

Junior Cert. results day prompts national youth organisation to announce nationwide alcohol and drug free celebratory events campaign

Latest research finds 30% of Irish teens regularly getting drunk*

With the release of Junior Cert results only a week away and following latest HSE research which found that 30% of Irish teens are regularly getting drunk, No Name Club today launched its "Positive Alternatives" campaign. The campaign aims to provide those who sat the Junior Cert this year a choice of countrywide alcohol and drug free events to celebrate their results.

In recent years, Ireland's Junior Cert results day has been marked by binge drinking and anti-social behaviour. Fronted by RTE presenter and No Name Club supporter Aidan Power, "Positive Alternatives" will, the organisation hopes, encourage teens to celebrate their Junior Cert results at events free from the pressures of alcohol and drug use.

No Name Club, the national voluntary organisation run by and for young people to provide a range of entertainment and developmental activities without drugs or alcohol, will host over 20 celebratory events throughout the country as part of its campaign.

In comparison to other European countries Irish teens have a very high rate of alcohol consumption with 91% of adults believing underage drinking is a problem in Ireland today*. Offering young people real alternatives, No Name Club provides a number of measures nationally to delay the age at which teens start drinking or taking drugs by organising leadership courses and events which aim to build the confidence and self-esteem of young people.

Teens drink for many reasons such as acceptance, peer pressure, boredom and lack of self-esteem. The HSE's Health Promotion Department has found that the heavy use of alcohol during teenage years can impair brain development and cause memory loss. If a teenager drinks before the age of 15, they are;

1. four times more likely to develop alcohol dependency than those who wait until they are 21;
2. seven times more likely to be in a car crash because of drinking; and
3. 11 times more likely to suffer unintentional injuries after drinking.

"No Name Club enables young people to organise and enjoy positive alternatives to alcohol and drug centred activities, building self-confidence and increasing awareness of the effects of alcohol and drugs helping young people make informed choices when they are older", says Martin Ryan, CEO of No Name Club. "Our national 'Positive Alternatives' campaign provides a number of activities for young people to celebrate their results free from alcohol or drug use."

Events include a music festival in Thurles, Co. Tipperary, Cobh Youth Festival, Co. Cork, a foam disco in Mountbellew, Co. Galway and No Name Club's Rose of Carridine Competition in Ball, Co. Mayo.

At present, the organisation has almost 1,000 young people trained as youth leaders and over 10,000 young teens actively taking part in No Name Club activities and events each year. No Name Club is actively seeking volunteers to provide further clubs for young people across Ireland.

For a full list of No Name Club's Junior Cert. results celebratory events or information on setting up a club see www.nonameclub.ie or call 087 7737665 / 087 2865073.

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