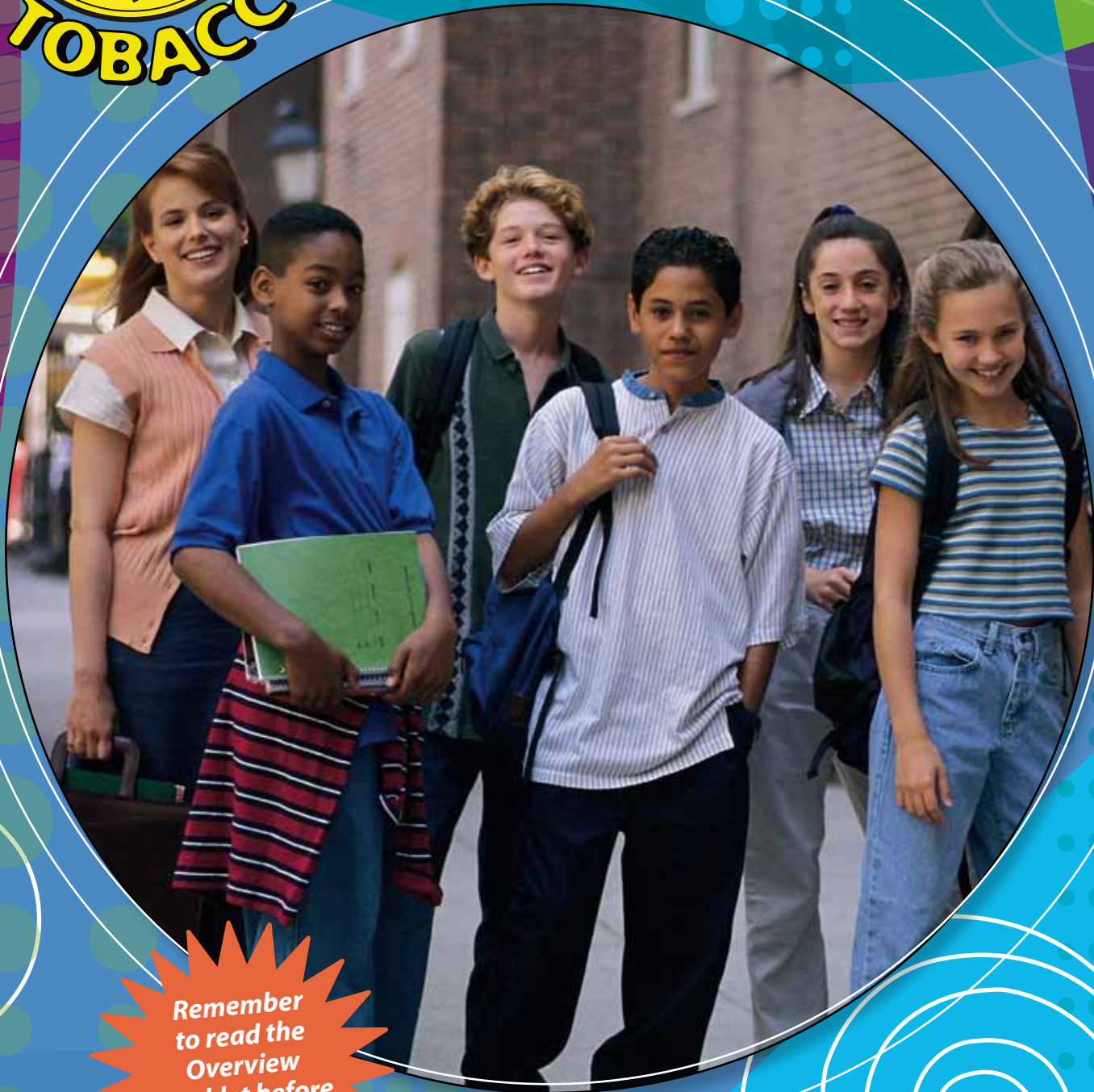


**BE  
RIGHT  
DECISIONS  
RIGHT  
NOW  
TOBACCO FREE**



**Remember  
to read the  
Overview  
Booklet before  
starting the  
unit.**

## Message to Educators

It is a fact that most young people do not use tobacco.<sup>1</sup> But, research also shows that young people are most likely to try smoking for the first time between the ages of 11 and 15, or grades 6 through 10.<sup>2</sup> One study found that the rate of smoking initiation more than doubled from 6th grade to 8th grade, from less than 10% to almost 20%.<sup>3</sup> Your students are at an age when they might consider experimenting with tobacco—some may have already. With your guidance and the activities in this booklet, your students can learn the facts and skills to help keep them tobacco free.

This booklet is part of the **Right Decisions, Right Now: Be Tobacco Free** educational program designed to help prevent young people from using tobacco (cigarettes and smokeless tobacco). It was created by Lifetime Learning Systems, Inc., and funded by R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company.

This booklet includes reproducible activities and a unit quiz for grade 7 found on pages 13 to 23, and instructions for implementing them. Before starting the unit, read the Overview Booklet for background information about the program, its components, and how it works. The Overview Booklet also contains facts about tobacco use among young people, a developmental chart (with tips for teachers), resources and references, and information you can share with your students about peer pressure and peer influence.

To use this program most effectively with your 7th grade students, complete all of the activities in this booklet in the order in which they are presented.

The activities are divided into three categories:

- **Keeping Healthy**—This section includes a survey to determine students' perceptions about tobacco, their understanding of its effects, and their experience with it. In addition, it includes activities to educate students about the health consequences of tobacco use.
- **How Friends Fit In (Interpersonal Skills)**—In this section, students explore their relationships with others. The activities focus on peer relationships and how peer pressure, influence, and acceptance may affect their lives. There are also activities on refusal skills to help equip students with strategies for saying "no."
- **How I Am (Intrapersonal Skills)**—This section has students look at how they act, feel, and think. Topics covered include self-esteem, social image, decision-making skills, and personal values (what is important to each student). The activities are designed to provide students with a chance to practice decision making and to empower them to make healthy decisions.

The reproducible quiz should be used after students complete the activities and lessons. It is designed to help you assess their understanding of the content. It includes multiple choice questions and short answer responses.

This booklet also contains tobacco-free pledges for students and parents that you can copy and distribute.

Posters and extension lesson ideas are included in the program to complement this unit. Information about how and when to use these components to supplement these lessons can be found in the Overview Booklet.

**Also Available:** A supplemental video and accompanying teacher's guide are available at [www.rightdecisionsrightnow.com](http://www.rightdecisionsrightnow.com). Look for the video icon for suggestions on when to incorporate the three video segments into your lessons.

Remember to read the Overview Booklet before starting the unit.

<sup>1</sup> CDC. Smoking & Tobacco Use. *Fact Sheet—Youth and Tobacco Use: Current Estimates (updated May 2009)*. Available online at [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/youth\\_data/tobacco\\_use/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/youth_data/tobacco_use/index.htm)

<sup>2</sup> CDC. Smoking & Tobacco Use. *2000 Surgeon General's Report—Reducing Tobacco Use. Highlights: The Impact of Educational Programs*. Available online at [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/sgr/2000/highlights/education/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/2000/highlights/education/index.htm)

<sup>3</sup> Simons-Morton, B. (2004). The protective effect of parental expectations against early adolescent smoking initiation. *Health Education Research*, Vol 19, no. 5, pages 561-569.

# Keeping Healthy

## ACTIVITY 1

### Take a Tobacco Survey

**Skills:** Assessing risks and consequences

**Suggested Time Consideration:** 25 minutes

Early adolescence is a time in which significant changes in attitudes and behaviors are typical. One of these behaviors may involve experimentation with tobacco.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, young people are becoming more independent and may start to spend more time with their friends. They will get a lot of their information (or misinformation) from their friends, potentially causing them to make decisions they will later regret. Teaching students the health consequences of tobacco use in this program is one important way to communicate the facts and help them make the decision to be tobacco free.

This activity is a student survey designed to help you launch your tobacco prevention unit and generate class discussion. It is a two-part survey that will give you insight into your students' experience with tobacco, their perceptions about tobacco use, and their prior knowledge of the topic. This information can help you more effectively implement this unit and address students' questions and concerns. The topics presented in the survey will be addressed throughout the program materials. For example, students will be provided with facts related to the health consequences of tobacco use, along with reasons why some adolescents choose to use tobacco products, and why most choose to remain tobacco free.

Part One of the survey asks students about their experience with tobacco. It includes questions taken from the CDC's *National Youth Tobacco Survey (NYTS) 2004 Questionnaire*, a survey that can be used to estimate current use of tobacco products and selected indicators related to tobacco use among U.S. middle school and high school students. These surveys are periodically done by the government to assess tobacco use. The survey and report are available online at [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/surveys/nyts/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/surveys/nyts/index.htm).

Part Two of the survey consists mostly of open-ended questions that ask students what they think or know about the prevalence and health consequences of tobacco use, quitting, and why some young people use tobacco. Students are also asked if they've ever felt pressured to use tobacco.

Since the survey asks students about their personal experience with tobacco, it should be done independently and anonymously.

