

## TOPIC 2

### Smoking

The secondary school experience is the time when young people are at greatest risk of smoking experimentation and uptake. The 2014 ASSAD data states that 91% of 12 year olds and 87% of 13 year olds have never smoked. However, by the age of 17 years, only 66% have never smoked (Department of Health, 2016). Therefore, conducting smoking education throughout the high school years is vital for educating students to make positive health decisions.

Research tells us that the younger a person starts smoking, the more likely they may become a regular adult smoker. We also know that many young people who are aware of the harms associated with tobacco still see it as okay to 'try smoking once' to satisfy their curiosity. It is therefore important to readdress smoking in secondary health programs, as attitudes towards smoking also change over time.

Research on the predictors of smoking suggests that the most promising school based approaches:

- help children to develop negative attitudes to smoking
- teach children how to cope socially while resisting peer influences to smoke
- encourage parents to quit while their children are young
- have opportunities for students to participate in health promoting activities
- are inclusive and seek to assist those young people who already smoke to consider cutting down or stopping.

#### Key concepts

- The number of young people who smoke has steadily been decreasing in Australia. In the 2014 ASSAD survey only 19.5% of 12-17 year old students had smoked in their lifetime (Department of Health, 2016).
- The younger a person starts smoking the more likely they may become a regular adult smoker.
- Smoking tobacco or cannabis can cause lung cancer and many other diseases.
- Smoking using implements such as bongs or shishas does not reduce the potential harms.
- Encourage students to be 'smoke free' rather than advocating that students simply 'don't smoke'.
- Encourage students who have not experimented with smoking to not start or are currently smoking to cut down or stop.

#### Teaching tobacco prevention programs

Effective programs should not discuss smoking as a 'deviant' behaviour as this may be the very thing that attracts some students to take up smoking and may alienate those who have already started smoking. Rather, focus on positive messages such as:

- most young people don't smoke
- young people who do smoke generally respect those who decide not to
- young people can become addicted to smoking even if they don't smoke many cigarettes, however, the fewer cigarettes a young person smokes; the easier it is to stop

- it is easier to quit when you are younger rather than after years of smoking.

How tobacco prevention education is taught is as important as what is taught. Ensure that students have both time and opportunity to: explore their own beliefs about smoking, practise assertive communication and decision making in tobacco related situations that may occur in their own social settings.

Give students many opportunities to consider when, where, how and by whom they may feel pressured to try a cigarette. Consider situations that involve both overt pressure from peers or family and also covert pressures where students put pressure on themselves to smoke, perhaps to please or be like friends or family.

#### Smoking prevention education

Teachers should consider raising the issue of shisha smoking and its potential health harms when delivering tobacco prevention messages in their classroom programs. Shisha smoking is not a safe alternative to cigarette smoking and poses potential harm not only to the user but to others around them. Shisha smoking is presented as a social pastime and therefore challenges one of our key tobacco prevention messages 'smoking is antisocial'. It is far more visible today and appears to be growing in its popularity therefore all the more necessary that we educate on this topic.

#### E-cigarettes

Teachers also need to consider including education around the harms associated with electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) in their tobacco or smoking prevention programs as these are often promoted as a safe alternative to smoking.

E-cigarettes are battery operated devices that resemble tobacco cigarettes and allow users to inhale a number of non-nicotine flavours like fruit, confectionary, coffee or alcohol, and other chemicals in a vapour form rather than smoke.

Currently, it is illegal to sell, use or possess e-cigarettes that contain nicotine. It is also illegal to sell a product that resembles a tobacco product in Western Australia (many e-cigarette brands fall into this category). E-cigarettes and other personal vaporisers for delivery of nicotine or other substances are not permitted to be used in any area where smoking is restricted.

E-cigarette marketing challenges two key tobacco prevention messages that 'smoking is not glamorous' and 'smoking is anti-social'. Students should be made aware that there is evidence to indicate that e-cigarettes may pose potential health harm not only to the user but to others around them even if they don't contain tobacco.



For information on e-cigarettes, head to the Australian Drug Foundation website at <http://www.druginfo.adf.org.au>

#### Whole-school approach

*School Drug Education Guidelines* outline your whole-school approach to drug education. These guidelines should include procedures for managing smoking and other drug-related incidents and provide support interventions for those students involved in these incidents so that responses consider health and safety, and are not only punitive.

