



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Research links the FIFA World Cup to a rise in alcohol-related domestic abuse
Swanswell has developed an innovative project to tackle the problem**

09 June, Rugby - As everyone gets ready for the World Cup, shops are beginning to drop their prices on England merchandise, large TV screens and especially alcohol. With supermarkets charging as little as 48p per pint, football fans will be stocking up before the World Cup starts on 11 June.

But behind the celebrations or commiserations there are unexpected consequences from this increase in alcohol consumption – a rise in domestic violence.

Alcohol doesn't cause violence but it can act as a trigger in abusive relationships; the *Home Office* reports that 32% of domestic violence occurs when the perpetrator is under the influence of alcohol (Finney, A., 2004)¹. They also report that 62% of domestic violence offenders are dependent on alcohol (Gilchrist et al., 2003)².

Swanswell, a charity with over forty year's experience helping people overcome alcohol, drug and other problem behaviour, has developed a unique programme to help victims and offenders of domestic violence to lead happier lives. The six session programme for offenders covers alcohol education, domestic violence myths, motivation to change and relapse prevention planning. Of the offenders we've worked with so far, 73% haven't reoffended. Swanswell are keen to share their experience of providing effective programs with other providers in their field. Jo Woods, Swanswell Operations Manager says:

'When under the influence of alcohol, arguments at home can quickly lead to fights or worse but alcohol does not and cannot make one person abuse another. There are few agencies offering services for perpetrators and victims of abuse with an alcohol problem. But our intervention demonstrates behaviour and alcohol issues can be addressed simultaneously and has resulted in great outcomes for victims and perpetrators of this often hidden violence.'

On their website, *Core Recruitment* said:

'Research provided by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) has suggested 20% of adults will watch the football World Cup 2010 in the pub this summer. In fact, the British Beer and Pub Association has estimated that a good run by the England football team in South Africa could result in an extra £124m for the pub industry.' (Core Recruitment, 2010)³

From June - July 2006, a *Home Office* report states that domestic abuse cases rose by a third on the day of England's World Cup matches, notably England defeating Paraguay on 10 June and being knocked out by Portugal on 01 July (Home Office, 2006)⁴. The same report also found that during the World Cup, 40% of offenders were under the influence of alcohol and that in 25% of all cases both the offender and the victim were under the influence of alcohol. This is concerning when the *British Crime Survey* found only 21% of women and 7% of men tell the police when they're a victim of domestic abuse (Walby, S., Allen, J., 2004)⁵.

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Notes for editors

Please see the other email attachment for a service user case study. For more information or supporting photographs or to interview service users, contact Emily Savage:

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About Swanswell

Swanswell is a national charity that helps people overcome drug, alcohol and other problem behaviour. We believe that everyone deserves the chance to change and to be happy. We help them to remove the things that stand in their way, whether physical, emotional or practical. So, as their lives improve, they can feel well, do well, and stay well. Swanswell has a reputation for innovation and is a leading developer of new services which help people to change their behaviour for the better.

Visit Swanswell at: www.swanswell.org

Service user case study

Below is a case study of a Swanswell service user who accessed our alcohol-related domestic violence project. Please contact Emily Savage to arrange an interview.

Peter referred himself to Swanswell in 2009; for the past three years his weekly alcohol consumption was three times over the safe drinking guideline for a man. His drinking behaviour led to a deterioration in his physical health and had significant effects on the family leading to incidents of domestic abuse.

Swanswell offered Peter interventions focused on alcohol and domestic abuse. Together we explored patterns of alcohol misuse, triggers for use and how to use coping strategies to avoid risky behavior.

With our support, over several sessions, Peter reduced his alcohol consumption to well within the safe drinking guidelines for a male adult. There have being no further reports of domestic abuse and the client says he's found a significant improvement in his physical health. Peter also said he felt happier after completing the sessions; he found the work difficult but enjoyed the process because it rewarded him with a better family life.

References

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5. Walby, S., Allen, J., 2004. *'Domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking: Findings from the British Crime Survey'*. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.familieslink.co.uk/download/jan07/HORS%20276.pdf> [Accessed on 24 May 2010].