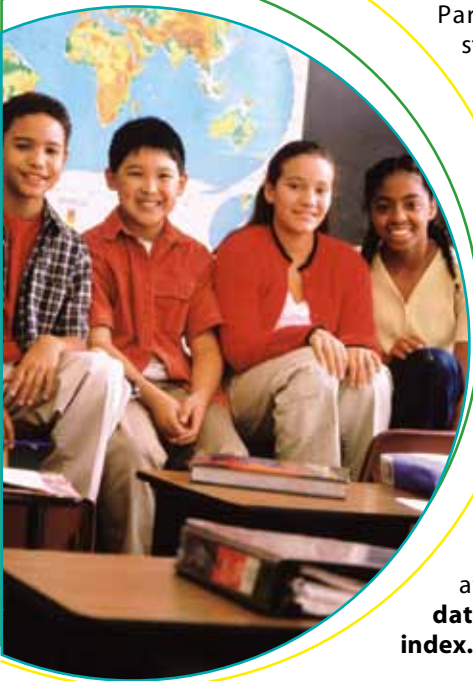
Once the survey is complete, share with your students the facts listed in the answer key to dispel misperceptions they may have about tobacco use, and to reinforce the message that most young people are tobacco free.

Before starting the activity, ask your students:

- *What have you learned about tobacco?*
- *What/who has given you information about smoking and tobacco products? (e.g., television/media, magazines/books, parents/family members, teachers, peers/friends)*

Explain to your class that they are going to take a survey about tobacco. And, let them know that they will learn facts about tobacco use and tips for coping with peer pressure in this unit.

Copy and distribute the activity. Tell students not to put their names on the pages because you will collect them afterward and you want the sheets to be anonymous. Encourage them to answer the questions as honestly as they can. Let them know that the first eight questions ask them about their experience with tobacco and are only going to be used by you to get a sense of what they have experienced. Inform them that once they are done with the survey, you will share some information with them related to Part Two. Explain that being informed is an important element of making the right decisions. Encourage students to volunteer answers during your discussion if they feel comfortable. Once you have completed all activities, please dispose of all student tobacco surveys.





## ANSWERS:

### PART ONE

Answers will vary.

1. – 8. Review the answers students provided for questions one through eight. This will give you a sense of your students' experience with tobacco, but should not be shared with the students.

### PART TWO

1. – 3. Explain to students that most young people do not smoke. Studies show that only 6% of middle school students and 20% of high school students in this country are current cigarette smokers, while 13% of high school males and 4% of middle school males are current smokeless tobacco users.<sup>1</sup> (Current is defined

as having used tobacco on at least one day in the 30 days preceding the survey.) Point out to students that the younger people are when they start smoking, the more likely they are to become addicted.<sup>4</sup>

4. Ask students if they want to volunteer answers about why young people use tobacco. Note their answers on the board. Explain to your students that some of the reasons young people try or start to use tobacco include:<sup>4,5</sup>

- They don't feel good about themselves (low self-esteem and self-image).
- They don't know about the health consequences of smokeless tobacco.
- They think lots of people smoke (overestimating number of people who smoke).
- They don't realize that they can become addicted (not understanding the addictive potential of nicotine).

5. Ask students if they want to volunteer answers about why they think young people choose to be tobacco free. Explain that some people may choose to be tobacco free because:<sup>4,5</sup>

- Their friends don't use tobacco.
- They know about the health consequences.
- They *want* to be tobacco free.

6. – 7. Explain to students that some young people try tobacco because of a "lack of self-efficacy in the ability to refuse offers to use tobacco,"<sup>4</sup> or they don't know how to tell their friends they don't want to try it.

Explain to students that people their age are sometimes pressured to use tobacco, and that pressure can be difficult to handle. Let them know that in this unit, they are going to learn some ways to say "no" and cope with peer pressure so they can be tobacco free.

If students volunteer stories, remind them not to use names. Listen to their concerns and explain to students that feeling pressure from friends happens, but that they will learn some ways to deal with the pressure.

8. Explain to students that there are health consequences related to tobacco use. According to the Surgeon General, symptoms such as coughing, shortness of breath, nausea, and phlegm production can develop in young people who smoke.<sup>4</sup> Tell them that they will learn more about the health consequences in Activities Two and Three. If students want to volunteer answers, write them on the board and then revisit the list when you read Activity Two.

9. Students might have heard that quitting tobacco is difficult, but they may not know why. Read to your students the following passage from the Surgeon General's Report "Preventing Tobacco Use Among Young People":<sup>4</sup>

*Most young people who smoke regularly are already addicted to nicotine, and they experience this addiction in a manner and severity similar to what adult smokers experience. Most adolescent smokers report that they would like to quit smoking and that they have made numerous, usually unsuccessful attempts to quit. Many adolescents say that they intend to quit in the future and yet prove unable to do so. Those who try to quit smoking report withdrawal symptoms similar to those reported by adults.<sup>4</sup>*

Students will learn more about addiction in Activity Three.

10. Answers will vary. However, explain to your students that a survey of teens reports that 65% of teens strongly dislike being around smokers.<sup>6</sup>

For additional information on factors that influence young people to use tobacco and for reasons most of them abstain, review the Overview Booklet.

To end the lesson, display the "Tobacco: Myth or Reality?" poster and review the content with your students. The poster will reinforce the message that most young people are tobacco free.

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Young People: A Report of the Surgeon General*. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 1994. Available online at [http://profiles.nlm.nih.gov/NN/B/C/F/T/\\_/nnbcft.pdf](http://profiles.nlm.nih.gov/NN/B/C/F/T/_/nnbcft.pdf)

<sup>4</sup>CDC. *Guidelines for School Health Programs to Prevent Tobacco Use and Addiction – United States, February 25, 1994*. MMWR 1994; Vol. 43, No. RR-2; 1-18. Available online at [www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00026213.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00026213.htm)

<sup>6</sup>The American Council on Science and Health (ACSH). *The Scoop on Smoking from ACSH: what every teen should know about tobacco*. Available online at <http://thescooponsmoking.org/xhtml/faq.php>

ACTIVITY  
**2**

## Tobacco Use—The Health Consequences

**Skills:** Assessing risks and consequences

**Suggested Time Consideration:** 25 minutes and project time

Young people often feel invincible. They may think tobacco causes health problems for adults, but that those same health risks won't apply to them. According to the CDC, "many children and adolescents do not understand the nature of tobacco addiction and are unaware of, or underestimate the important health consequences of tobacco use."<sup>5</sup> Therefore, they need to be reminded that health consequences of tobacco use affect everyone.

This activity explains some of these health consequences. The CDC reports each year that more deaths are caused by tobacco use than by all deaths from motor vehicle injuries, illegal drug use, alcohol use, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), suicides, and murders combined.<sup>7</sup> Share this statistic with your students.

To introduce this activity, write the following tobacco-related health consequences on the board:<sup>8,9</sup>

- halitosis (bad breath)
- shortness of breath
- stained teeth
- cracked lips
- mouth sores/bleeding in the mouth
- coughing/wheezing
- smelly hair (non-health related)
- oral cancer
- tooth loss
- throat cancer
- kidney cancer
- gum disease
- stroke
- heart disease
- emphysema
- lung cancer
- nicotine addiction

Ask students to review the list. Use the Internet ([www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco)) to define any unfamiliar terms. Then, ask students which issues on the board they believe are health consequences of tobacco use. Check each one the students suggest. Next, tell them that all of the items on the list are health consequences of tobacco

use—and they are real. Some students might be concerned about consequences such as bad breath and the smell, while others may be more concerned about the diseases.

This activity sheet outlines some of the health consequences caused by cigarettes and smokeless tobacco. Knowing the facts may prevent students from experimenting, or stop them if they've already tried tobacco.

Distribute the page and review the information with your class. Ask your health teacher or school nurse to join you for the activity. Have a dictionary or health textbook on hand so students can look up unfamiliar terms and share them with the class. After reading the page, take a class poll to see which tobacco health consequences students were familiar with, and which ones they were not. They may be surprised to learn how quickly a young person can be affected by using tobacco.


Before completing this activity, display the health consequences poster ("Look what tobacco will do."). Read the facts with your students. Remind them that these are real issues that affect people who use tobacco. Deciding to be tobacco free will help them stay healthy.

As a class, visit the CDC's Web site for additional information on health consequences at [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/health\\_effects/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/health_effects/index.htm)

### FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY:

*Cigarette smoking is responsible for about one in five deaths in the U.S. per year.*<sup>10</sup> Have students work in teams to research this fact and prepare presentations to encourage people to be tobacco free. They might use photos or images, Internet resources, books, or interviews with smokers who quit as their resources. They will then create a slideshow, poster, handouts for their peers, or any presentation method of their choice to demonstrate the health consequences of tobacco use that generate this statistic. Determine a timeframe that is appropriate for your group.

Let them get creative and use whatever aids they find most effective to do their reports/presentations. Schedule each pair/group for a different day during the unit to present its findings so your students have enough time to prepare their projects. Invite other classes in to hear the presentations.

 Use the supplemental "Totally Caught" video to complement this section.



<sup>7</sup> CDC. Smoking & Tobacco Use. *Fact Sheet—Health Effects of Cigarette Smoking* (updated May 2009). Available online at [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/health\\_effects/effects\\_cig\\_smoking/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/health_effects/effects_cig_smoking/index.htm)

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Smoking: what it means to you*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2004. Available online at [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/sgr/2004/pdfs/whatitmeanstoyou.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/2004/pdfs/whatitmeanstoyou.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> CDC. Smoking & Tobacco Use. *Information Sheets. You (th) and Tobacco—What Youth Should Know About Tobacco*. Available online at [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/youth/information\\_sheet](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/youth/information_sheet)

<sup>10</sup> CDC Smoking & Tobacco Use. *Fact Sheet—Fast Facts*. Available online at [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/fast\\_facts/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/fast_facts/index.htm)

### ACTIVITY 3

## Tobacco Addiction

**Skills:** Assessing risks and consequences

**Suggested Time Consideration:** 30 minutes

As mentioned above, adolescents may not understand the nature of tobacco addiction. This activity will explain what nicotine is and how it affects the body so that students understand the concept of addiction as they make their decisions to be tobacco free.

To introduce this activity, ask students to define “addiction.” Write their thoughts on the board or chart paper. Students might give you examples of things people might be addicted to, such as drugs, alcohol, or tobacco. Encourage them to define the term. Then, have a student provide the dictionary definition of “addiction.”

Explain to your students that they are going to read about nicotine addiction. Hand out the activity and read the passage with your students. Have students complete the questions at the bottom of the page and then review the answers together.

### ANSWERS:

1. Nicotine is a drug.
2. Most smokers use tobacco regularly because they are addicted to nicotine.
3. The adrenaline (or epinephrine) released by the body after absorbing nicotine stimulates the body and causes an increase in blood pressure, respiration, and heart rate.
4. Each year, nearly 35 million smokers want to quit.
5. Nicotine causes the same changes in the brain as heroin and cocaine.
6. Without nicotine, a smoker can feel irritable and depressed.

Next, share the following additional facts with your class:

- Studies have shown that addiction can occur after smoking as few as 100 cigarettes. And, some young people have shown symptoms of dependence within the first few weeks of using tobacco.<sup>11</sup>
- Tobacco smoke contains more than 4,000 chemicals. The most dangerous chemicals in cigarette smoke, besides nicotine, are tar and carbon monoxide. Tar causes lung cancer, emphysema, and bronchial diseases. Carbon monoxide causes heart problems.<sup>12</sup>
- Approximately 70% of adolescent smokers report that they regret ever having started smoking.<sup>13</sup>
- The younger people are when they begin smoking cigarettes, the more likely they are to become strongly addicted to nicotine.<sup>4</sup>

- Young people who try to quit tobacco suffer from the same nicotine withdrawal symptoms as adults.<sup>4</sup>
- Cigarette smoking is responsible for about 443,000 deaths per year in the U.S.—approximately one out of every five deaths.<sup>10</sup> This fact from the CDC is very real. Even more startling, based on current smoking patterns, an estimated 25 million Americans alive today will die prematurely from smoking-related illnesses.<sup>14</sup>

To wrap up the activity and reiterate the health consequences of tobacco use and the addictive nature of nicotine, discuss the warning labels that appear on tobacco products.

Explain to your students that the U.S. Surgeon General serves as the head of the United States Public Health Service and is the leading spokesperson on such matters for the U.S. government. In 1984, Congress enacted the Comprehensive Smoking Education Act, which required four specific health warnings be placed on cigarette packages and advertisements on a rotating basis.<sup>15</sup> Read or write the following warnings on the board:

- SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking Causes Lung Cancer, Heart Disease, Emphysema, and May Complicate Pregnancy.
- SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Quitting Smoking Now Greatly Reduces Serious Risks to Your Health.
- SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking by Pregnant Women May Result in Fetal Injury, Premature Birth, and Low Birth Weight.
- SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Cigarette Smoke Contains Carbon Monoxide.

The Comprehensive Smokeless Tobacco Health Education Act of 1986 required that there be three rotating warning labels on smokeless tobacco packaging and advertisements. These are:

- WARNING: This product may cause mouth cancer.
- WARNING: This product may cause gum disease and tooth loss.
- WARNING: This product is not a safe alternative to cigarettes.

Ask your students:

- *Have you seen these warning labels before?*
- *Were you aware that these health issues could result from tobacco use?*
- *Why do you think these labels are important?*

Conclude by telling students that you hope their knowledge of these health risks and the addictive nature of nicotine will help them make the right decision to be tobacco free.

### FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY:

As a group, brainstorm positive, healthy activities students can engage in as alternatives to using tobacco. For example, they could exercise, paint, draw, sing, dance...the list is endless.

<sup>11</sup> Milton, M.H., Maule, C.O., Yee, S.L., Backinger, C., Malarcher, A.M., Husten, C.G. *Youth Tobacco Cessation: A Guide for Making Informed Decisions*. Atlanta, Georgia: U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2004. Available to order at [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit\\_smoking/cessation/youth\\_tobacco\\_cessation/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit_smoking/cessation/youth_tobacco_cessation/index.htm)

<sup>12</sup> National Institute on Drug Abuse. NIDA for Teens, The Science Behind Drug Abuse. *Nicotine: What Are the Common Effects?* Available online at [http://teens.drugabuse.gov/facts/facts\\_nicotine2.asp](http://teens.drugabuse.gov/facts/facts_nicotine2.asp)

<sup>13</sup> CDC. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, May 22, 1998. Vol. 47, No. 19. Available online at [www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/wk/mm4719.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/wk/mm4719.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> CDC. Smoking & Tobacco Use. *Fact Sheet—Tobacco-Related Mortality (updated May 2009)*. Available online at [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/health\\_effects/tobacco\\_related\\_mortality/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/health_effects/tobacco_related_mortality/index.htm)

<sup>15</sup> CDC. Smoking & Tobacco Use. *2000 Surgeon General's Report—Reducing Tobacco Use. Highlights: Warning Labels*. Available online at [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/sgr/2000/highlights/labels/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/2000/highlights/labels/index.htm)

# How Friends Fit In (Interpersonal Skills)

## ACTIVITY 4

### Peer Pressure and Influence – Do Your Friends Affect Your Decisions?

**Skills:** Understanding peer relationships/Dealing with peer pressure and influence

**Suggested Time Consideration:** 30 minutes

Before starting the activity, remind your students that peer pressure occurs when the words or actions of our friends push us to do something we don't want to do. Peer influence is the urge we sometimes feel to do something other people are doing because we want them to think highly of us. (See the Overview Booklet for additional information about peer pressure and influence.)

It's important for your students to understand that no one enjoys being excluded by peers or doing things that will make peers like them any less. We can and should make decisions based on what we think is best for us, rather than on what we want others to think of us. For instance, read the following examples and comments to your students:

- Peer influence and peer pressure can have positive effects. For example, one of the boys on the football team is lazy, but when he sees all the other boys lifting weights to get ready for the upcoming season, he joins in. His decision was not based on his desire to do the work but by his desire to fit in with his teammates.
- Peer pressure can have negative effects as well. When a group of students who we want to like us all decide to cut math class and they invite us to join them, we might do so. We don't really want to miss the class, and we wouldn't cut it if no one else did, but we decide to go along because we like the approval we receive from the others in the group. Explain to students that when they understand peer pressure, they don't have to give in to it. For example, we can decide that we will go to math class, even if it costs us some popularity with the others.

In this exercise you will give your students four situations, one at a time. Have the students read each situation, and then open the class for discussion. For each situation, ask students:

- *Put yourself in the character's position. What sort of conflicting feelings might the character have?*
- *What choices does the character have?*
- *Do you think you would give in to the pressure or influence in this situation?*
- *Have you ever been in this situation or a similar one?*



#### ANSWERS:

Answers about the characters' feelings and what students would do may vary. The situations are examples of:

1. peer pressure
2. peer pressure
3. peer influence
4. peer pressure

After discussing these vignettes, break the class down into small groups and ask each group to come up with two scenarios. In one, have them devise an example of positive peer influence. Then have them devise an example involving tobacco in which negative peer influence is felt. Each group should act out its scenarios for the rest of the class.

To wrap up, talk about the difference between influence and pressure (or coercion), emphasizing the fact that—whether positive or negative—friends and peers can only encourage a certain behavior. A person is always ultimately responsible for his or her decisions and the consequences.



Use the supplemental "Eggin" video to complement this section.

## ACTIVITY 5

### What's Important to Me!

**Skills:** Understanding/Dealing with peer pressure, influence, and acceptance

**Suggested Time Consideration:** 25 minutes



Research shows that peer influence, or a child's internal desire to be accepted, is a stronger influence of tobacco experimentation than overt peer pressure.<sup>16</sup>

Many young people will try tobacco because of the kind of reaction they think they will get from their peers, even if they don't feel pressured by those peers.

This activity will help students evaluate their need for acceptance or approval by their peers, as well as the need to be themselves. Hand out the list of phrases related to things that are important to people this age. Ask students to rank the importance of each item.

When they have finished, read to them the scenario that follows the chart in the **"You Decide!"** section. Encourage discussion about why the character Tyrell does what he does, and what it might say about what he feels is important. Lead the students in a discussion of why Tyrell did what he did. Ask students:

- *Why do you think it was important to Tyrell that he try tobacco?*
- *What were his motivations to use tobacco?*
- *Do you think he would have tried smokeless tobacco if he had not been in that environment?*
- *Do you think things changed for him (or not) in the group once he adopted this behavior?*

To wrap up, get the students to talk about priorities—what is most important to them—and ask them how being tobacco free reflects their priorities. Next, ask them how Tyrell might have been able to use his own "inventory of priorities" to think through his decision and choose to be tobacco free.

## ACTIVITY 6

### Thinking Your Way to Good Decisions

**Skills:** Understanding peer relationships/Dealing with peer pressure and influence

**Suggested Time Consideration:** 25 minutes

This activity is designed to help students use their knowledge of peer pressure and influence (or the desire for acceptance) to reassess their thoughts and preconceptions about what happens in peer groups.

Organize the students into small groups and then distribute the activity. Ask them to read the first scenario and talk among themselves about what they think might happen. They should use the questions listed on the activity as a framework for discussion.