## Activity 1 Identifying harms from smoking



### Learning intention

- Students observe the chemicals and substances found in cigarette smoke
- Students use the Four L's Model to identify the possible harms of smoking
- Students identify the level of risk for young people in smoking-related situations
- Students share their opinions about smoking

### Equipment

Plastic bottle with a screw top

Sealing substance such as poster putty

Plastic tubing with a diameter about the same as a cigarette

Cotton wool

Cigarettes

Matches



*What's in a cigarette and how does it affect me* – fact sheet – print one per student from *Smarter than Smoking* website <http://www.smarterthansmoking.org.au/tobacco-resources/> or have access to the internet for students to view online



*Tobacco and the law* – fact sheet – print one per student from *Smarter than Smoking* website <http://www.smarterthansmoking.org.au/tobacco-resources/> or have access to the internet for students to view online



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*Be Ready* student workbook – *Smoking - what's the harm?* – page 16

Family information sheet – *Being smoke-free* – photocopy one per student

### Teaching tip

In classroom discussions, consider including smoking of cannabis and also fruit flavoured tobaccos that are smoked in shishas. Many of the potential harms are similar.

### Activities

1. Rinse the plastic bottles well and make an opening in the cap. Fit the tube into the cap and seal with poster putty. Pack cottonwool into the neck of the bottle around the tubing. Insert a cigarette into the opening of the tube. Press firmly on the bottle to force out any air and light the cigarette. Allow air to swell into the bottle again and continue a slow and regular pumping (to simulate breathing) action until the cigarette is smoked to the butt. Open the lid and take out the cotton wool to see how much tar there is from one cigarette and draw students' attention to the smoke still lingering in the bottle. Explain that smoking not only affects the lungs but also other parts of the body.
2. Have students read *Facts about smoking* fact sheet which can be viewed on the *Smarter than Smoking* website. Use the following questions to process this part of the activity.

### Ask

- *What are the three most active ingredients in cigarettes and cigarette smoke?* (Nicotine is the main drug in tobacco that stimulates the brain and increases heart rate and causes the user to become dependent. Tar causes lung cancer and smoker's cough, stains to teeth and hands. Carbon monoxide reduces supply of oxygen to the body which then increases workload on the heart and lungs and reduces efficiency of the cardiovascular system).
  - *What other substances can be found in cigarette smoke?* (Around 4000 chemicals of which many are known to be carcinogenic).
3. Draw a square divided into quarters (ie four boxes) on the board and write one of the following headings in each quadrant – **Liver**, **Lover**, **Livelihood** and **Law** (ie Four L's model). Ask students how these four headings might relate to drug education. Listen to some responses. If students do not guess, explain that the model is used to group the possible harms from any drug use including tobacco into four categories:
    - **Liver** – Physical or mental health harms
    - **Lover** – Relationship harms
    - **Livelihood** – Financial and employment harms
    - **Law** – Legal harms
  4. In groups of four, have students read the tobacco fact sheets and workbook pages *Smoking - what's the harm?* on page 16 for information about the possible harms of tobacco use. Encourage students to consider harms not only to the user but also those around the user and write these in the Four L's model on page 16. For example:
    - **Liver** – get asthma, smelly breath, hair and clothes, shortness of breath, reduced sense of taste and smell, chance of becoming dependent after just a short time, glue ear and bronchial problems in babies.
    - **Lover** – offend someone with second hand (passive) smoke, get into trouble with parents or teachers by breaking family or school rules, have to lie or keep secrets, lose friends.
    - **Livelihood** – less money to buy other things, not able to work out or compete in sport due to illness, losing work or study time due to having to go for a cigarette.
    - **Law** – if underage, get into trouble with police, fines for retailer or persons selling or supplying cigarettes to minors or smoking implements for cannabis or e-cigarettes.

Have groups report their findings back to the class then discuss the following questions.

### Ask

- *What aspects of the tobacco laws do you think have been introduced to reduce the harm to young people from tobacco?* (Any of the *Tobacco Products Control Act* provisions help reduce harm to young people).
  - *Are the possible harms from smoking cannabis more than smoking tobacco? Why?*
  - *Which harm might influence a young person's decision to not smoke? Why?*
  - *What things could you do to reduce the possible harms from passive smoking?* (eg move away from others who are smoking, open windows, ask the smoker to move outside, have 'no smoking' rules in your home).
5. Send a copy of the Family information sheet – *Being smoke-free* home with each student to share with their family.



