

## T'is The Season To Be Jolly?

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Researchers at the University of Birmingham's Business School are part of a team who have looked at issues surrounding the binge drinking culture and found that increases in young people's alcohol consumption is levelling off.

Focusing on the role of marketing practices in shaping young people's attitudes to alcohol consumption, the research included analysis of 216 alcohol adverts, both in print and broadcast. While extreme drinking and determined drunkenness may be perceived as the norm amongst young people, there is some positive news from the research.

Previously representations of binge drinking as a source of entertainment, coupled with pervasive coverage of drunken celebrities has increased the social acceptance of binge drinking. Advertising representing the 'coolness' of excessive drinking, along with the increasing use of internet based social networking sites that are used to share images of drunken nights out,, also enable the linkage between alcohol and 'having fun'.

Professor Isabelle Szmigin, from the University of Birmingham's Business School, commented "Although many young people recognise the damage that 'drinking too much' can do to their health, and the associated risks of physical and sexual assault, few view these as more than short term problems."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. The research involved in-depth interviews with 89 young people in three UK regions over a period of three years and is part of the 'Branded Consumption and Social Identification, Young People and Alcohol' project under the 'Identities and Social Actions' programme (RES 148-25-0021). This research was graded as good.

2. Principal Investigator: Prof Christine Griffin, Psychology, University of Bath; and: Prof Isabelle Szmigin, The Business School, University of Birmingham; Dr Willm Mistral, Mental Health Research & Development Unit, University of Bath; Professor Chris Hackley, Management, Royal Holloway College, University of London; Research Assistants: Dr Andrew Bengry-Howell, Psychology, University of Bath; Dr David Clarke, The Business School, University of Birmingham. Placement Students, Louise Weale and Danielle Tynan, University of Bath.

3. The research was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). The ESRC is the UK's largest funding agency for research, data resources and postgraduate training relating to social and economic issues. It supports independent, high quality research which impacts on business, the public sector and the third sector. The ESRC's planned total expenditure in 2008/09 is £203 million. At any one time the ESRC supports over 4,000 researchers and postgraduate students in academic institutions and research policy institutes. More at <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk>

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