Discuss each scenario separately. In the first one, get the students to talk about why they might get tired of their friend asking to copy homework. Ask if there is a part of them that does want to give him the homework, and if so, why?

Ask students:

- *Is it possible that the decision not to share the homework might change the relationship?*
- *Is it possible that it won't change the relationship?*
- *Would you be ready to live with the consequences of your action?*

Wrap up the discussion by talking about how relationships are bound to have conflicts and disappointments, and that these might generate some anger or hurt feelings, but in most cases these feelings subside. Talk about how we can value our relationships enough to accept the good with the bad.

In the second scenario, have the students examine whether or not they would feel as though they would be treated differently by their friends. *Will you still be welcomed in the home after school? Do you want to be there? Do you have any feelings about your friend's smoking?*

To conclude, zero in on the decision not to smoke. Explain that in some cases, people continue to smoke even if they initially don't like it. Reinforce the wisdom of the decision not to smoke, and how it reflects priorities. (For example, "It's more important not to do something I don't like than it is to be accepted in my peer group.")



<sup>16</sup>Sussman, S. et al. *Developing School-Based Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation Programs*. Sage Publications, 1995.

## ACTIVITY 7

### Facing Tough Situations

**Skills:** Refusal skills

**Suggested Time Consideration:** 40 minutes

It can be uncomfortable for students to reject pressure from friends (or from within) to do something they don't want to do.

Ask students to share examples about when they might have found themselves in uncomfortable situations, and how they managed to get out of them.

Hand out the activity sheet and review the suggestions for saying "no" to tobacco. Display the poster that provides refusal tips while doing this activity.

Next, have students work in groups for the "Act It Out!" exercise. Select some groups to act out the scenarios for the class. Ask the rest of the class which refusal techniques might work best. Discuss the possible consequences that might ensue from the different techniques.

In discussion, get students to talk about which refusal techniques work better than others. Explain that in order to choose the best technique for them, they need to feel comfortable with it. They also need to consider whom they are refusing and how that person will receive the refusal. (Is this someone who responds well to humor? to confrontation? to politeness?) Get students to talk about the usefulness of practicing these sorts of strategies ahead of time so they are comfortable using them.



## ACTIVITY 8

### Let Me Illustrate

**Skills:** Analytical reasoning/Researching and creating reports

**Suggested Time Consideration:** 25 minutes and research time

In this activity, students will demonstrate what they've learned about the health consequences of tobacco use and the refusal skills presented in previous activities to create illustrations about saying "no." This will help you reinforce the message and assess students' understanding of the material.

Have students work independently or with a partner to complete the page. When they are done, have students present their illustrations to the class.

For the "Draw It!" section, brainstorm topics with your students to get them thinking about other common situations they encounter to which they can apply the refusal skills they've learned. Have students share their illustrations and then post them on a bulletin board under the heading "When Saying 'No' Is the Way to Go."

#### FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY:

Students need to be equipped with skills to refuse tobacco offers. They should also be aware of policies, rules, and laws that relate to tobacco use and possession in your area. According to the CDC: "Tobacco-free policies involving the school's faculty, staff, and students have a critical role in reducing tobacco use among young people, especially when these policies apply to all school facilities, property, vehicles, and school-sponsored events."<sup>2</sup>

Have your students work in groups to research and report back to the class on the following:

- The school's smoke-free or tobacco-free policy—Students should describe the policy, when it was implemented, and what the consequences are for breaking the policy. If your school does not have a policy, students can find out what can be done to implement one.
- State and federal laws regarding tobacco possession and/or use by minors—Students should prepare oral presentations to convey their findings.

## How I Am (Intrapersonal Skills)

ACTIVITY  
9

### My Perception!

**Skills:** Building self-esteem/Understanding personal values  
**Suggested Time Consideration:** 25 minutes

One predictor in the experimentation and escalation phases of tobacco uptake is self-image—some adolescents turn to tobacco because they think it will give them a better image.<sup>4</sup> Low self-esteem is another factor that influences a young person's decision to use tobacco. To start this activity, ask students to brainstorm words or phrases that come to mind when they think of people using tobacco. Explain that the number of people using tobacco has decreased over the past few decades.<sup>17</sup>

When a comment reflecting the perception that using tobacco makes people look “cool” is raised, challenge students to explain why. Ask them to provide specific instances to support their notion that it looks cool. Chances are that any student thinking it looks cool will point to media representation. Ask these students:

- *Would the person be cool even if he or she did not use tobacco?*
- *What other characteristics make the person cool?*
- *Do characters tend to hold cigarettes more often than smoke them? (It may be more common to see them holding cigarettes than inhaling or spitting tobacco, since these actions are usually less appealing to see.)*

Spend time discussing how important “image” should be, especially when there is a difference between image and reality. Remind students of the health consequences of tobacco use, and show them the poster with the images depicting these health issues. There is nothing “cool” about these pictures.

For additional resources related to media representation, see the resource section in the Overview Booklet and visit [www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco).

In this exercise students will examine how they see themselves and the image that they want to portray. They should write 10 adjectives that they feel are self-descriptive. Then, they will look at an illustration of young people using tobacco and write 10 adjectives to describe their perception of the characters.

Once their lists are completed, students should compare them. Create two columns on the board with the headers “Us” and “The Characters.” Ask for volunteers to share adjectives and write them under each column. If you feel your students might be reticent to share their lists, you can suggest adjectives for the “Us” column.

Remind students that perceptions are subjective. Encourage them to talk about what they might have learned about themselves and about how others see them. Then move the conversation in the direction of what constitutes a positive self-image, and raise the issue of how some people begin using tobacco simply because of how they think it makes them look.

Refer back to the list of words on the board. If your students have a positive perception of the characters in the illustration, ask them to explain why. See if some students a) think it looks cool to smoke, b) think it looks cool but isn't worth the risk, or c) think it looks ridiculous. Try to bring the conversation around to a discussion of how, when it comes to tobacco, there aren't any “positive” images.

To emphasize the point, display the poster depicting the health consequences of tobacco use. Refer to the list of words and tell students, “Keep in mind that the pictures and facts on the poster are reality.”

ACTIVITY  
10

### It's Decision Time!

**Skills:** Decision making  
**Suggested Time Consideration:** 30 minutes

Since the types of decisions students make change as they mature, this activity reviews the six steps outlined in the previous grades and has students evaluate three decisions they made recently so that they can assess their own decision-making style. (See the Overview Booklet for additional information about decision making that you can share with your students.)

Distribute the activity and ask students to list complex decisions they have made. They should work independently to describe their decisions and answer the questions about the process they go through when making them.

Ask for volunteers to share their process with the class. In the discussion, get them to talk about whether they went through all the steps involved, whether they focused on some steps more than others, what sorts of factors influenced their decisions, and how/ if stress plays a role in decision making. Also ask them to describe how they felt about the decisions they ultimately made.

Let students know that it can be helpful to know how we make decisions so that we can make the right decisions for ourselves.

Students might then complete the “You Decide!” section on their own or in groups. Reconvene to go over the students' comments on this section.

Encourage students to keep in mind the importance of evaluating options and consequences before they make a decision since they will have to deal with the results of their decisions—both the positive and negative.



Use the supplemental “Surprise Chat” video to complement this section.

<sup>17</sup>National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). Research Report Series—Tobacco Addiction. *What Are the Extent and Impact of Tobacco Use?* Available online at [www.nida.nih.gov/ResearchReports/Nicotine/whatis.html](http://www.nida.nih.gov/ResearchReports/Nicotine/whatis.html)

## Unit Quiz

# Student Assessment

**Skills:** Comprehension/Analyzing data

**Suggested Time Consideration:** 25 minutes

When you are done with the lessons and your students have completed the activities, copy and distribute the unit quiz to help you assess your students' understanding of the content. The quiz includes two parts: Part One has nine multiple choice questions, while Part Two consists of five short answer responses. In Part Two, students are asked to provide three items for each response except for number three, which asks for four items. This format allows you to base your students' scores on a 25 point scale—9 points for Part One, and 16 points for Part Two.

## ANSWERS

### PART ONE

1. **B.** Most middle schoolers are not current cigarette smokers.
2. **D.** all of the above
3. **C.** a drug found in tobacco leaves
4. **A.** True
5. **C.** Smoking cigarettes can damage nearly every organ in your body.
6. **A.** True
7. **B.** False
8. **C.** irritable and depressed
9. **A.** True

### PART TWO

Answers for Part Two will vary. Students should include the number of items requested in their responses.

#### 1. List three health consequences of tobacco use.

- strokes
- cataracts (which can cause blindness)
- emphysema
- gum disease
- pneumonia
- bronchitis
- chronic coughing
- wheezing
- heart disease
- phlegm production
- bleeding gums
- mouth sores
- shortness of breath
- hardening of the arteries
- increased risk of infection
- damaged immune system
- cancer
- being less physically fit
- impaired lung growth

#### 2. List three nicotine withdrawal symptoms.

- irritability
- craving
- cognitive and attentional deficits
- sleep disturbances
- increased appetite
- depression

#### 3. Describe the difference between peer pressure and peer influence. Then give an example of each.

- *Peer pressure* is obvious, or overt pressure from friends, and tends to involve teasing, taunting, challenging, encouraging others, or giving someone attitude. Peers pressure friends with words and actions to do something they don't want to do—it can be positive or negative.
- *Peer influence* is less obvious. It's an internal pressure people put on themselves to do something they don't want to do because they think it will help them be accepted, maintain friendships, or fit in. Peers don't actually say or do anything to encourage the friend.
- Examples will differ but should reflect the above differences.

