



**“Fruity Friday” at Huddersfield New College**

# the ‘h’ is for ‘health’

The Kirklees Healthy College Standard is having a healthy impact on area colleges  
by **Stephen Green and Kate Birch**

**T**he “health” part of “health & safety” is sometimes overlooked. However, healthy lifestyles are moving up the agenda – and not just from Jamie Oliver’s PR about school dinners. In fact, changes in the Ofsted Framework (June 2005) mean that colleges will be expected to contribute to the Joint Area Reviews on five key issues: being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, and achieving economic well-being.

Many colleges must be left wondering where to start.

Anyone who works with students on a daily basis quickly comes to appreciate how complex some students’ lives are and how vulnerable they can be as they face the transition from college to work or higher education.

Because support and development of the whole person are essential for academic success, AoC is keen to encourage proactive college H&S initiatives, such as the Kirklees Healthy College Scheme (KHCS) at Huddersfield New College. The scheme provides colleges with a framework to audit where they are at the moment, acknowledge achievements and plan where improvements are needed.

Huddersfield New College developed the scheme in partnership with the Kirklees Healthy Schools Team, because there is no national standard for students in FE or sixth form colleges. The KHCS criteria are: whole-college awareness, active citizens, smoke-free environment, environment in and around college, healthy eating, community involvement, active lifestyle, and student and staff wellbeing.

Nine colleges have been piloting the standard for the past 18 months.

Interest in the standard has led to the setting up of a Healthy College Network. At termly meetings, members share good practice and monitor the progress of the pilot. Currently running at 95 members, the network includes a large number of FE and sixth form colleges. There is also a Healthy College website: [www.khcs.org.uk](http://www.khcs.org.uk)

Colleges that are making progress with Healthy College work share a number of common features:

- support from the college principal and senior management team
- a named person with time/funds to carry out the Healthy College co-ordinator role
- an effective cross-college task group
- student and staff consultation on health-related issues

- use of Students Health Education Unit (SHEU) questionnaires or similar to determine current student lifestyles
- cross-college awareness of the importance of health issues
- partnership working with local primary care trust/Healthy Schools team
- willingness to have onsite services for students, such as counselling on contraception and sexual health
- a great deal of enthusiasm and determination!

The scheme has been having a wide impact on practice at area colleges. Healthy activities include free fruit and water, a staff pedometer club, use of the SHEU questionnaire and action planning, condom distribution, a free fitness suite and “Fruity Friday”. ■

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To learn more about the standard or to join the network, contact Kate Birch at: [kateb@huddnewcoll.ac.uk](mailto:kateb@huddnewcoll.ac.uk) or telephone 01484 652341. Of course, all questions relating to college health and safety issues can be sent to Stephen Green at: [Stephen\\_green@aoc.co.uk](mailto:Stephen_green@aoc.co.uk) or telephone 020 7827 4600.