

Monday 1 March 2010

Sex. Just Don't Do it – think it through

“Sex don't just do it, think it through” - the sexual health awareness campaign, developed by the Public Health Agency, will be rerun throughout March 2010. The campaign, targeting 16 – 25 year olds, aims to promote respect within relationships and empower young people to delay sexual intercourse until a time when they are ready.

Dr Bernadette Cullen, Consultant in Public Health, Public Health Agency, said: “the provision of positive and accurate information about sexual health issues is a key element in the promotion of good sexual health. With proper information and knowledge young people are more likely to avoid risky behaviour, use contraception, and access services. An evaluation of the campaign shows that it has been an effective way of getting the information across to young people”.

Sexual health is identified as an important factor contributing to good physical and mental health.¹ Young people carry a disproportionate burden of sexual ill-health, with those aged 16-24 representing 12% of the population, but accounting for nearly half of all sexually transmitted infections (STIs)² Evidence shows that young people who report an earlier age of first sexual intercourse are more likely not to have used contraception or protection against STIs³.

Further information is available from PHA campaign website www.thinkitthrough.org.uk

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For media queries contact:

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Notes to Editors:

1. The campaign 'Sex don't just do it, think it through' will run throughout March 2010. The campaign aims to promote respect within relationships and empower young people to delay sexual intercourse until a time when they are ready.

The campaign includes a series of radio and outdoor advertisements (side of buses and inside buses, 6 sheet posters and phone kiosks) washroom posters (in youth/student venues and FE colleges) and online advertising (MSN, Facebook and Google adwords).

A splash page will provide some information about sexual health and relationships and details of contact organisations. The splash page address www.thinkitthrough.org.uk features on all the campaign advertising.

2. The campaign previously ran in January/February 2009 and an evaluation was conducted following the campaign in 2009. Evaluation was positive, showing that 74% of 16-25 year olds were exposed to the campaign, with over 50% recalling at least one of each of the radio or poster ads.

¹ DHSSPSNI (2002) Investing for Health Strategy

² Health Protection Agency 2008. Sexually Transmitted Infections and Young People in the United Kingdom

³ Schubotz D, Simpson A, Rolston B. (2002) Towards better sexual health: a survey of the sexual attitudes and lifestyles of young people in NI. London.fpa