#### 4. List three things to consider when making a decision.

Students should include any three of the following steps:

1. *Situation:* Why do you need to make a decision?
2. *Goals:* What do you want to happen?
3. *Choices:* What are your options or the alternatives?
4. *Consequences:* What could happen?
5. *Decision:* What will you do?
6. *Think About It:* Did you make the right decision?

#### 5. You want to be tobacco free. List three ways you could say "no" to a friend who offers you a cigarette or smokeless tobacco.

- Say "no" and suggest something else.
- Say "no" and talk about the consequences.
- Say "no" and give a reason or explain why you said "no."
- Say "no" and reverse the pressure.
- Say "no" and change the subject.
- Say "no" and add some humor.
- Say "no" and walk away.

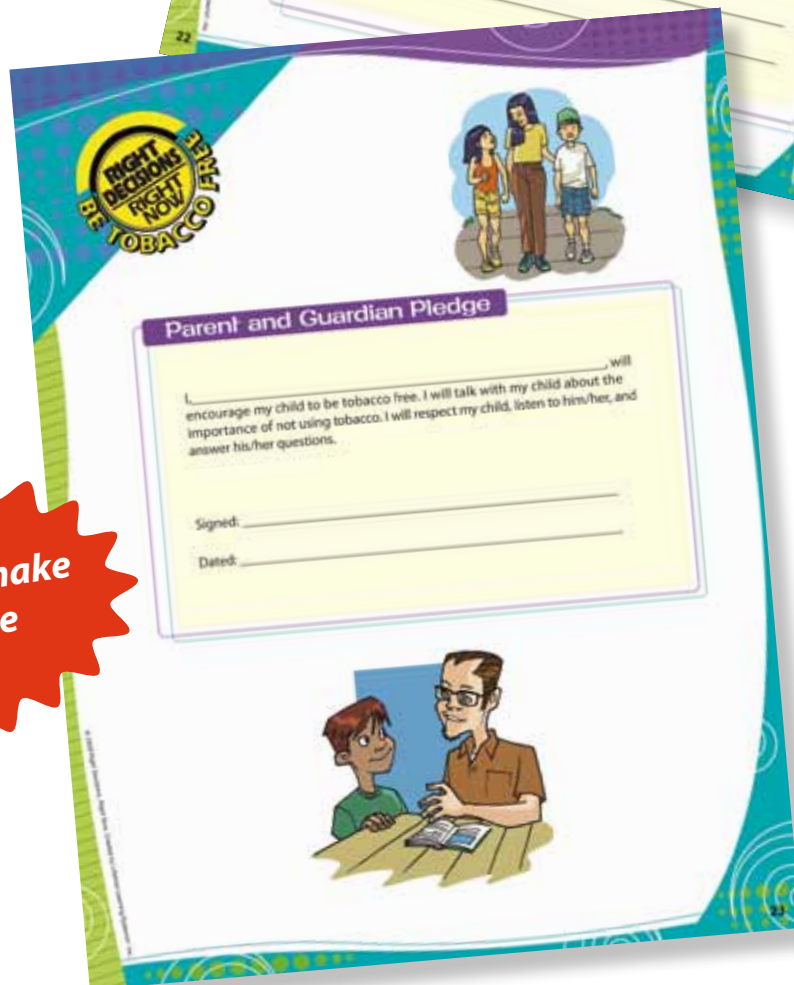
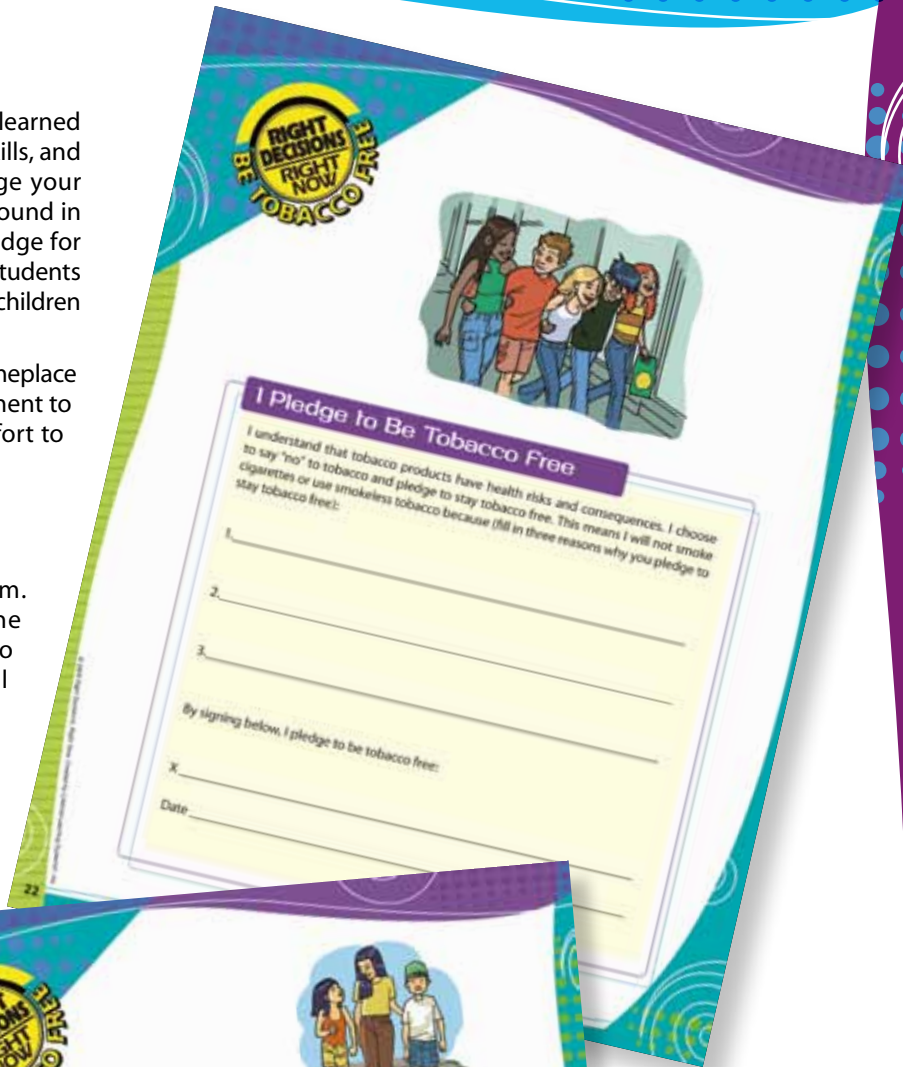
## Tobacco-Free Pledge

You've now completed the program. Your students have learned about the health consequences of tobacco use, refusal skills, and decision-making skills. To conclude the unit, encourage your students to sign the reproducible tobacco-free pledge found in the back of this booklet. There's also a reproducible pledge for parents and guardians that you can send home with your students so that parents and guardians can commit to helping their children be tobacco free.

Encourage your students to fill out the form and keep it someplace where they can refer to it as a reminder of their commitment to remain tobacco free. Congratulate students for their effort to stay tobacco free.

## Program Evaluation Form

We'd like to hear your thoughts about the program. Please complete the program evaluation form online once you've used the materials with your students to tell us your opinion. The evaluation includes general questions about the program components, as well as specific questions about the lessons and activities for grade 7. To complete the program evaluation, go to [www.rightdecisionsrightnow.com/educators](http://www.rightdecisionsrightnow.com/educators), click on **materials**, and then click on **evaluation form**.



**Congratulate  
your students who make  
the decision to be  
tobacco free.**



# Take a Tobacco Survey

This survey is a reality check. The questions are meant to help you, your teachers, and class engage in a discussion about tobacco. Do NOT put your name on the paper. Put a check next to your answers to the questions in Part One, and then write your answers to the questions in Part Two. Try to answer all of the questions as honestly as you can. If you do not want to answer a question, leave it blank.



## PART ONE<sup>18</sup>

- Have you ever tried cigarette smoking, even one or two puffs?**  Yes  No
- During the past 30 days, on how many days did you smoke cigarettes?**  
 0 days       1 or 2 days       3 to 5 days       6 to 9 days  
 10 to 19 days       20 to 29 days       all 30 days
- Have you ever used chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip?**  Yes  No
- During the past 30 days, on how many days did you use chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip?**  
 0 days       1 or 2 days       3 to 5 days       6 to 9 days  
 10 to 19 days       20 to 29 days       all 30 days
- How many of your four closest friends smoke cigarettes?**  
 none       one       two       three       four       not sure
- How many of your four closest friends use chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip?**  
 none       one       two       three       four       not sure
- If one of your best friends offered you a cigarette, would you smoke it?**  
 definitely yes       probably yes       probably not       definitely not
- Do you think it is safe to smoke for only a year or two, as long as you quit after that?**  
 definitely yes       probably yes       probably not       definitely not

## PART TWO

- Do you think most middle school students smoke?  YES  NO
- Do you think most high schoolers smoke?  YES  NO
- Do you think most young males use smokeless tobacco?  YES  NO
- Why do you think young people smoke cigarettes or use smokeless tobacco? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- Why do you think young people who don't use tobacco choose to be tobacco free? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- Have you ever felt pressured to use tobacco? If so, what did you do? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- Have you learned ways to say "no" to offers of tobacco? If so, explain how you would refuse the offer.  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you think there are health consequences from using tobacco? If so, what do you think they are?  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you think it's easy or difficult for people to quit using tobacco? Explain your answer.  
 Easy  Difficult  \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you think most young people like or dislike being around smokers?  
 Like being around smokers  Dislike being around smokers

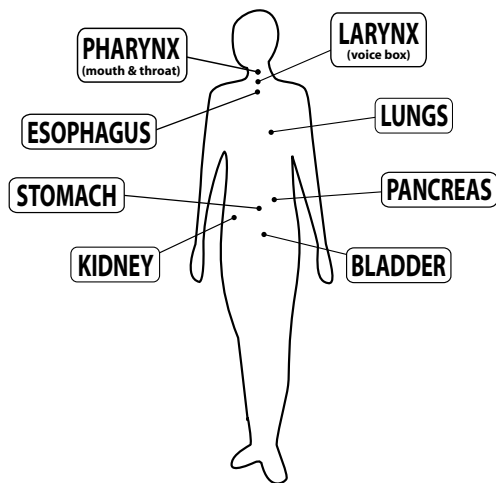
Like playing sports? Need to climb stairs every day? Do you sing or dance? Then make sure you have the breath to do it by not using tobacco!

