



Tobacco



Tobacco is a very prominent problem in our society. Many young people start smoking everyday without knowing how harmful it is to them. There are many health concerns in relation with using tobacco, some include: Cigarette smoking by young people leads to immediate and serious health problems including respiratory and nonrespiratory effects, addiction to nicotine, and the associated risk of other drug use. Smoking at an early age increases the risk of lung cancer. For most smoking-related cancers, the risk rises as the individual continues to smoke.

Here are some activities for tobacco education.

Make a Tar Jar

Supplies: glass measuring cup, one caulk-style tube of tar from home improvement center or a jar of blackstrap molasses from supermarket, paper plate, cotton swab

Directions:

1. Measure out one cup of tar and pour it into a measuring cup.
2. Using the cotton swab, smear some of the "tar" onto the paper plate.
3. What is the consistency of the tar or tar substitute? What effect does it have on your fingertip or on the plate? What effect might tar have on your mouth, teeth, lungs.

For class presentation:

Tar is one of the 40 known carcinogens (substance that causes cancer) in tobacco products.

The average smoker inhales about one cup of tar per year. Because of its sticky consistency and the reduced ability of the smoker's lungs to expel impurities, tar may remain in the lungs for long time.

Tar paralyzes the hairlike structures called "cilia" inside the bronchial tubes. Cilia protect the lungs by sweeping out mucus, impurities, and germs. How do you think the lungs are affected if the cilia are out of order? How would you describe the effects of tar on the teeth?

How does advertising work?

Use print ads to illustrate methods of advertising. These include:

- association - suggests that you can be like the person in the ad (having fun, appealing, in control, rugged, independent)
- comparison - says the product is better than others (Winston cigarettes claim they have "no additives" fooling people into thinking they are healthier)
- rewards - offers free prizes if you use the product
- factual- makes factual sounding claims about product
- testimonial -personal stories about product success
- bandwagon - suggests that everyone is using the product
- repetition - repeats the same images, phrases, or slogans which eventually consumers start to believe (Just do it!)
- cool humor - entertains you for a moment; the makers of the product know how to make you laugh (frogs for beer)

Have the children collect magazines containing tobacco ads. Divide the class into groups and have them select an ad they would like to make truthful. Discuss what message the tobacco companies is giving through the ad. Then talk about ways the children can make the ad truthful. The group may want to use the theme, picture, or slogan from the original ad to create a parody that tells the truth about tobacco. You may have them cut and paste pictures or simply draw their own versions.