

news release ...

With Christmas over, we all feel the pinch. All that overspending during the festive period catches up with us and the pennies are scarce, particularly in the current economic climate. So what better time for local alcohol specialists **alcohol services for the community (asc)** to launch their latest campaign to promote safer drinking in Luton?

“Cheap and nasty?” highlights the dangers of pre-loading (drinking alcohol at home before hitting the town), a common habit that is often carried out to save money. Undoubtedly starting the evening by pre-loading on cheap alcohol from a supermarket or off-licence will make for a cheaper night out, but at what cost?

A recent study of 18-35 year olds undertaken by the Centre for Public Health, Liverpool John Moores University found that:

- more than half of those interviewed usually pre-loaded
- those who pre-loaded were more likely to consume a total of over 20 units *on a night out* (compare this to the recommended maximum *weekly* safe levels of 14 units for a woman and 21 units for a man!)
- those who pre-loaded were two and a half times more likely to have been in a fight when going out in the last 12 months.

asc's Safer Drinking Manager, Sarah Loftus said “In these lean times people are understandably looking for ways to save money, but pre-loading on alcohol could well be false economy. A normal, healthy liver can only process one unit an hour, so drinking large amounts of alcohol before leaving the house, means that your risk of alcohol poisoning is greatly increased. Also it is the *style* of drinking (lots of alcohol over a very short period) that means you're more likely to be involved in nightlife violence – this type of consumption is an even more important factor than the total amount drunk. Our message for a good night out is pace yourself, stay safe and have fun”.

If you would like to order some of these A5 flyers, then please contact the Safer Drinking Team on 01582 506305 or at training@alcohol-services.co.uk or visit our website, www.alcohol-services.co.uk for details on further resources and support services.

Notes for Editors:

alcohol services for the community (asc) aims to promote a healthier lifestyle without reliance on alcohol or other drugs.

asc comprises the Safer Drinking Team (prevention), the James Kingham Project (jkgp), our adult treatment service and PUK (Prevention Understanding Knowledge Education), **asc's** dedicated young people's service.