<sup>18</sup> Source: National Youth Tobacco Survey (NYTS) 2004 Questionnaire. Available online at [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/surveys/NYTS/#NYTS2004](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/surveys/NYTS/#NYTS2004)

# Tobacco Use— The Health Consequences

You've probably heard that using tobacco is unhealthy. But do you know that smoking cigarettes can damage almost every organ in your body?<sup>19</sup> Take a look at some of the diseases and health problems smoking causes:<sup>19</sup>

## Cancer of the:



## More Health Problems:

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| stroke                                | emphysema  |
| cataracts (which can cause blindness) | chronic coughing                                     |
| gum disease                           | wheezing   |
| pneumonia                             | heart disease  |
| bronchitis                            | hardening of the arteries (which affects blood flow) |

Smoking also damages the immune system, which increases a person's risk of getting infections. And, once they get sick, smokers often take longer to recover than people who don't smoke.<sup>19</sup>

## What About Smokeless Tobacco?

Chew, dip, snuff, or spit tobacco—it's all smokeless tobacco. But, it's not a safe alternative to smoking cigarettes.<sup>20</sup> There are health risks with using smokeless tobacco:

- It is a known cause of cancer—increasing a user's risk of oral cancer.<sup>20</sup>
- It can cause bleeding gums and mouth sores.<sup>21</sup>
- It can lead to nicotine addiction.<sup>20</sup>

Still not convinced it's harmful? Read this: According to the CDC, a high school athlete who used spit tobacco died of oral cancer when he was 19!<sup>21</sup>

## Chemical Reaction: Count to 10

After smoke is inhaled, it only takes 10 seconds for nicotine, an addictive chemical found in tobacco, to reach the brain.<sup>19</sup> Cigarettes and smokeless tobacco both contain nicotine. Nicotine is absorbed through the lungs with cigarette smoke, and through the mouth with smokeless tobacco.<sup>22</sup> Nicotine affects the brain's reactions<sup>22</sup> and narrows a person's blood vessels, making it tougher for the heart to work.<sup>21</sup>

## Think Young People Can't Be Affected? Guess Again!

Young people who smoke cigarettes are likely to be less physically fit and have more respiratory (breathing) problems than people their age who don't smoke.<sup>23</sup> Coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, and phlegm production are symptoms that young people who use tobacco report they are more likely to experience than their non-smoking peers.<sup>23</sup>

And then there's the issue of addiction, making it difficult to stop doing something. The younger a person is when he or she starts smoking cigarettes, the more likely he or she is to become addicted to nicotine.<sup>23</sup> Most young people who smoke regularly are addicted to nicotine, making it hard for them to quit.<sup>23</sup>

## What Else Is There?

Tobacco causes bad breath and stains your teeth.<sup>21</sup> Smoke can make your clothes and hair stink.<sup>21</sup>

## What Is Secondhand Smoke?

Secondhand smoke is made up of smoke that comes off the burning cigarette and the smoke that the smoker exhales.<sup>24</sup> According to the Surgeon General, "there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke: even small amounts of secondhand smoke can be harmful to people's health."<sup>24</sup>

Visit [www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco) for additional information about diseases and health consequences related to tobacco use.

<sup>19</sup>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Smoking: what it means to you*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2004. Available online at [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/sgr/2004/pdfs/whatitmeanstoyou.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/2004/pdfs/whatitmeanstoyou.pdf)

<sup>20</sup>CDC. Smoking & Tobacco Use. *Fact Sheet—Smokeless Tobacco (updated May 2009)*. Available online at [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/smokeless/smokeless\\_facts/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/smokeless/smokeless_facts/index.htm)

<sup>21</sup>CDC. Smoking & Tobacco Use. *Information Sheets. You(th) and Tobacco—What Youth Should Know About Tobacco*. Available online at [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/youth/information\\_sheet](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/youth/information_sheet)

<sup>22</sup>NIDA for Teens. *The Science Behind Drug Abuse. Mind Over Matter: Nicotine; The Brain's Response to Nicotine*. Available online at [http://teens.drugabuse.gov/mom/mom\\_nic1.asp](http://teens.drugabuse.gov/mom/mom_nic1.asp)

<sup>23</sup>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Young People: A Report of the Surgeon General*. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 1994. Available online at [http://profiles.nlm.nih.gov/NN/B/C/F/T/\\_/nmbcft.pdf](http://profiles.nlm.nih.gov/NN/B/C/F/T/_/nmbcft.pdf)

<sup>24</sup>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General—What Is Secondhand Smoke?* Available online at [www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/secondhandsmoke/factsheets/factsheet1.html](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/secondhandsmoke/factsheets/factsheet1.html)

# Tobacco Addiction



Approximately seventy percent (70%) of adolescents who smoke regret ever starting.<sup>25</sup> Why don't they just quit? Because it may not be that easy. According to a report from the U.S. Surgeon General, most teens who smoke want to stop.<sup>26</sup> But they can't because "most young people who smoke regularly are already addicted to nicotine."<sup>26</sup> Read the following selected excerpts from two reports of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) to better understand nicotine and addiction:

- *Nicotine is the drug in tobacco leaves. Whether someone smokes, chews, or sniffs tobacco, he or she is delivering nicotine to the brain.*<sup>27</sup>
- *Immediately after exposure to nicotine, there is a "kick" caused in part by the drug's stimulation of the adrenal glands and resulting discharge of epinephrine (adrenaline). The rush of adrenaline stimulates the body and causes an increase in blood pressure, respiration, and heart rate.*<sup>28</sup>
- *Most smokers use tobacco regularly because they are addicted to nicotine. Addiction is characterized by compulsive drug seeking and use, even in the face of negative health consequences. It is well documented that most smokers identify tobacco use as harmful and express a desire to reduce or stop using it, and nearly 35 million of them want to quit each year. Unfortunately, more than 85 percent of those who try to quit on their own relapse, most within a week.*<sup>28</sup>
- *Nicotine also attaches to neurons (brain cells) that release a neurotransmitter called dopamine. Nicotine stimulates neurons to release unusually large amounts of dopamine. Dopamine stimulates the brain's pleasure and reward circuit, a group of brain structures called the limbic system involved in appetite, learning, memory, and feelings of pleasure.*<sup>29</sup>
- *In 40 minutes, half the effects of nicotine are gone. So smokers get the urge to light up for another dose of the drug. After repeated doses of nicotine, the brain changes. To adjust to too much dopamine, the brain cuts production of the neurotransmitter and reduces the number of some receptors. Now, the smoker needs nicotine just to create normal levels of dopamine in his or her brain. Without nicotine, the smoker feels irritable and depressed. The smoker has trained the limbic system to crave tobacco. Think about how you long for a cold drink on a hot day. Or how you want a sandwich when you are hungry. Craving for tobacco is much stronger.*<sup>29</sup>
- *These changes in the brain and body make nicotine highly addictive. Other addictive drugs of abuse, including heroin and cocaine, cause the same changes in the brain.*<sup>29</sup>
- *Nicotine withdrawal symptoms include irritability, craving, depression, anxiety, cognitive and attention deficits, sleep disturbances, and increased appetite.*<sup>28</sup>

## ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BASED ON THE ABOVE PASSAGE.

1. Nicotine is a \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Most smokers use tobacco regularly because they are \_\_\_\_\_ to nicotine.
3. The \_\_\_\_\_ released by the body after absorbing nicotine stimulates the body and causes an increase in blood pressure, respiration, and heart rate.
4. Each year, nearly 35 million smokers want to \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Nicotine causes the same changes in the \_\_\_\_\_ as heroin and cocaine.
6. Without nicotine, a smoker can feel \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

<sup>25</sup> CDC. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, May 22, 1998. Vol. 47, No. 19. Available online at [www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/wk/mm4719.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/wk/mm4719.pdf)

<sup>26</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Young People: A Report of the Surgeon General*. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 1994. Available online at [http://profiles.nlm.nih.gov/NN/B/C/F/T/\\_/nnbct.pdf](http://profiles.nlm.nih.gov/NN/B/C/F/T/_/nnbct.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> NIDA for Teens. The Science Behind Drug Abuse. *Nicotine*. Available online at [http://teens.drugabuse.gov/facts/facts\\_nicotine1.php](http://teens.drugabuse.gov/facts/facts_nicotine1.php)

<sup>28</sup> National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). *Research Report Series—Tobacco Addiction*. NIH Publication Number 09-4342, Revised June 2009. Available online at [www.nida.nih.gov/PDF/TobaccoRRS\\_v16.pdf](http://www.nida.nih.gov/PDF/TobaccoRRS_v16.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> NIDA for Teens. The Science Behind Drug Abuse. *Nicotine*. Available online at [http://teens.drugabuse.gov/facts/facts\\_nicotine2.php](http://teens.drugabuse.gov/facts/facts_nicotine2.php)



# Peer Pressure and Influence—

## Do Your Friends Affect Your Decisions?

Peer pressure can influence a person's decisions. Friends might pressure you by teasing you or giving you a lot of attitude. Other times you might feel pressured to do something you don't want to do because you think your friends want you to do it, but they don't actually say or do anything to encourage you at all. This is peer influence—you make a decision to do something because you think your action will make you fit in better.

