

16 July 2008

[Parliamentary Business](#)[Visit, Learn, Interact](#)[MSPs](#)[News, Media & Events](#)[About the Parliament](#)[Home](#) > [News, Media & Events](#) > [News](#) > [News Releases 2007](#) > [..back](#)**Related Links**[▶ Futures Forum news](#)

## Using the truth to tackle alcohol and drug misuse

17 October 2007

Scotland's Futures Forum will look at whether false perceptions about other people's drinking habits are contributing to the problem of excessive drinking, in an upcoming seminar at the Scottish Parliament organised by the Scottish Association of Alcohol and Drug Action Teams.

On Monday 22 October Dr Wesley Perkins from the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in New York will present a seminar entitled, 'Is everybody really doing it?'

Dr Perkins is an expert in social norms marketing, which aims to communicate the truth to students, and others, who often hold exaggerated views of the extent of alcohol misuse among their peers.

Once they become aware of the true level of alcohol use among others, Dr Perkins' findings have shown a significant drop in consumption.

Scotland's Futures Forum Director Robert Rae said:

"This research challenges some of the basic assumptions of health promotion work and is an important contribution to the debate on the causes of alcohol misuse."

Also presenting on Monday will be David Zucker, a key player in the social marketing field in the United States who was central to the development of the Florida Truth Campaign on tobacco.

He will discuss the success of this campaign in reducing tobacco use among Florida school students.

### **Background information on the 'Fresh Perspectives on Alcohol and Drugs' project**

Holyrood's think-tank, Scotland's Futures Forum, is carrying out an innovative study into alcohol and drugs use in Scotland.

The aim of the project is to look at the following question: "How can Scotland reduce the damage to its population

through alcohol and drugs by half by the year 2025?"

The Forum seeks to stimulate open and honest debate on the causes and impacts of drug and alcohol misuse across Scottish society.

The study will consider the views of local communities, a wide range of harm reduction measures, the role of poverty, and review international best practice.

The project aims to inform public policy debate and challenge policy makers to consider new long-term approaches to problematic alcohol and drug use. The project is due to be completed in June 2008.

### **Background information on Scotland's Futures Forum**

Scotland's Futures Forum was created by the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body in August 2005.

The forum aims to identify key challenges facing the nation and stimulate debate between MSPs, academics, civic society, wealth creators and international organisations on the ways of meeting them.

For more information about Scotland's Futures Forum see:

[www.scotlandfutureforum.org](http://www.scotlandfutureforum.org)

[www.scottish.parliament.uk/nmCentre/news/futuresforum\\_news.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/nmCentre/news/futuresforum_news.htm)

### **Media attendance and photography**

Media are welcome to attend the seminar, which will run from 12.30pm to 4.15pm on Monday 22 October in Committee Room 1.

Reporters wishing to attend the seminar should contact Kallon Basham in the Parliament's Media Relations Office on 0131 348 6088 or [kallon.basham@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:kallon.basham@scottish.parliament.uk). Photographs will be available afterwards by contacting Andrew Cowan at the Media Relations Office on 0131 348 6269 or [andrew.cowan@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:andrew.cowan@scottish.parliament.uk).

---

### **For further information, the Scottish Parliament media contact is:**

Kallon Basham: 0131 348 6088  
RNID Type talk calls welcome  
Email: [kallon.basham@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:kallon.basham@scottish.parliament.uk)

For public information enquiries, contact: 0131 348 5000  
Text phone: 0845 270 0152 RNID Typetalk calls welcome  
email: [sp.info@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:sp.info@scottish.parliament.uk)

Visit our website at: [www.scottish.parliament.uk](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk)