



**RIGHT
DECISIONS
RIGHT
NOW**

**I
Quit
SMOKING
NOW!**

Did you know...

- According to the Surgeon General, adolescents are most likely to try smoking for the first time between the ages of 11 and 15¹
- Most youth smokers report that they would like to quit?²

“**I Quit Smoking Now!**” is a program for guidance counselors to use with youth who want to quit smoking. Most teen smokers report that they want to quit, but have been unable to do so.² Adolescents face a lot of pressure, especially from their peers, and they may need guidance on how to handle these pressures and make the right decision to quit smoking. We recognize these facts and have prepared this program to help you intervene.

Objectives

- To help young people quit smoking by:
 - Encouraging them to see how smoking could affect what's important to them;
 - Providing tools to assist them in recognizing their smoking behavior and attachments to smoking;
 - Helping them find alternate activities to these attachments; and
 - Encouraging them to use this six-week program, which includes setting a quit date, counting down to this date for two weeks, and tracking progress for four weeks after the quit date.
- To provide educators with information on assisting youth in their efforts to be smoke-free.

Components

- Educator's guide
- Three reproducible activity sheets
- 25 copies of an **I Quit Smoking Now!** “Stay on Track” guide
- A wall poster
- Two postage-paid evaluation forms

How This Program Can Help

Unlike smoking-prevention programs, there may be barriers to implementing a school-wide smoking-cessation program,

as not every student is directly affected. Yet, focus groups conducted with guidance counselors and general educators indicated that it is necessary for students to be guided through the quitting process and have their progress monitored. They have recommended that educators use this program with:

- Small groups of students or one-on-one before or after school;
- Students who have been caught smoking;
- Peer counselors who have successfully quit smoking — to support those trying to quit;
- Pairs of students trying to quit to create a buddy system; and/or
- Students who are trying to encourage family or friends to quit.

Life Skills Materials

While **I Quit Smoking Now!** is designed specifically for youth smokers who want to quit, there are six study guides in the **Right Decisions, Right Now** program that are available to teach general life skills to students in grades six through nine. These study guides cover decision-making, consequences, peer pressure, values, managing conflict and responsibility. See the “Further Resources” section for ordering information.

Overall Notes to Educators About Helping Young People to Quit Smoking

In a 1994 report, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a United States government agency, recommended that schools support cessation programs for their students.³ Research conducted by the CDC on tobacco prevention and smoking cessation indicates that there are a variety of methods available to help people quit smoking. Some of their studies indicate:

- “Effective cessation programs for adolescents focus on immediate consequences of tobacco use, have specific attainable goals, and use contracts that include rewards. These programs provide social support and teach avoidance, stress management, and refusal skills. Further, students need opportunities to practice skills and strategies that will help them remain nonusers.”⁴
- Successful prevention programs address the health risks and social consequences associated with smoking.⁵
- “The evidence on problem solving/skills training suggests a beneficial impact.”⁶ The skills learned in cessation programs can help people trying to quit avoid relapse and “replace positive reinforcements they had linked to smoking.”⁶
- Programs recommended by the CDC offer specific concrete tactics that can be employed by the smoker to quit: e.g., setting a quit date, getting support and counseling, and changing routines.⁷

The key to any successful behavior change is motivation and belief in success. Helping young people to quit smoking brings up certain additional considerations:

- Many teens smoke because they think it will help them be accepted by their peers or look mature.³ Yet, according to government statistics, about 80% of teens are non-smokers.⁸ Young people need to know that it is not “in” to smoke.
- Young people face many pressures and influences from peers, and they often need help in learning how to make the right decision to resist peer pressure to smoke.
- Many smokers find that once they have started smoking cigarettes, they find it difficult to quit — and some find it extremely difficult. In fact, many people believe that smoking is addictive, and as the term is commonly used today, it is. Youth are no exception.²



Getting Started

To help your students become smoke-free, let those who want to quit know that the “**I Quit Smoking Now!**” program is available to them. Your knowledge of your students, and perhaps your role as the school’s guidance counselor, will enable you to determine the best way to utilize the materials. Also, check with your school administration to see if you need parental consent to use this program.

