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POST-SNOG ANXIETY (PSA) HITS UK OFFICES THIS NEW YEAR

1 in 4 office workers worried about returning to work following a moment of passion with a colleague at Christmas

UK office workers are being afflicted by new a condition as they prepare to go to work on January 3. According to the new research by Gumtree.com, PSA, or Post-Snog Anxiety, affects one in four (24%) of workers, who will be spending their Christmas holidays worried about the repercussions of high jinx at Christmas office parties.

For many the annual office party is the highlight of the working year, yet a drunken faux pas, a fumble in the broom cupboard or a kiss under the mistletoe can ruin life at work. Nearly 5% of workers have been sacked over the festive season as a result of their mischievous antics. Over a third of (39%) office snogs simply ends in complete embarrassment and result in teasing by colleagues.

Financial workers, despite their predictable and boring image, will be the most embarrassed to return to work in 2006 – with nearly a third of nymphomaniac number crunchers having snogged a colleague this Christmas. Retail workers are the best at selling themselves with one in three (36%) getting a snog at the Christmas party.

The research, carried out after this year's seasonal soirees, reveals that as a result of these guilty feelings, romantic liaisons are better kept as discreet as possible. Two in three people believe an office relationship should remain secret whilst 67% think you shouldn't date a work colleague at all. Nearly half believe it will impact your work negatively and 53% believe it will lower your productivity.

Michael Stephanblome, Managing Director of Gumtree.com, said: "The sensitive issue of office romance is often amplified at this time of year - you spend more time with your work colleagues than anyone else, so it's easy to see how a few too many drinks at the Christmas bash can sometimes lead to more intimate encounters - our research shows that it's a major contributor to the January blues."

It's not all bad news, however, with one in two people dating a colleague after moment of passion at the office party. The best professions for meeting a mate are the catering profession with 53% of people saying they have dated a colleague, but only 31% have said this has led to a relationship. Stable relationships characterise the marketing and sales work force with 64% of people being in a relationship, 19% who have met their partner through work.

Most relationships still occur outside the office with 25% meeting their partner through friends, 18% through work or colleagues, 18% through the local pub or bar, 10% through school and university.

To make a date or find a mate in the New Year check out Gumtree.com's relationship section where you can view prospective partner's ads and post your own personal ad for free - simply click on to www.gumtree.com for further details.

About the research

Gumtree.com surveyed over 1,000 workers across seven industries to find out their opinions about seasonal interoffice tonsil tennis using Survey Monkey.