



Press Release

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For Immediate Release

Hundreds of Young People to Discuss Teen Health

Key health issues that are affecting teenagers in communities across Ireland are to be discussed with young people at a conference the No Name Club, a leading national youth organisation, is holding in Tipperary on Saturday February 19th.

Issues surrounding drugs and alcohol, substance misuse, bullying, mental awareness and road safety will be discussed at the No Name Club Eastern and Southern Region 2011 Conference. Over 200 No Name Club host and hostesses* from clubs in Carlow, Clare, Cork, Dublin, Galway, Kildare, Kerry, Kilkenny, Meath, Waterford, Wexford and Wicklow are expected to attend the event at The Garda College, Templemore on Saturday February 19th.

At the conference, **Mr Noel Brett, Chief Executive Officer of the Road Safety Authority (RSA)** will speak with the young people on the issue of road safety and the young adult.

Speaking ahead of it, he states: *"Irish roads are safer than they have ever been, but there is still a long way to go. In 2010, 212 people died on our roads; that is 212 funerals that simply did not need to happen; 212 devastated families and communities. Every death is preventable and we need the help and energy of young people to assist in preventing further deaths and devastating injuries on our roads."*

"In 2009, 40% of deaths on Irish roads were people aged under 25. Think of all those families, friends and communities left devastated by the loss of a person needlessly on our roads. If everyone just takes the time to think about their behaviour when using the roads we can prevent this suffering as a result of deaths on our roads." Mr Brett issued a challenge to No Name Clubs to make road safety and saving lives in their community a project for their action in 2011.

Dr Brendan Byrne, teacher, guidance counsellor, researcher and author, will make a presentation on bullying. His talk will focus on the fact that we all have a responsibility to confront the issue. *"The most difficult thing to do when you are being bullied is to tell someone because of the fear that you will be called*

a rat or the shame that you feel – why me? If it goes on for long enough, you begin to feel it is your fault – ‘maybe I deserve it’. The worst part of bullying is the loneliness.

“People who are bullied know only too well what it can do. One 16 year old boy said to me ‘bullying is the breaking down of a person’, while a girl of 17 who had been excluded for six weeks by her classmates said ‘when they do that to me, I feel like a snail being crushed.’”

“Difference of any type – race, religion, appearance, personality, background or interests – does not make it acceptable to bully a person. We are all different, that’s what makes us special. People have a right to be themselves and the responsibility to treat others as they themselves would like to be treated. Silence allows people to suffer. We need to speak out when we know we should.”

On the day, representatives from the Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána will facilitate workshops on drug and alcohol awareness, substance misuse, unsocial behaviour and mental awareness.

“This will be a health conference that will engage with the young people and listen to them to hear their thoughts on important health issues that many of them encounter within their communities and indeed their lives,” **Con Nolan, No Name Club Chief Executive Officer** explains. *“When people are in their teenage years health related issues are often overlooked, but these are issues that are of critical importance to young people and we, as an organisation, are keen to work with our members to provide them with the support and confidence to address them as they move into adulthood.”*

*Hosts and hostesses are teenage male and female members of No Name Clubs and develop their leadership and confidence skills thru their involvement with the national youth organisation. They work with adult committee members to run activities and events that bring benefits to the wider community.

Press release issued by Michael McGlynn, Communications Officer with No Name Club. For further information you can contact him at 045 435444 or 087 9082970.

Note for the Editor

No Name Club is a National Voluntary Youth Organisation founded in 1978 and has 40+ clubs throughout the country. No Name Clubs are run by and for young people aged 15 years + who come together in a safe and lively environment where there’s fun, friendship and enjoyment without the pressure of alcohol or other drugs. No Name Clubs were founded to provide an alternative to pub culture for young people in Ireland. They demonstrate a lifestyle in which the use of alcohol or drugs is seen as unnecessary to the enjoyment of a happy, cheerful and fulfilling social life for young people. Over the last 30 years, thousands of young people have valued their involvement in a programme of activities that allow them to enjoy themselves socially with their peers in a safe and friendly environment, free from the dangers and influences of alcohol and drugs. At present there are over 15,000 young people involved with No Name Clubs throughout the country.