To implement the program, here are a few recommendations that you might consider:

- Display the “Stay on Track” guides and ask students who inquire about them if they would be interested in getting together with others to go over the materials. Start a sign-up sheet.
- Encourage older students who have quit smoking to work with you and act as peer counselors to support younger students trying to quit. Or, pair up students who want to quit so that they can encourage each other.
- Use these materials in sessions with students who have been caught smoking to encourage them to quit.
- Offer the materials and your guidance to students who might be concerned about helping others quit smoking (e.g., friends or parents).
- Display the materials and present them to students for independent use. Although we recommend that you use these materials in a monitored setting, they are self-explanatory and may be used independently by individual students wanting to quit. We suggest that you follow up with any individuals requesting the program to support and encourage them.

Once you have established a system for using the program, plan a set time, either before or after school or during free periods, when you would like to present the materials. Post signs to let the students know where and when meetings will be held.

During these meetings, students will first complete activities and examine their smoking behavior. Once you have had enough time to review these sheets together (about one to two weeks), distribute the “Stay on Track” guides and go through them with your students. The program encourages students to cut down on their smoking for the first two weeks, and kick off week three with their quit date. In the last four weeks, they continue to monitor their progress and smoke-free days.

Your support and guidance will be important to them every step of the way. We recommend that you meet with these students during this six-week period, and also set periodic meeting times following the program to help keep students on track and smoke-free.

When using this program, it is important to offer your students encouraging thoughts:

- **Point out that cessation programs do succeed in helping people to quit smoking.** The CDC indicates that organized cessation programs involving advice and counseling have helped many people to quit smoking.⁹

- **Alert young people that the focus of this program is the individual person.** Among the smoking-cessation programs that our review panel members¹⁰ are familiar with, it is a customary tactic to help make smokers aware of the nature of their decisions to smoke in terms of underlying “attachments,” such as stress or peer pressure. The **I Quit Smoking Now!** approach is designed to offer young people prompts for self-questioning and tools to help record the individual aspects of their decision to smoke. Then, the program offers specific, concrete tactics that can be employed by the young person to quit. These tactics include: setting a quit date, keeping a journal, finding replacement activities, and refining the skills they need to resist peer pressure and to cope with the many stresses of growing up.
- **The key to quitting for young people is for them to realize that smoking is not “in” or necessary for status or peer acceptance.** Young people should know that they can develop the skills to resist peer pressure and make their own decisions, and that if they really make a commitment, they can quit! If young people do fall off track, they also need to know that they can try again, stick to it and succeed.



Using the Materials

Activity Sheet

one

“Consider the Facts”

One potential advantage of using the **I Quit Smoking Now!** program in a group setting is that you may be able to engage students in discussions that help them feel supported by their peers to quit smoking. In short, you may be able to engender a positive form of peer pressure, or at least you may be able to make it “uncool” for students to exert negative peer pressure on one another. With this goal in mind, before distributing the first activity sheet, you should initiate a discussion by using some of the following questions and comments.

- What do you know about the risks, the costs and the other downsides of smoking?

Smoking poses health risks. Emphasize that scientific studies have led the U.S. Surgeon General to conclude:

- Smokers have almost twice the risk of having coronary heart disease as non-smokers.
- Smokers’ risk of getting lung cancer is approximately 14 times that of non-smokers.
- Smokers’ risk for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, such as emphysema and chronic bronchitis, is approximately 10 times that of non-smokers.

Youth tend to be concerned about the short-term consequences smoking can cause. It is likely that your students will know many facts about the risks, costs and other downsides of smoking. Praise them for their knowledge. You may add to their comments by pointing out that smoking discolors teeth, it tends to leave residual odors on hair and on clothing, and it can cause bad breath and destroy taste buds.