## Being smoke-free

**Great news!** Smoking rates in young people have been declining steadily for the last 20 years due to a range of strategies such as tobacco education in schools; laws targeting tobacco sales, packaging and advertising; and health campaigns targeting young people. However, it is still an important part of your child's health education program to learn about:

- the effects of smoking on the body
- ways to avoid passive smoking
- the range of reasons why young people choose to smoke
- friends, family, the media and laws that can both positively and negatively influence young peoples' attitudes about smoking.

It is also a conversation that you should have with your children, just as you would for any other health-related topic.

The good news is that the longer your children delay trying smoking, the more likely it is that they will remain smoke free and healthy. It's also reassuring to know that most children who try cigarettes don't go on to be regular smokers.

### Here are some useful tips on what you can do and say to encourage your children to remain smoke-free:

- Let your children know that most young people their age do not smoke.
- Encourage your children to make their own decisions.
- Try asking your children questions such as, *What would you say if a friend offered you a cigarette and you didn't want one?*
- Help your children practise refusal skills so they can stand by their decision not to smoke but still keep their friendships going like – *I think I'm coming down with a cold, my throat's sore – no thanks! Or, My mum can smell cigarette smoke at 5 paces – she'll ground me for a week if she finds out or I just don't want to smoke thanks.*
- Ask your children why they think some young people choose to smoke (eg being part of a group, think it is a sign of independence or makes you look cool) and talk with them about ways to achieve these things without smoking.
- Make your home smoke free, or at least, only allow smoking outside.
- Be a healthy example, don't smoke. If you do smoke, quitting will have a huge influence on your children's attitude to smoking.
- If you smoke, have you explained to your children what you think about smoking and how hard it can be to quit.
- Don't ask your children to buy cigarettes for you, as this is illegal.
- When you see people smoking, talk to your children about how easily people become dependent on nicotine and about the positive aspects of being a non-smoker – saving money, no smelly hair or clothes, and a greater fitness level.

While there is no sure way to prevent young people from experimenting with cigarettes, if you think your child may have done this, make it clear that you don't approve of smoking.

Clearing the air: Talking with children and teenagers about smoking is available at <http://www.quit.org.au/downloads/resource/communities/youth/clearing-the-air-talking-children-teens-about-smoking-brochure.pdf>



For information about tobacco visit the Australian Drug Foundation website <http://www.druginfo.adf.org.au/>

For advice or support about smoking or quitting visit <http://www.quitnow.gov.au/> or call the Quitline on 137 848.

## Activity 2 E-cigarettes



### Learning intention

- Students explore the similarities and differences between conventional cigarettes and e-cigarettes and the safety of each
- Students debate a smoking-related topic
- Students write a persuasive text

### Equipment

Internet access

Blank A4 paper – one sheet per group

### Teaching tip



Have students read the fact sheets available on the *Smarter than Smoking* website <http://www.smarterthansmoking.org.au/tobacco-resources/> and <http://www.smarterthansmoking.org.au/for-parents/e-cigarettes/>



[http://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/A\\_E/Electronic-cigarettes-in-Western-Australia](http://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Electronic-cigarettes-in-Western-Australia)

### Activities

1. Explain that e-cigarettes have recently become fashionable and considered by some people to be a safer way to use nicotine and THC as there is believed to be no ingestion of smoke or tar. Have students access the *Smarter than Smoking* website and read the fact sheets on smoking and e-cigarettes.

Discuss the following points:

- In accordance with the Tobacco Products Control Act 2006, a person must not sell any food, toy or other product that is not a tobacco product but is designed to resemble a tobacco product or package.
- Products that resemble tobacco products, regardless of whether they contain nicotine or not, cannot be sold in WA and it is an offence under the Tobacco Products Control Act to sell these products.
- E-cigarettes have not been assessed or approved by the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) as a safe and effective aid to quitting smoking.
- E-cigarettes and other personal vaporisers for delivery of nicotine or other substances are not permitted to be used in any area where smoking is restricted.

2. Using a **T chart** (refer to page 113) label 'cigarettes' and 'e-cigarettes'. Have groups brainstorm what they know about each product and compare and contrast the two styles of smoking. Tell students to put a question mark next to responses on their T chart that they think may not be correct.

3. Divide the class into two groups and assign 'affirmative' to one group and 'negative' to the other. Explain that students will be debating the topic 'E-cigarettes are a safe way to smoke' and that each group should prepare their position statements and brainstorm open-ended questions to pose to the opposition.

