

# Quit Week/Take Back the Bathroom



If you are in a school that has a lot of kids who smoke, planning a Quit Week for the Great American Smoke out can be a great event.

## **Talk With Your Principal**

Enlist his/her help with the event. Also, talk with the school nurse, coaches, gym teachers, health teacher, and any other teacher or administration member who may be interested in helping with the Quit Week plans. Recruit a nurse from a local hospital or contact the American Lung Association to find out about lung capacity testing and CO testing.

## **Contact Organizations:**

Find out what posters and giveaway items they may have for schools. They can help with lots of the media and promotional items for the Smokeout. Here are some possible organizations;

- Vermont Department of Health-Tobacco Control Program
- American Cancer Society
- American Heart Association
- American Lung Association of Vermont

## **Be investigators**

Where do kids smoke on the school campus? In the bathrooms or outside or, maybe both. Where do teachers smoke? Set up "health tables" outside the bathrooms and have brochures, posters, and pledge sheets at the tables. A day or two before the Smokeout, conduct lung capacity testing (if the machine is available locally). This always gets people interested in your booth and teaches them about the adverse effects of smoking to young people.

## **Ask people to fill out a survey**

In the survey, find out if people think smoking is a problem at the school. Include some before, during and after the event questions. There are many questions you can ask so talk to the Youth Tobacco Control Coordinator for more information.

## **Get a Commitment**

If smoking is happening in the bathrooms at school see if you can have the administration monitor the restrooms for the Quit Week. Hang posters in the bathroom as a reminder.

## **Ask all smokers to commit to quitting for the Smokeout**

Ask students who smoke to sign a pledge sheet that at the same time enters them into a prize drawing. If you have a ski area nearby, try to get a free day of skiing or snowboarding with rentals and lessons or some other worthwhile prize. All non-smokers could be encouraged to sign pledge sheets as well, committed to staying smoke-free. Pull names for prizes from this list also. Think healthy and fun for the prizes!

## **Survival Kits**

The day of the Smokeout have survival kits available. These are bags filled with small items that people can play with and things to chew on like gum or candy. They are intended to help people get through their cravings. You may want to include tips or encouragement from people who have successfully quit.

**Give people information**

A great display can be created to show the ingredients in cigarettes in a graphic manner. Also, use this opportunity to educate about second hand smoke. Give cessation tips. Provide as much information as possible in a fun and creative way.

**Set up a graffiti wall**

Using colorful markers and poster board, have people write messages or draw their dreams for someone who smokes or chews on the wall.

**Organize a support group**

See if you can set up a support group at your school for people who quit or who indicate a desire to quit. Try to get the Nurse, Health Educator or School Counselor involved in the plan for the group.

**Work with the administration to arrive at a solution to tobacco use on campus.**

What policies are in place, how are they enforced, and what can be done to “take back the bathrooms”?

**Be proactive and positive**

Remember to work with smokers, not against them. If smokers feel they’ve had a hand in the process, they will be more likely follow the guidelines for behavior that have been established.

**Think Partnership**

It takes the cooperation and understanding of everyone at school to make new plans and policies effective. Be patient Try to work as partners and not in competition.