- Next, move on to ask the question: If young people are aware of those risks, costs and downsides, why might they still decide to smoke?

Students will probably have a number of opinions, and perhaps some facts to cite, in response to this question. Again, praise them for their insights.

Answers might include:

- “People think it looks cool.”
- “It helps you lose weight.”
- “All my friends do it.”
- You will have to judge whether responding point-by-point to these comments is productive, and whether your responses will impact students’ willingness to participate. But you may wish to point out, for example, that:
 - Since smoking has known health risks, it’s not smart to see it as “cool;”
 - With the vast majority of young people being non-smokers, it’s unlikely even a majority of the young people in a group are smokers; and
 - Non-smokers could take a leadership role to show you don’t need to smoke to be cool.

Distribute Activity Sheet One, “Consider the Facts,” and walk your students through each section. Since the sheet asks students to come to their own personal assessment of the risks, costs and downsides of smoking based on their own values or what’s important to them, answers will vary.

- If students have difficulty coming up with ideas, you might make suggestions. For example, if playing on the soccer team is important to them, they need to realize that a lack of stamina has been attributed to smoking, and they might play better if they stop.
- Encourage students to really think about what they have written and develop their own personal statements on why not to smoke.
- You may also wish to provide students with leads on more information about these topics from the “Further Resources” list at the end of this educator’s guide.

Activity Sheet

Two

“It’s About Me”

This sheet helps students examine the specifics of their own smoking behavior, and identify the attachments smoking has to other activities in their lives. Prior to handing out the activity sheet, you may wish to bring up the broader topic of routine decisions to help focus students’ attention on the array of behaviors that can be discussed. Some of the following points may help stimulate discussion:

- Decisions can be positive, negative or neutral. Review some of each. For example, eating breakfast is a positive decision; skipping breakfast is a negative decision, according to most medical experts. But whether you drink a glass of orange juice before eating, after eating or in sips while you eat is almost certainly a neutral decision.
- Routines can be very helpful. Learning to put certain personal effects, such as school books or a wristwatch, in the same place every night can be very helpful when you’re looking for those items in the morning. Also, having routines for doing homework or doing household chores can make it possible to get a lot done without having to waste a lot of energy thinking about when or how to do it. In fact, almost all people have useful routines in their lives.

Sometimes, however, a negative behavior can get attached to some valuable routines. For example, you can clear dishes from the table after dinner, which is good; you can also leave those dishes in the sink, which is negative. Ask students for some other examples of helpful routines and other examples of negative behaviors that can get attached to those routines.

If students fail to arrive on their own at the topic of smoking, you may have to prompt them. Below is a suggestion to facilitate a conversation about smoking routines and behaviors:

- Smoking is a negative behavior that can be attached to positive routines. Many people eat a healthy dinner, but then they smoke a cigarette. Many people set aside a regular time to talk with friends, which is a positive thing, but those friends smoke while they talk. Others smoke while they read or write. Reading

and writing are very positive, but it’s negative when smoking becomes attached to them. Some routines are necessities, like waiting at a school bus stop, and negative behaviors such as smoking can also become attached to such necessary activities.

Distribute Activity Sheet Two, “It’s About Me,” and walk your students through it. The point of this activity sheet is to help students understand the ways in which smoking may have become attached to their daily or weekly routines. Let students know that it may be easier for them to quit smoking once they understand its attachment to other activities in their lives.

- Students might fill in this chart during the course of the week and discuss it with you the following week. Or, you might arrange to have them fill in the chart with you on a daily basis if you think students will lose the sheet. You might also make extra copies and send them home daily.
- If students are having difficulty recognizing the times when they are likely to smoke, offer ideas. For example, maybe they only smoke after school while walking home with their friends. Maybe they smoke when they are studying or when they are upset with their family or friends. Help them recognize these patterns.
- Although the way that students fill out the activity sheet will vary, there will probably also be similarities, and those may be useful to discuss as a group. Such a discussion could help foster a feeling of mutual support and positive peer pressure.

