PACT
PARTNERSHIP TO ASSIST WITH CESSATION OF TOBACCO

PHARMACY ASSOCIATION OF SASKATCHEWAN

10 Ways to Help Teens Quit Using Tobacco

1) Understand the attractions

Teens use tobacco for a variety of reasons such as rebellion, fitting in with their peers, or to feel cool or independent. Ask youth how they feel about their tobacco use, applaud healthy choices, and discuss the consequences of unhealthy choices.

2) Say no to teen smoking

It may often appear that what you say to teens goes one in and out the other, but say it anyway. If you're a parent, set clear boundaries for your teen around tobacco and declare your home tobacco-free. Teens of parents who set the firmest tobacco restrictions tend to use less tobacco than those whose parents do not set tobacco limits. If you're a teacher or educator, remind adolescent that in Saskatchewan it is illegal to smoke on school grounds. Your disapproval may have more impact than you think.

3) Set a good example

Adolescent smoking is more common among those whose parents smoke. If you're a parent-quit now. The earlier you quit, the less likely your child is to become a tobacco user. Explain how unhappy you are with your smoking, how difficult it is to quit, and that you'll continue to stop for good. If you are a clinician, encourage parents to quit smoking, advise them of the negative health affects for their children, and offer them cessation support.

4) Appeal to your teen's vanity

Remind adolescents that smoking is dirty and smelly. Smoking gives you bad breath, wrinkles, and makes your clothes smell terrible. Most young people prefer to date someone who does not use tobacco.

5) Do the math

Smoking is expensive. Assist adolescents in calculating how much money they would have to save if they gave up tobacco.

6) **Expect peer pressure**

Friends can be convincing so give adolescents the tools they need to refuse tobacco. (See “Let’s Get Out Of Here” handout pg. 12)

7) **Take addiction seriously**

Many adolescents believe they can stop using tobacco anytime they want. Educate youth about how difficult it can be to quit tobacco once they are addicted.

8) **Predict the future**

Many adolescents believe that bad things (like cancer, and breathing problems) only happen to other people. List the potential short and long-term consequences of tobacco use. Use real-life examples-for example celebrity actor Michael Douglas and his battle with throat cancer; or Patrick Swayze and his unsuccessful battle with pancreatic cancer at the young age of 57.

9) **Think beyond cigarettes and chew tobacco**

Candy-flavored cigarettes, cigars, hookahs and chew are sometimes mistaken as less harmful or addictive than traditional cigarettes. It is important that youth understand that all tobacco products are addictive, can cause cancer and other health problems, and are not a safe alternative.

10) **Get involved**

Have parents and adolescents take an active role against tobacco use. Plan community and school sponsored events that provide an anti-tobacco message and encourage informed and healthy decisions from youth. Have youth pledge to remain or become tobacco-free.