Read each situation below. First, decide if it is an example of peer pressure or peer influence and put a check by your answer. Then think about how the person being pressured might feel. Next, decide what you would do in the situation.

1.) Letisha has a sister who is in the grade ahead of her. Letisha likes it when her sister lets her hang out with her and her friends because at their school it's considered pretty cool to be seen with kids older than you. One afternoon Letisha is at home with the older girls. There are no adults around. The older girls let Letisha hang out with them. The next thing she knows, they are all lighting cigarettes. One of the girls holds an open pack in front of Letisha and offers her one. Letisha shakes her head "no," but the girl is insistent. The other girls, including Letisha's sister, join in encouraging her to have one.

Peer pressure \_\_\_\_\_ Peer influence \_\_\_\_\_

What might Letisha be feeling? \_\_\_\_\_

What would you do? \_\_\_\_\_

2.) Steve likes a particular group of guys because they always spend time together and seem to laugh a lot. They don't socialize much with other students, preferring to spend most of their free time together. Lately, some of them have been talking casually with Steve, and he has expressed to them his interest in becoming a part of their group. The guys tell Steve he can become part of the group but first he has to go down to the neighborhood supermarket and steal one candy bar for each guy.

Peer pressure \_\_\_\_\_ Peer influence \_\_\_\_\_

What might Steve be feeling? \_\_\_\_\_

What would you do? \_\_\_\_\_

3.) Morgan is at a party at an older student's home. The girl's parents are home for a while, but they then go out for the evening. Shortly after, a few students take out beer from the refrigerator and begin to drink. Soon, several people are drinking. Morgan doesn't want to drink and would like to go home. But she lives too far away from where the party is being held to walk and may have to wait for a ride home.

Peer pressure \_\_\_\_\_ Peer influence \_\_\_\_\_

What might Morgan be feeling? \_\_\_\_\_

What would you do? \_\_\_\_\_

4.) Three of José's friends have gotten their hands on next week's history exam. They offer to show José, but José declines. They warn him not to tell. When the three all get unusually high grades for the test, the teacher is suspicious and asks them if they cheated. They say "no." The teacher then asks the class if any of them have any knowledge of whether these three had an unfair advantage.

Peer pressure \_\_\_\_\_ Peer influence \_\_\_\_\_

What might José be feeling? \_\_\_\_\_

What would you do? \_\_\_\_\_



# What's Important to Me!

Below is a chart with a list of phrases that describe things people may value, or find important. After each word or phrase, check the box that indicates how much value it has in your life.

PHRASE	LOW IMPORTANCE	MEDIUM IMPORTANCE	HIGH IMPORTANCE
Being a member of the "in group" at school			
Being a successful athlete			
Having more freedom to come and go as I please			
Having good friends			
Maintaining good eating and hygiene habits			
Having a nice appearance			
Doing what is right			
Getting good grades			
Having interests outside of school			
Being liked by my teachers			
Being very popular			
Being tobacco free			
Being respectful			
Being willing to experiment and take risks			
Being considered funny by my friends			
Standing up for myself			
Having money to spend			
Being respected			
Having the latest styles in clothing, jewelry, etc.			
Saying "no" to my friends when they do something I don't want to do			
Having more responsibility at home			
Fitting in			
Deciding what I want to do when I become an adult			



## You Decide!

Tyrell is walking home from school with a group of friends. In the past few weeks, some of them have started using smokeless tobacco on the way home. This goes on for several days, after which most of Tyrell's friends have picked up the behavior. One day, Tyrell reaches into his pocket, pulls out a pouch of smokeless tobacco, and starts dipping.

Could this be you? Take a look at the list of what's important to you. How would using tobacco go against what's important to you? \_\_\_\_\_

How could Tyrell (or you) deal with the peer influence when it comes to using tobacco? \_\_\_\_\_

# Thinking Your Way to Good Decisions

Imagine yourself in the two hypothetical situations below. Read each one and then discuss the questions that follow with your group. Talk about what you think might be the consequences for the friendships, and how you might deal with the consequences if this were to happen to you.

## First Situation:

Your friend did not do his science homework and asks if he can copy yours. He is not doing well in the class and will get detention if he does not hand in his homework. He has asked to copy your homework before, and you are tired of it. You tell him you won't let him copy.

- What do you think will happen?
- Do you think your friend will do or say anything to you right away?
- How will you deal with the immediate consequences?
- Do you think your friend will act differently toward you a few weeks after the incident?
- Do you think your decision will have any negative long-term effects on your friendship?

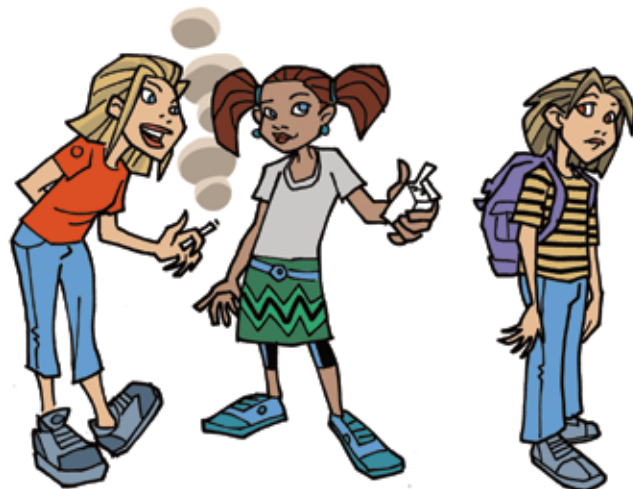
## Second Situation:

Your best friend has started smoking because her older sister does. You're at their house after school, and they are smoking with some other friends. You ask for a cigarette because you think it will make you fit in. You hate it. The next two times you hang out, they offer you cigarettes, but you say "no."

- What do you think will happen?
- Do you think your friends will act differently toward you for not smoking? Why or why not?
- If they do act differently, how will you deal with it?
- Why is it more important to do what you think feels right than to do something just to go along with the group?

## You Decide!

Sometimes we think the outcome of doing something difficult, like saying "no" to our friends, is going to be worse than it is. Chances are that your friends will respect you more for standing up for what you believe in and doing what's right for you than for just going along with them for the sake of wanting to be the same. It might just be a matter of how you look at the situation and how you approach it.





# Facing Tough Situations

Sometimes preparing for situations before they happen can help you deal with them when or if they do happen. For example, learning ways to say “no” to your friends who pressure you to do things you don’t want to do can be helpful.

When you are feeling pressure to use tobacco products because they are being offered to you, you can refuse in any number of ways. Check out the techniques and examples below.

*A small group of students has gathered at a friend’s house one evening. When cigarettes come out, Susan is offered one by a casual friend. She chooses not to accept. She responds to the offer by saying...*

- “No, thanks, I’d just rather not. Let’s go talk to Erika instead.” (Suggest something else.)
- “No. Tobacco ‘perfume’ is not for me.” (Add some humor.)
- “No, I’m really trying to take care of my health and cigarettes just aren’t good for me.” (Talk about the consequences.)
- “No, I think I’ll pass.” Then, if the person persists, Susan says, “I’m not going to do that, and I’m going to ask you to please stop pressuring me.” (Stand up for yourself.)
- “No. If I do this I’m sure I’ll be caught by my parents, and they’ll really have a fit.” (Give a reason.)
- “No, thanks. Did you watch that new show last night?” (Change the subject.)
- “No. As a matter of fact, I think I’ll be taking off now. I’ll see you another time.” (Walk away.)
- “Why in the world would you want to use tobacco that’s smelly, expensive, illegal, and bad for your health?”<sup>30</sup> (Reverse the pressure.)

Which techniques might work for you? Why?

## Act It Out!

Read the scenarios below. With your group, role-play each situation. Be prepared to discuss how best to say “no” and “escape” each situation. Use the techniques listed above, or come up with your own.

- You are hanging out in a park with some friends. Some are smoking. One person offers you a cigarette by saying, “Here, you always refuse these, but it’s about time you try one.”
- You are with a friend and his older brother, who says to you, “Y’know, I waited until the seventh grade before I started using tobacco. I think it’s time you guys got started.” He gives his younger brother some tobacco, and the brother accepts it. It’s then offered to you.
- You’re walking home from the movies with four friends, and one friend pulls out moist snuff, a type of smokeless tobacco. Your friend says, “I’m feeling pretty generous today, so your first taste is on me.” The tin is passed around and everyone takes a dip. Then the tin is offered to you.