Activity Sheet

Three

“Your ‘I Quit Smoking Now!’ Tool Kit”

This activity sheet is designed to offer young people specific tips and tools to help them quit smoking. One key tip is that smokers attempting to quit should try to find alternate activities that can take the place of smoking. Offer encouragement to your students by pointing out that the desire to smoke will pass given sufficient time. You may find that the following questions and comments generate discussion that will help introduce the concept of replacement activities.

- Ask students to make a list of things that they like to do. Examples might include playing sports, playing a musical instrument, listening to music, drawing or building things. Also discuss little things that students like to do.
- Move the discussion toward using replacement activities by reminding students of the “It’s About Me” activity sheet they completed about the attachment of smoking to their daily or weekly routines. Ask students what other kinds of activities they could do to replace the role of smoking. For example, suggest that if they hang around with friends and talk, and that tends to include smoking, they might shoot basketball or take a walk while talking with their friends.
- Another related strategy includes changing the venue of certain activities that are related to smoking. Students might move a regular meeting place with friends to a place that does not permit smoking.
- Note that some other strategies involve setting a quit date, telling others that they are quitting, and finding different ways to address or to cope with stresses — if they find that smoking is one of the ways they have been coping with such stresses. Many of these strategies, in turn, relate to other aspects of the young person’s life.
- Try to keep students focused on the issue of not smoking with comments or questions such as:
 - Does smoking really relate to that?
 - Wouldn’t it be better to confront that person about that problem than to just go away and smoke?
 - What about taking out that frustration by running or playing basketball? Vigorous activity can often be a great reliever of frustrations.
 - What about asking that person to join you in quitting smoking? How about ignoring someone else’s smoking to make it a non-issue between you? Or, asking that person not to smoke in front of you because you’re trying to quit? Of course, this can be challenging if the smoker is a parent or family member. (If this is

the case, suggest that they rehearse this discussion with another family member or a friend first.)

Distribute Activity Sheet Three, “Your I Quit Smoking Now! Tool Kit.” Have your students assess the suggested tools for breaking smoking attachments — and write their own tools. After they have filled in the chart, review the tools and ask students which ones they think will work for them. Also ask students to volunteer to share their own tools — sharing these tools may help their classmates. Encourage your students to try these tools. Remind them not to get discouraged if a tool doesn’t work, but to try another tool instead.

- Role play with your students using some of the suggested tools — and new ones you come up with — to help them learn how to implement the tools.

guide “Stay On Track”

The “Stay on Track” guide is designed to help students track their progress as they quit smoking. It includes information to help students make their smoke-free pledge, a personal-pledge form, tips and reminders, and a six-week calendar designed for students to chart their progress.

Distribute the guides to your students. Explain that **I Quit Smoking Now!** contains a six-week program to help them become smoke-free. The guide pulls together information from activities one, two, and three in this program and provides step-by-step actions to help students put their new knowledge to work.

Students are asked to pick their own quit date. They should begin this program two weeks prior to that date — this is the countdown period. Explain to students that during the first two weeks of the program they will be asked to cut down on their smoking using their own personal tools, and to begin marking their progress on their **I Quit Smoking Now!** calendar.

The first day of week three marks the official quit date. This is when students should completely stop smoking. For four weeks after the quit date, students

should continue to monitor their smoke-free progress on their calendars to keep them on track.

Explain to students that the guide consists of “Steps to Quitting,” a personal pledge, reminder notes and a calendar to help them to track their progress. Emphasize that keeping the information in one place may be useful during times when they consider smoking again. Review each of the six steps with your students.

Step 1 “My Personal Statement Why NOT to Smoke.” Explain to students that they need to evaluate why they want to quit. Encourage them to review the facts you discussed in Activity Sheet One, “Consider the Facts.” Remind them to also think of their own reasons to quit. Let them know that writing the reasons down as a personal pledge can help them keep their commitment. Students are asked to write down their personal statement on the top of their pledge.

