



LEAVE THE PACK BEHIND

Campus-Based Brief Tobacco Intervention Bulletin

Fall 2009
Volume 10

Special Interest:

- LTPB increases ways to help smokers quit
- Research shows: Quitting is Contagious
- LTPB's new Medical Consultant (Dr. Darrell Grant)

Contributors

Kelli-an Lawrance, PhD
Sharon Lawler, RN, MEd
M Shick-Porter, RN BA(Com Nurs)

www.LeaveThePackBehind.org

Tobacco Use Remains High Among Students

Leave The Pack Behind now runs on 51 Ontario post-secondary campuses where it continues to promote services and policies that help smokers quit smoking and protect non-smokers from second-hand smoke.

The need for continued focus on young adults' smoking is evidenced by

recent data showing 27% of young adults still smoke.¹ In fact, tobacco use in this age group has not decreased meaningfully for the past decade. Clearly, tobacco remains an important determinant of students' current and future health.

You can positively impact students' health by

routinely asking patients about their tobacco use and advising smokers to quit. Offering a LTPB *Clinic Package* along with a free sample of nicotine gum enhances the odds of a successful quit.

Thanks for taking 30 seconds to ASK-ADVISE-ASSIST-ARRANGE. You are making a difference.

LTPB: Helping Smokers Quit

Clinic Packages & Nicotine Replacement Therapy

Many university and college students who smoke use their campus health clinic. A recent LTPB study revealed that young adult smokers would most-prefer to quit independently, but are willing to receive help from a friend, speak with a doctor or a nurse, and use support offered through LTPB. Offering these smokers a clinic package and a sample of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) would likely receive a positive response. After all, quitting independently can be more of a perception than a reality. Young adult smokers who claim to have quit independently have often received medical advice, and support from family and friends along the way!

The wouldrather... Contest

In January 2010, college and university students who smoke can enter LTPB's **wouldrather...** motivational contest. Grand prizes will be awarded to randomly-selected contestants who remain abstinent for 6 weeks beginning January 20, 2010. Contest materials encourage students to visit their campus clinic for support as they quit and remain smokefree. See: www.LeaveThePackBehind.org/contest.php.



The Your Way Campaign

Interviews with smokers on college campuses led to the clear conclusion: these young adults want to quit smoking "their way." Therefore, LTPB's website provides information about proven strategies and aides for quitting so students can choose their own effective way to quit. See: www.LeaveThePackBehind.org

Quitting is Contagious

Is quitting smoking contagious? Recent research, published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, suggests it could be.²

Researchers found that it was easier for people to quit smoking when others in their social circle also kicked the habit. People followed the quitting habits of their spouses, friends, brothers and sisters. In small firms, quitting behaviour of co-workers was also influential! It is not hard to imagine that quitting would be contagious in residences.

The greatest influence on quitting was seen in close relationships. When husbands or wives quit, the chance that their spouse would smoke fell by 67%. When a brother or sister quit, the chance a sibling smoked decreased by 25%. The chances of individuals smoking decreased by 36% when their friend(s) had quit smoking.

Among people working in small firms, individuals' chances of smoking decreased by 34% if co-worker(s) had quit.

Those who continued to smoke, meanwhile, formed their own social circles that, over time, shifted from the centre of the social network to the periphery.

This research highlights the powerful influence that social networks can have on smoking behaviours and decisions. The findings suggest that one person quitting may lead to others to quit, too. Smoking cessation initiatives that target social groups may be more effective than those aimed at individuals.

This research inspired the theme for this year's National Non-Smoking Week: **"Quitting is contagious, pass it on!"** For more about NNSW, visit www.nnsw.ca

Adapted from a press release of the Canadian Council for Tobacco Control, www.cctc.ca

LTPB's new Medical Consultant

Dr. Darrell Grant, Medical Director, Student Health Services, Brock University joins LTPB as its new Medical Consultant. Dr. Grant offers these initial thoughts about LTPB programming.

I'm impressed with the variety and effectiveness of resources that LTPB offers campus clinics. [These include: free NRT samples, "clinic packages" to hand to patients, opportunities for Continuing Medical Education related to smoking cessation, posters, notepads, and resources for patients.] I encourage my colleagues to hand out the orange "clinic packages" every chance they get – and definitely when they provide an NRT sample to a smoker.

LTPB welcomes Dr. Darrell Grant.



LTPB's clinic package

¹ Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey (2008). Table 2: Smoking status and average number of cigarettes smoked per day, by province, age group and sex, age 15+ years, Canada 2008. Retrieved on October 24, from: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hc-ps/tobac-tabac/research-recherche/stat/_ctums-esutc_2008/ann-table2-eng.php

² Christakis, N.A. & Fowler, J.H. (May, 2008). The collective dynamics of smoking in a large social network. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 358, 2249-58.