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Press Release

‘STAY SAFE AT CHRISTMAS’ CAMPAIGN FOR CRC STUDENTS

Young party-goers will be celebrating Christmas more safely this year after a campaign by Cambridge Regional College to push home the ‘Drink Aware’ message.

More than 600 students took part in workshops focusing on drinking during the party season – with top tips to avoid some of the common dangers. Many of the students were unaware of the risks of having their drinks spiked or how long alcohol could stay in the body after drinking.

Lisa Pollitt, CRC’s Safeguarding Co-ordinator, who carried out the workshops with Health and Welfare Manager Sue Smith, said a quarter of the students who took part in the workshops didn’t drink, and of those who did, many weren’t clear on the best steps to take to stay safe when out partying.

“Christmas is a big party season for students and we wanted to help them make sure safety is a priority when they go out,” she said.

“Students were given information about how to cut down their consumption of alcohol and tips about how to keep safe whilst out drinking such as sticking together, nominating someone to keep sober in the group, and protecting their drinks so that they don’t get spiked.

“Around a quarter of the students who took part in the alcohol workshops said that they didn’t drink alcohol at all. The majority who did drink alcohol were not aware of what constitutes a unit of alcohol and how long the units take to leave the body – leaving them at risk of driving the next day while over the limit.”



How much is a unit? CRC Health and Welfare Manager Sue Smith spreads the safe drinking message

A number of the students tried driving on games machines wearing specially designed “beer goggles” that gave the impression of being under the influence of alcohol – and were shocked by how much slower their reactions were and how difficult it was to control the car.

“It was quite an eye-opener for the students, who are usually good on the machines, and made them realise just how dangerous it is to drink and drive,” said Lisa.

Five hundred students filled in a questionnaire on 'Knowing your limits when drinking alcohol' and many didn't realise how easy it was to drink more than they thought – and that they could be damaging their health and putting their safety at risk, said Lisa.

"The good news is that many of the students said they will follow the advice to cut down on their units of alcohol, drink water in between drinks and eat well before going out drinking," she said.

"We were surprised by how many students didn't seem to be aware of the dangers of having their drinks spiked, so it is definitely a message worth reinforcing. All the students we spoke to said they would be far more careful with their drinks in future. Taking simple steps such as keeping their glasses or bottles with them at all times will keep them much safer.

"The feedback to the sessions was very positive and students said they had learned a lot, which we hope will make a big difference to their safe-being over Christmas."

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MEDIA ENQUIRIES

For more information, please contact Lynn O'Shea, Communications & PR Manager, on 01223 418773 or email loshea@camre.ac.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS

Cambridge Regional College is one of the largest providers of full-time further education for 16 to 19 year-olds in the eastern region. The College has more than 4,000 full-time and 6,000 part-time students, coming from a 40-mile radius, covering Cambridge and its surrounding villages, eastern Bedfordshire, northern Essex and western Suffolk. Over 80 per cent of full-time students are aged 16 to 18 years old and come to the College after secondary school; the rest are mature students, studying on a range of Access to Higher Education and vocational programmes. The College offers the largest and most comprehensive range of vocational courses in Cambridgeshire, and has one of the largest work-based learning contracts in the Eastern Region.