Step 2 “My Main Activities Attached to Smoking.” Have students review Activity Sheet Two, “It’s About Me,” to go over their attachments to smoking.

Tell your students that it is important to be aware of these attachments, and writing them down may help students avoid them. There is space provided for students to write their main attachments on their pledge.

Step 3 “Tools or Alternate Activities.” Have students refer back to Activity Sheet Three, “Your **I Quit Smoking Now!** Tool Kit,” to review the suggested alternate activities and tools they may have filled in. Encourage them to write these tools or alternate activities on their pledge form.

Step 4 “Setting a Quit Date.” Discuss quit dates with your students. They should select a date two weeks from the time they will start the program. This will help students prepare to make the commitment to stay smoke-free by starting to cut back and use the skills they learned in the activities. Once students decide on their quit dates, they should write them down on their pledges.

Step 5 “I WILL DO IT – My Personal Pledge.” Remind students that making other changes in their lives helps them make the change to quit. Students will be asked to sign and date their pledge. Signing their pledge is important because it signifies their commitment to quit smoking.

Step 6 “Friends and Rewards” Emphasize that students should let everyone know that they are quitting so their friends and family can offer support. For some, this might mean offering encouraging words. For others, it might mean asking people not to smoke in front of them. It’s important for students to write down telephone numbers of people to call when they want to smoke so they will have their numbers ready. Also encourage them to think of rewards. Incentives often help people attain their goals. There is a space on the bottom of the pledge form for students to fill in this information.

Remind your students that they can quit!

- Direct your students’ attention to the calendar and notes located inside the guide. The notes provide brief instructions for using the calendar, as well as tips, reminders and encouraging words. For the first week on the calendar, students will be asked to check the days that they cut down. Also encourage them to write the number of cigarettes they smoked, if any. During week two, as they continue cutting down, they are urged to stay smoke-free as many days as they can. Their quit date kicks off week three. From then on, they should be smoke-free and mark an X for each day they succeed.
- Remind students that making their pledge public can help them stay on track. Encourage them to share their success with their friends. Knowing others are pulling for them can help them stay committed.
- Let students know that it is important for them to keep their guides handy to closely track their progress and use the information to help them get through a possibly rough time. You might suggest that they keep the guide in their binder (hole-punched inside), school bag, backpack, purse or wallet.

Now that your students are on their way to becoming smoke-free, continue to offer them support and encouragement. If you know of local resources that might lend support to your students' efforts to quit, have them write the phone numbers on the guide. Let your students know that you are proud of their decisions to quit and that you want them to keep you posted on their progress.

Tracking Your Students' Progress

Your students have made the right decision to quit smoking. Since it may be a tough process for them, it is important that you stay in touch and continue to offer support. We recommend that you set aside time each week to get together individually or as a group to talk about their experiences and offer encouragement.

Although this is a six-week program, you should recommend that students continue to monitor their progress after they have completed the program. You may also suggest that they switch to a weekly calendar or monthly calendar so that they can continue to track their progress and feel good about their success.

If you find that one or several students are having a difficult time, we suggest setting up a special series of single or group meetings to offer additional support. The group setting may provide additional motivation and encouragement from peers that could make a difference. Following are several ideas you may want to incorporate into your meetings:

- Ask your student(s) to share any recent challenges and successes in committing to their smoke-free pledge. Students may take comfort in knowing that others are experiencing similar issues and could be inspired by those who have been successful.
- Work through the activities again, potentially identifying new attachments and alternate activities.
- Order the free **Right Decisions, Right Now** study guide program offered in the "Further Resources" section. This series of six study guides can help your students learn important skills to help them resist the peer pressure and peer influence to smoke.

