

January 2011

Raising Smoke Free Children on the North Shore

As parents, our job of raising children includes great joys and challenges. It's filled with pride and worries and uncertainty. We help our children learn that their actions have consequences and teach them the skills to make healthy choices. But, they may choose to do something that has lifelong implications: they may choose to experiment with cigarettes. Every day youth on the North Shore become addicted to tobacco even though our communities have some of the lowest smoking rates in Canada.



How Can We Help Our Children Make the Healthy Choice on Smoking?

Give Them The Facts - Parents and family members can and do influence whether their children smoke. Of all the people who influence your children about smoking, you have the greatest impact. You and your child may already be aware of some of the negative facts about smoking.

- Cigarettes contain thousands of chemicals that no one would otherwise choose to put in their body, such as those found in rat poison, moth balls, batteries and toilet bowl cleansers.
- The number of people who die from smoking is five times the number of deaths attributed to AIDS, traffic accidents, suicide, murder, fires and accidental poisoning combined
- Four out of five lung cancers and one in three other cancers are caused by smoking

Flavoured or Filtered Doesn't Mean Safer

- Your child may not know that smoking flavoured cigarillos or a hookah water pipe are not safer choices than smoking cigarettes even though these are available in candy and fruit flavours which increase their

appeal to youth

- The smoke from a hookah is cooled by the water but not filtered and a single one hour session of hookah smoking can deliver as much tar as a pack of cigarettes



Lights, Camera, Action!

- It may be news to you and your children that the movie industry is influencing their choices about smoking
- Major movie characters, including animated stars, are three times more likely to smoke than people in real life and the more frequently children see smoking on screen, the more likely they are to become smokers
- Ratings for this week's movies are available on the Smoke Free Movies website <http://www.smokefreemovies.ucsf.edu/>



Second Hand Smoke

- There is no safe level of exposure to second hand smoke and even brief exposure raises blood pressure and heart rate and can trigger asthma attacks



- Smoke Free community spaces and businesses protect your family

And just when you think they are grown up

- Young adults aged 20-24 have the highest smoking rates of all age groups
- The transition from high school to post secondary schools or the workplace may place your teen in situations and communities where smoking is more common
- Information and support for smoking cessation is available by phone or online

For more information or resources on tobacco reduction initiatives contact Vancouver Coastal Health Tobacco Reduction Coordinator, Marcia Lewis marcia.lewis@vch.ca

quitnow.ca
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