Set a time limit for each group to present their point of view then open the floor for each side to ask the opposition questions to further the debate.

4. After the debate, draw two large squares on the board – label one 'agree' and one 'disagree'. Have students mark a dot in the square that represents their opinion on the topic. If most of the class is supporting e-cigarettes and vaping, review the potentially negative effects of using these devices and have students respond to why they support this technology.
5. Have each student write a persuasive text encouraging people not to use e-cigarettes or tobacco. Facts about potential health harms and laws about e-cigarettes should be included.

## Activity 3 Actions to reduce smoking harms



### Learning intention

- Students identify strategies to reduce smoking harms

### Equipment

Activity sheet – *Actions to reduce smoking* – photocopy one per group

*Be Ready* student workbook – *Smoking – what's the harm?* page 17

Strategy sheet – *Risk cards* – photocopy one set of cards – page 118

### Activities

- Explain that the 2014 ASSAD survey of 12 to 17 year old students showed that 80.5% had never smoked (which was an increase from the previous survey conducted in 2011) and only 4.8% of young people smoked in the last week (Department of Health, 2016). Write 'event changers' on the board. Have students identify situations that may influence or change a young person's decision not to smoke and write these on the board. For example:

- younger than those who are smoking
- feel that others want them to smoke
- want to fit in with a peer group
- most of their friends are smokers
- believe that most young people smoke
- think that smoking makes them look cool
- girlfriend or boyfriend smokes
- older siblings suggest they try smoking
- don't really know the other people they're with and are too afraid to say no
- live with family members who are smokers.

Ask the class which of the situations listed on the board could be managed by a young person their age if they knew about the potential harms of tobacco, the statistics (that show most young people do not smoke), and were able to say 'no' when feeling pressured by others.

- Distribute a copy of the Activity sheet – *Actions to reduce smoking* to each group (or write on the board, the different smoking situations shown on the activity sheet). Ask students to identify two or three actions that could be used by the person described in each scenario to help them to reduce smoking-related harms. Some actions could include:

#### *Someone who doesn't smoke and doesn't want to smoke*

- Remain smoke-free and don't be tempted to try.
- Have excuses at the ready or feel confident to say 'No thanks, I don't want to smoke'.
- Minimise passive smoking.
- Support others to reduce or stop smoking.
- Avoid smoking situations where cigarettes, joints or bongs might be offered or experimentation might be encouraged.

#### *Someone who smokes at least 2 cigarettes every day*

- Avoid smoking situations.
- Smoke fewer cigarettes, don't smoke every day, stop smoking.
- Seek help or find support to reduce or stop smoking.
- Try not to buy cigarettes.
- Minimise passive smoking.

#### *Someone who only smokes at parties to 'fit in'*

- Have excuses at the ready.
- Avoid situations where friends are smoking.
- Smoke fewer or less often or consider stopping smoking.

#### *Someone whose friends all smoke*

- Have several excuses at the ready.
- Confidently say 'No thank you, I don't want to smoke'.
- Support others to reduce or stop smoking.
- Avoid passive smoking and smoking situations.
- Be confident and stand by your decision not to smoke.

Listen to some of the actions identified by students. Suggest that sometimes things happen that can make it difficult to do what you originally planned. Ask students to decide what a young person, who doesn't smoke and doesn't want to smoke, would do to manage the situation and maintain their decision when faced with each 'event changer' previously listed on the board.

- In groups, have students discuss the scenarios on page 17 of *Be Ready*, identifying the possible harms and suggesting ways to reduce and manage the harms.
- Set up a **risk continuum** (refer to page 112) labelled 'low risk' and 'high risk'.

Ask students to decide the level of risk for Shani and stand on a point along the risk continuum that reflects the level of risk. Remind students there is no right or wrong answer. Invite students at various positions along the continuum to explain their decision to stand where they did. After listening to the opinions of other students, ask the class if anyone wants to change their position on the continuum and if so to explain why. Repeat this process with the other three scenarios.

- Have each student complete the personal reflection section of *Smoking – what's the harm?* on page 17 and also their responses to the case studies. Discuss student responses.





## Actions to reduce smoking



A non-smoker who doesn't want to smoke but is experiencing pressure to smoke



Someone who smokes at least 2 cigarettes a day



Someone who only smokes at parties



Someone whose friends all smoke