- Review the Web sites listed in the "Resources" section of the "Stay on Track" guide and ask students to explore the Internet for relevant non-smoking sites they can share with everyone at the next meeting.
- Ask a student who has successfully quit smoking to share their experience with your student(s) and offer advice.
- Create a personalized incentive program for your student(s). This could include awards or other acknowledgments that would reward them for staying committed to their pledge.
- Continue to remind your students that if they do resume smoking, they should not give up, but try to quit again. You might spend time with these students to help them understand where they had difficulty. Let them know it often takes people several attempts to quit, but that they should keep trying.

Your support and efforts can make the difference in helping them stay on track!

Let Us Know What You Think

Once you have had time to use these materials with your students, we would like to hear your thoughts. The two enclosed postage-paid evaluation forms ask for your feedback on these materials and your students' progress. We would appreciate it if you would complete one of the forms after using the program and send it back to us. The second form has been included so that you may pass it along to a colleague using the program, or so that you may complete it after using the materials again in the future.

You know best what works with your students. Future **Right Decisions, Right Now** youth non-smoking program materials can be more effective with the benefit of your input. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.



Further Resources

Here are some organizations and resources you might wish to use to help you encourage your students.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers resources on tobacco use for teachers, students and parents. Aspects of these resources are available online at www.cdc.gov/tobacco. You may also order materials by writing to CDC Office on Smoking and Health, Mail Stop K-50, 4770 Buford Highway, NE, Atlanta, GA 30341-3717; or by calling (770) 488-5705.

The Surgeon General's office in the Department of Health and Human Services also offers information on preventing tobacco use among teens. You may go to the Web site at www.cdc.gov/tobacco/sgrpage.htm for references.

Right Decisions, Right Now study guides, in-school posters, youth non-smoking videos, public service announcements, grandparent brochures and adult brochures are also available. Those designed for parents include: "How To Talk To Your Child About Not Smoking Even If You Do;" "CHOICES: Helping Your Child Make the Right Ones;" and "Tobacco: Helping Your Child Say No." To obtain copies, please visit our Web site at www.rightdecisionsrightnow.com, or send your written request to **Right Decisions, Right Now**, P.O. Box 2959, Winston-Salem, NC 27102.

There are other organizations and resources that can provide additional information on these and other lifestyle behaviors. The listing in this booklet does not imply that the organization endorses the information contained herein, nor does it constitute an endorsement of the organization or resource by R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company or the Review Panel.

Footnotes:

1 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "Reducing Tobacco Use: 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, 2000. "Education Fact Sheet," April 11, 2001. Available at www.cdc.gov/tobacco/sgr/sgr_2000/factsheets/factsheet_education.htm.

2 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 www.cdc.gov/tobacco/sgr/yth2.htm. See Summary Chapter 1.

3 "Guidelines for School Health Programs to Prevent Tobacco Use and Addiction." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, MMWR 43(RR-2): 1-18, 2/25/94. Available online at www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00026213.htm. See Recommendation 6.

4 "Guidelines for School Health Programs to Prevent Tobacco Use and Addiction." See Recommendation 6.

5 "Guidelines for School Health Programs to Prevent Tobacco Use and Addiction." See Recommendation 2.

6 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "Reducing Tobacco Use: 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, 2000. Chapter 4, "Management of Nicotine Addiction." Available online at www.cdc.gov/tobacco/sgr_tobacco_use.htm. See pages 107, 106.

7 "You Can Quit Smoking Consumer Guide." National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2000. Available online at www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit/canquit.htm.

8 "Tobacco Information and Prevention Source (TIPS) - Facts You Should Know." National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2000. Available online at www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tips_4_youthfacts.htm.

9 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "Reducing Tobacco Use: 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, 2000. Chapter 4, "Management of Nicotine Addiction." See page 134.

10 **Review Panel** for this program includes Teresa Krysin, MD; Sheila Levine, school psychologist; Diane Frankel-Gramelis, Hospital Director of Education; and Monica Wheeler, MS, RN.