

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Minister Varadkar launches drug awareness competition

Dublin, Ireland November 4th, 2014

Minister for Health, Leo Varadkar has launched the 2015 'Drugs.ie Let's Talk about Drugs National Youth Media Awards' at a photo call in the Department of Health, Dublin. This annual drugs awareness competition, which was officially launched today, is targeting young people in Ireland and aims to help students research and understand various issues relating to drug and alcohol use in Irish society.

Minister Varadkar said:

“I'm delighted to launch the 2015 'Drugs.ie Let's Talk About Drugs National Youth Media Awards'. These awards give young people an opportunity to discuss issues around alcohol and drugs through a range of media. Targeting young people with prevention in mind, and highlighting the dangers of substance abuse, are some of the most important things we can do.”

The competition is supported by the Department of Health, the HSE, COSC, the Ana Liffey Drug Project, Healthy Ireland and Drugs.ie - Ireland's National Drug and Alcohol Information and Support Website.

To enter, students are asked to create either: a short video, an audio clip, a news article; or a poster on one of the following themes: (a) The effects of alcohol on the family; (b) The effects of drugs on mental health. The age categories for entering are: 12-14; 15-17; 18-21; 22-25.

Winners from the four age categories will receive an iPad mini and the overall winner will receive a **prize of €2,000**. Winners will also have their work published on drugs.ie. The closing date for entries is February 16th 2015 and the awards ceremony will take place in April 2015.

Speaking at the launch, Tony Duffin, Director of the Ana Liffey Drug project said: **“This competition offers participants the opportunity to creatively use digital tools to present issues relating to drug and alcohol use from their own perspective. The awards are a great opportunity to recognise and reward young people who are passionate about using digital content to relay their message. I am looking forward to seeing what messages are highlighted by the many entrants and I wish everyone the best of luck!”**

For full competition details, examples of previous winners and launch photos for press visit drugs.ie/awards

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Notes for editors

Drugs.ie is an independent website funded by the HSE and managed by The Ana Liffey Drug Project. The drugs.ie site has in excess of 120,000 unique Irish visitors each year and over 500,000 international visitors annually.

For further information and/or interviews contact Tony Duffin, Director, Ana Liffey Drug Project on Mobile: 087 328 3666 Email: tony.duffin@aldp.ie



Minister for Health, Leo Varadkar T.D. and Nicki Killeen, the Ana Liffey Drug Project, Dublin launching the Drugs.ie Let's Talk about Drugs National Youth Media Awards 2015 in The Department of Health, Dublin.