

An Issue of Influence...

Tobacco: Influence? The Great American Smoke Out: November 19th, 2009



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This month we celebrate all that we have. We give thanks for individuals in our lives that help support us and befriend us. We give thanks for the food we eat and the things we have. As we begin to gear up for the season of giving and celebrating life, we begin to look towards a new year with new possibilities and opportunities for fresh starts. Maybe we want to fix a bad habit or behavior which we have not yet tackled or accomplished. Regardless, it's about this time of the year we begin to give thought on how to better ourselves. Perhaps this is why the American Cancer Society sponsors the Great American Smoke Out in November right before the holiday season.

I can already hear a few groans out there. "Why do you need to bother me about my smoking or chewing?...I will quit when I am ready...Are you kidding, being around relatives I will need to smoke twice as much."

Personally, I live with a smoker, so I see it first hand. This time of year comes with a lot of stress. I understand how hard it is to quit. But there are two things I want to say to you: First of all, life is too precious to purposely shorten it for a few moments of the pleasure and the "calming effect" of tobacco. Secondly, what we do influences our youth.

Life is precious and it's important we focus on what we are blessed with. With the ups and downs in the economy it has been a hard year for many. Some individuals don't have a roof over their heads, enough food to fill their stomachs, transportation to work, or might even lack employment. Yet we all have things to be grateful for. We have good people in our lives and we all have opportunities to bless other people. However, use of tobacco can rob you of precious time with those you love and can also rob you of the money you need to meet basic needs. Life offers so many chemical free ways to find pleasure and calming. We encourage you to find ways that make you healthier and stronger. Positive activities and improved health can give you more time doing wonderful things with the people you care about. Those memories will last much longer than the time it takes to smoke a cigarette.

What we do influences our youth. Youth model our positive behaviors, but can also model negative behaviors whether it's smoking, drinking or taking pills to cope, calm down, or wake up. I could talk all day of the dangers of smoking to oneself or second-hand smoke to others. I could tell you all the nasty ingredients in a cigarette or how the tobacco industry spends lots of money figuring out how to target you and our youth to start smoking and chewing, both which are proven to be addictive. I could bring out the biology and discuss how you are altering the chemical reactions in your brain and body to function abnormally and make you vulnerable to cancer and other health issues and irritabilities. But what is the real reason you should quit or not start? The real reason is to be the best person you can be, physically, mentally, and relationally for yourself and for those you care about. It is *An Issue of Influence...*

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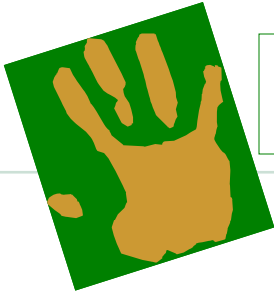
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Why Is Secondhand Smoke an Influence?

Secondhand smoke can be harmful in many ways. In the United States alone, each year it is responsible for:

- an estimated 35,000 deaths from heart disease in non-smokers who live with smokers
- about 3,400 lung cancer deaths in non-smoking adults
- other breathing problems in non-smokers, including coughing, mucus, chest discomfort, and reduced lung function
- 150,000 to 300,000 lung infections (such as pneumonia and bronchitis) in children younger than 18 months of age, which result in 7,500 to 15,000 hospitalizations
- increases in the number and severity of asthma attacks in about 200,000 to 1 million children who have asthma
- more than 750,000 middle ear infections in children

Pregnant women exposed to secondhand smoke are also at increased risk of having low birth weight babies.



When Smokers Quit- A Change in Influence

Health Benefits Over Time

20 minutes after quitting: Your heart rate and blood pressure drops.

(Effect of Smoking on Arterial Stiffness and Pulse Pressure Amplification, Mahmud, A, Feely, J. 2003. *Hypertension*:41:183.)

12 hours after quitting: The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.

(*US Surgeon General's Report*, 1988, p. 202)

2 weeks to 3 months after quitting: Your circulation improves and your lung function increases.

(*US Surgeon General's Report*, 1990, pp.193, 194,196, 285, 323)

1 to 9 months after quitting: Coughing and shortness of breath decrease; cilia (tiny hair-like structures that move mucus out of the lungs) regain normal function in the lungs, increasing the ability to handle mucus, clean the lungs, and reduce the risk of infection.

(*US Surgeon General's Report*, 1990, pp. 285-287, 304)

1 year after quitting: The excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's.

(*US Surgeon General's Report*, 1990, p. vi)

5 years after quitting: Your stroke risk is reduced to that of a nonsmoker 5 to 15 years after quitting.

(*US Surgeon General's Report*, 1990, p. vi)

10 years after quitting: The lung cancer death rate is about half that of a continuing smoker's. The risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, cervix, and pancreas decrease.

(*US Surgeon General's Report*, 1990, pp. vi, 131, 148, 152, 155, 164,166)

15 years after quitting: The risk of coronary heart disease is that of a non-smoker's.

(*US Surgeon General's Report*, 1990, p. vi)

Revised:10/26/2007

For more information:

hubbardcountydrugfree.org

<http://www.cancer.org/docroot/subsite/greatamericans/Smokeout.asp>

www.venomocity.com

Youth Event Calendar



Mondays at 5:30-7:00pm
at the Laporte School in
the FACS room.

Tuesdays at 4:00-5:30 pm
at the HAPA/Taskforce
office in the old Utke
Hardware Building

Alternative Highs

Power Team:

Nov. 18th

7:30-10:30 pm

Laporte School



Nevis 5th Quarters:

Dec. 11th

Jan. 15th

Feb. 19th

To follow home games at
Bethany Lutheran Church