Before you ink, think!

- It is important that you think carefully about getting a tattoo. Remember, the tattoo will be permanent and tattoo removal can be expensive, take a long time and can leave scarring.

- Did you know there are risks of serious infections such as Hepatitis B, C and HIV, if the equipment used is not sterile?

- If you decide you want it done, make sure you use a reputable tattooist who uses sterile procedures and equipment.

- Check if the tattooist and the studio is legally registered with the council.

- If in doubt, just walk away!

If you have any concerns about a tattooist in your area or want a list of locally registered tattooists, you can contact the relevant councils below.

Central Bedfordshire Council: 0300 300 8000
Bedford Borough Council: 01234 718099
Luton Borough Council: 01582 510 330

For further information go to www.nhs.uk and search tattoos.