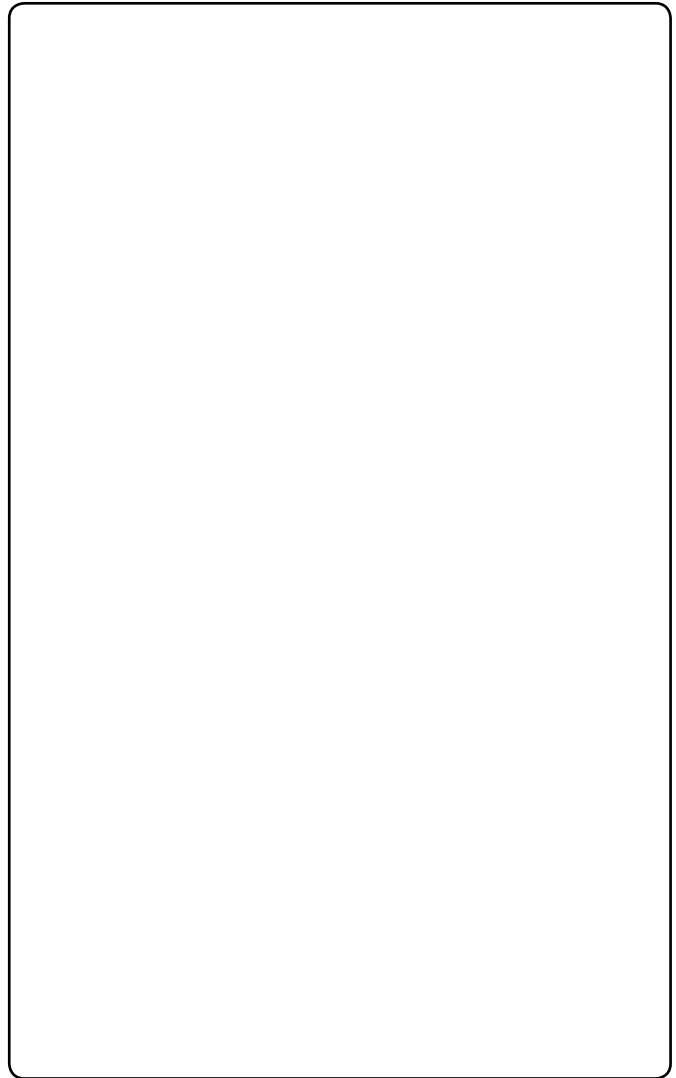
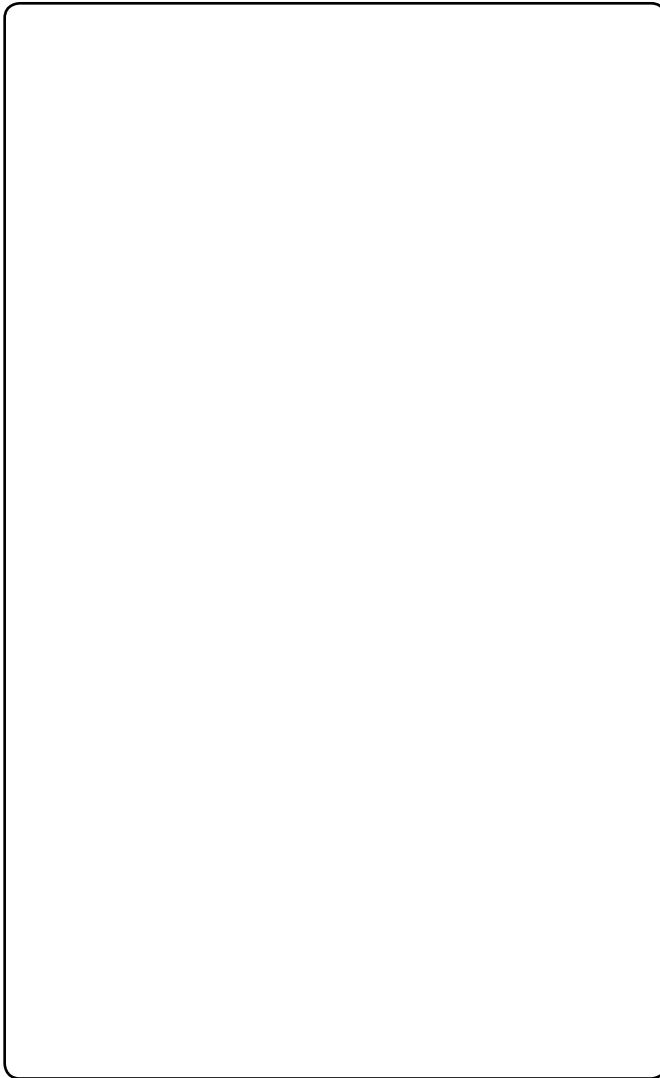
<sup>30</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Smoking: what it means to you*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2004. Available online at [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/sgr/2004/pdfs/whatitmeanstoyou.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/2004/pdfs/whatitmeanstoyou.pdf)



# Let Me Illustrate

It's time to put your knowledge about the health consequences of tobacco use and techniques for saying "no" to work. In the boxes below, illustrate a situation in which someone your age is being pressured to use tobacco or is thinking about trying tobacco in the hope that it will help him or her gain acceptance from peers and friends.

In the first box, draw a picture to set up the scene. Use speech and thought bubbles if you want to include words in your illustration. In the second box, illustrate your character using one of the techniques you've learned for saying "no."



## Draw It!

Create a second illustration on a separate sheet of paper to show another type of situation where refusal skills or the techniques for saying "no" can be applied. Maybe it involves bullying, cheating, lying—you decide.

# My Perception!



How would you describe yourself? List 10 positive adjectives that describe you. For example, maybe you are friendly, outgoing, smart, courteous, respectful, and tobacco free.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Take a look at the picture above. Write ten adjectives to describe the characters.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Look at the two lists of words you wrote. Which list paints a better picture? If you want others to use your list to describe you, then keep this simple message in mind:

**Be Tobacco free!**



# It's Decision Time!

While you may not always think about it consciously, your mind goes through a series of six steps, or questions, when you make a decision. These include:

1. **Situation:** Why do you need to make a decision?
2. **Goals:** What do you want to happen?
3. **Choices:** What are your options or the alternatives?
4. **Consequences:** What could happen?
5. **Decision:** What will you do?
6. **Think about it:** Did you make the right decision?

Sometimes the process is easier than other times. And, there are also times when you might jump around—you might not go through the process in order, or you might rethink steps before making a decision. You might also skip some of the steps for less serious decisions, like figuring out what shoes to wear.

Think of three serious decisions you made recently. Write them on the lines. Then answer the questions below.

**Decision 1** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Decision 2** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Decision 3** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you think you go through all of the decision-making steps involved?

If "Yes," how so? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you focus on one step more than others? Explain. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What factors influence your decisions? (your goals, values, friends, family, etc.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How do you make decisions when you feel stressed? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## You Decide!



Put your decision-making skills to work and think about what you would do in each situation below.

- Your best friend invites you and some other classmates over for the afternoon, and during the course of your time together tells you that he or she has taken up smoking cigarettes. Your friend then lights one up, as do the others. Then, your friend offers you a puff. *What do you do?*
- You and some friends are walking to a friend's home after school. You are in a hurry because you want to get to the house to play your favorite video game. You come upon a wallet with \$100 inside. There's also a driver's license. None of you recognize the person the license belongs to. *What do you do?*



# Unit Quiz

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## PART ONE

Read each statement or question. Then circle the correct answer.

### 1. Which statement is true?

- A. Most middle schoolers are current cigarette smokers.
- B. Most middle schoolers are not current cigarette smokers.
- C. Most middle schoolers use smokeless tobacco.
- D. Most middle schoolers like to hang around with people who smoke.

### 2. Young people who smoke cigarettes can experience \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. shortness of breath
- B. coughing and wheezing
- C. nausea and phlegm production
- D. all of the above

### 3. What is nicotine?

- A. a neurotransmitter
- B. a neuron
- C. a drug found in tobacco leaves
- D. a form of glucose found in tobacco leaf

### 4. True or False? Nicotine addiction can occur after as few as 100 cigarettes.

- A. True
- B. False

### 5. Which statement is the most accurate?

- A. Smoking cigarettes can damage your lungs.
- B. Smoking cigarettes can damage your heart.
- C. Smoking cigarettes can damage nearly every organ in your body.
- D. Smoking cigarettes is only harmful to people who have smoked for a long time.

### 6. True or False? Using smokeless tobacco causes health consequences.

- A. True
- B. False

### 7. True or False? Nicotine does not affect or change the brain the same way heroin and cocaine do.

- A. True
- B. False

### 8. Without nicotine, a smoker can feel \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. cold and sad
- B. energetic and thirsty
- C. irritable and depressed
- D. happy and alert

### 9. True or False? The younger a person is when he or she starts to smoke cigarettes, the more likely he or she is to become addicted to nicotine.

- A. True
- B. False

## PART TWO

### 1. List three health consequences of tobacco use.

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### 2. List three nicotine withdrawal symptoms.

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### 3. Describe the difference between peer pressure and peer influence. Then give an example of each.

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### 4. List three things to consider when making a decision.

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### 5. You want to be tobacco free. List three ways you could say "no" to a friend who offers you a cigarette or smokeless tobacco.

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## I Pledge to Be Tobacco Free

I understand that tobacco products have health risks and consequences. I choose to say "no" to tobacco and pledge to stay tobacco free. This means I will not smoke cigarettes or use smokeless tobacco because (fill in three reasons why you pledge to stay tobacco free):

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

By signing below, I pledge to be tobacco free:

X \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



## Parent and Guardian Pledge

I, \_\_\_\_\_, will encourage my child to be tobacco free. I will talk with my child about the importance of not using tobacco. I will respect my child, listen to him/her, and answer his/her questions.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_







