than half 66% said that they would not turn to their GP if they had a drinking problem.

http://tinyurl.com/yjq5lxr

16. Evidence has been presented at a reception in Parliament, which shows that an increase of one litre in per capita consumption would lead to 928 alcohol-related deaths in the UK per annum. According to Dr Nikki Coghill of the University of the West of England (UWE), reducing consumption is highly recommended and to do this the Government should introduce a minimum price of 50p per unit. The research was commissioned by the charity Alcohol Concern and the report is available from their website.

http://info.uwe.ac.uk/news/UWENews/article.asp?item=1608
http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk/servlets/doc/1519

17. In 2008 Dr Ruth Hussey the Regional Director of Public Health (RDPH) for the North West was commissioned by the Department of Health (DH) to review the National Chlamydia Screening Programme. Dr Hussey’s review is now complete. Amongst a number of recommendations, she recommends that Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs) should coordinate a young person’s sexual health development team in each region which links related programmes to maximise the benefits and impact (HPA, SHA, GO DCSF, regional DH); and which is jointly led by the RDPH and Regional Director for Children and Learners.

http://tinyurl.com/ybnxu92

Mental Health

18. The Royal College of Psychologists (RCP), the NHS Confederation’s Mental Health Network and London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) have jointly produced a short report of their one day meeting on the ‘Mental health and the economic downturn’. The report identifies a range of priorities for Government, the NHS, commissioners and providers and for finding efficiencies. All the parties involved have committed to addressing the challenges.

http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/publications/collegereports/op/op70.aspx

Sustainability

19. The Homes and Communities Academy, the skills arm of the Government’s Homes and Communities Agency is funding an online course which aims to provide a deeper understanding of the sustainable communities agenda. The course consists of 5 online workshops, each of 2 weeks duration. On completion of the course participants receive a certificate endorsed by the Academy. The £100 course is open to all UK residents.

http://www.hcaacademy.co.uk/courses/nutshell
Events

20. The Kings Fund is hosting a conference entitled ‘A National Care Service: How would it work?’ on 10 December. The half-day event aims to: provide analysis and increase understanding of national assessment and fair funding; feature practical case studies around creating joined-up services and encouraging integrated working between health and social care professionals; and stimulate discussion and debate around the challenges to creating a National Care Service. The event costs £172 inc. VAT for public sector delegates.

http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/learn/conferences_and_seminars/a_national_care.html
http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/discuss/the_kings_fund_blog/is_the_time_now.html

Other regional public health news update services:

BOB Bulletin
A fortnightly email update containing public health news, research and information with a focus on practitioners. It includes local news specific to Bucks, Oxon or Berks.
Contact Chrissy Allott, Berks Shared Services, chrissy.allott@berkshire.nhs.uk

PH Knowledge Bulletin
A fortnightly email update containing public health news, publications and information from government and other relevant websites.
Contact Jill Rutland, Kent & Medway Public Health Observatory, jill.rutland@nhs.net

Observatory Observations
A monthly newsletter from the South East Public Health Observatory. It contains data and statistical news, and updates on the work of the Observatory and its products.
Contact Carolyn Tasker, South East Public Health Observatory, carolyn.tasker@sepho.nhs.uk

The Department of Health - South East is not responsible for the content of external websites.

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