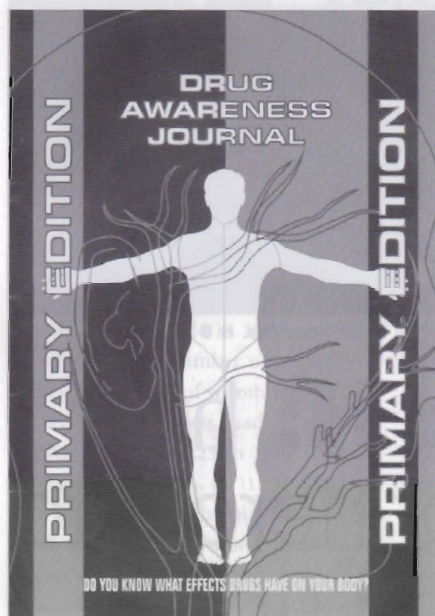


Drug education scam returns



the scheme had the backing of various celebrities including the Lancashire and England cricketer Andy Flintoff and referred to a primary school in the North West where the scheme was launched by the head teacher who set the companies up.

At the time, *Druglink* made calls to Awareness UK with the promise that a director would contact us to explain what was going on, but no calls were returned. *The Guardian* (6th October 2001) had better luck. When challenged by the reporter to explain why companies were being asked to pay for something without an agreement in writing, Awareness UK director Tracy Valentine said, 'sending paperwork is a waste of our time'.

But in November last year, following complaints, the DTI Companies Investigations Branch asked the High Court to wind up the companies in the public interest. DTI investigators found that only 2% of the funds raised had actually been spent on producing the booklets.

However, the scheme has started up again. This time under the banner of Hamilton Reid Publications with an address in Manchester, although the phone number given is unobtainable – and another Stockport-based company called Community Care Campaign (UUK). The DTI has already launched an investigation into the activities of these companies as well, but no doubt others will surface.

Any drug agencies who are approached by local businesses trying to establish the credibility of this type of scheme should refer them to the DTI Companies Investigation Branch on 0207 215 5000 (main DTI switchboard).

A £1 million scheme shut down by the DTI in November 2001 to get business to sponsor the production of drug information booklets for schools has reappeared.

During last year, 2000 companies around the country were persuaded to sponsor the production of drug awareness booklets for local schools. Companies were contacted and asked for their views on drugs. The next thing they knew, a pro forma invoice for (in some cases) hundreds of pounds, dropped through the letterbox.

Obviously many local employers would want to help schools provide drug education, but would not be aware that many schools already offer drug education using approved materials and supported by professional drugs workers. Nor would companies be able to judge the value of the materials which are, in the view of those drugs workers who have seen them, poorly produced and overpriced (£10 each) with dubious educational value.

The companies involved were Honeybee Publications Ltd and Awareness UK Ltd, both registered to an address in Stockport. Honeybee also operated from an address in London's Docklands area. There was a website for Awareness UK which claimed that



In Brief

Doping in Sport

David Sullivan's *Sunday* and *Daily Sport* have called for the legalisation of cannabis. According to the *Press Gazette* (5th April), the papers have launched a campaign to scrap all the laws relating to the control and consumption of cannabis among adults. Tony Livesey, editor-in-chief of Sport Newspapers said that his paper have always treated their readers as adults, 'We believe it is time for the Government to do the same'.

Broadreach reaches out

Broadreach House has announced that it no longer delivers a Modified Minnesota Model in any of its three centres. In accordance with its policy of developing evidence-based practice, business manager Ric Weeks says 'an entirely new approach has been designed which is ultimately more flexible, respectful, empowering and efficacious for individuals who engage in it. Drawing on the strengths of Motivational Interviewing and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, a different kind of relationship with clients evolves from that which develops within the traditional 12 step model, commonly believed to be the "one size fits all" solution to addiction'.

For more information visit www.broadreach-house.org.uk

New drugs to be controlled

The Home Office is proposing to bring eight new substances under the Misuse of Drugs Act. They are GHB (gammahydroxybutyrate); four of the anabolic steroids in the androstene group which have just been added to the International Olympic Committee list of banned drugs; remifentanil, a narcotic analgesic used in surgery; zolpidem, a drug with similar effects to barbiturates; and another narcotic analgesic dihydroetorphine which is not available in the UK.

And finally....

The chain-smoking, drug-obsessed American comedian Bills Hicks who died of cancer in 1994 at the age of 33 once mused that the mass media never carried any good news about drugs – not even once. 'Today a young man on acid realised that all matter is merely energy condensed to a slow vibration and that we are all one consciousness experiencing itself subjectively. There's no such thing as death, life is only a dream and you are the imagination of yourself. And now here's Tom with the weather'.