

TOPIC 3

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 more information on smoking and e-cigarettes:

Australian Drug Foundation
<http://www.druginfo.adf.org.au>

WA Health Department
http://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Electronic-cigarettes-in-Western-Australia

Smarter than Smoking
<http://www.smarterthansmoking.org.au/>

Cancer Council WA
<https://www.cancerwa.asn.au/prevention/tobacco/>

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 Harms of smoking



Learning intention

- Students discuss the physical, social, emotional, financial and legal harms of smoking

Equipment

Be Ready student workbook – *Up in smoke* – page 27

Teaching tip

Refer students to the *Smarter than Smoking* website <http://www.smarterthansmoking.org.au/> for more fact sheets, games and resources.

Information about tobacco can be viewed at <http://www.tobaccoinaustralia.org.au/>.

Activities

1. Explain that despite the known health consequences of smoking cigarettes, it still remains a health issue in Australia. Also highlight that 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).
2. Write the Four L's Model on the board – Liver, Lover, Law and Livelihood. Explain that the Four L's model (adapted by Roizen) is useful when considering the short and long-term harms that tobacco use may have on four major spheres of a person's life. Working in groups, have students **brainstorm** (refer to page 107) some of the impacts for each sphere and write these on page 27 of *Be Ready*. Some examples have been provided.
 - **Liver** – anything to do with a person's health such as possible cancer related illnesses, emphysema (walls of lung tubes collapse), stained fingers and teeth, less oxygen to the brain, bad breath, more coughs and colds, shortness of breath, pregnancy complications, stroke, blindness, stomach ulcers, skin becomes dry, discoloured and wrinkled, reduce fertility in women, erectile dysfunction, osteoporosis.
 - **Lover** – problems associated with a person's relationship's (family, friends, children) such as breakdown in relationships due to disagreements over smoking in the house, spending money on cigarettes when struggling with other financial issues.
 - **Law/legal** – any problems associated with the law, either criminal or civil proceedings – selling cigarettes to those under 18 years of age, smoking in designated non-smoking areas or in a vehicle with young children.
 - **Livelihood/lifestyle** – problems which relate to accommodation, work, career, finances, education, recreation, loss of job and income.

Listen to responses from each group then use the following questions to process the activity. Explain that the toxins in tobacco smoke can go to every part of the body through the blood stream, causing harm to nearly every organ and system of the body. Point out that there are some immediate health effects such as shortness of breath and that some of the long term effects can take decades to occur, and it is this time lag that often gives smokers a false sense of security. Have students add effects not already included.

Ask

- *Do young people think about any of the impacts that tobacco can have on their lives? Why?*

- *How can young people find out about the health impacts of alcohol?* (eg advertising campaigns, drug education at school, credible websites, teachers, doctor).
 - *Would a person who is experiencing issues in all four spheres of life be considered to be at increased risk of harm? (Yes). How?*
 - *Which impacts could affect a person in the long-term?* (eg health diseases such as cancer and emphysema).
 - *Are the physical harms from smoking tobacco different from smoking cannabis?* (Smoking tobacco and cannabis can both cause physical harms, some of which are the same both to the user and those around them eg breathing in second hand smoke).
 - *If you were asked to develop a tobacco campaign targeting young people, which of the four L's would you focus on and why?*
 - *Would your campaign be different if it was targeting adults? Why?*
2. As smoking harms that are negative, short-term and immediate have greater relevance to young people than long-term effects, have students identify some of the benefits of not smoking using the 4 L's model:
 - **Liver** (eg not having smelly hair or clothes).
 - **Lover** (eg not being dumped by a girlfriend or boyfriend because you smoke, not being isolated, being part of the majority, not having smelly clothes or hair, and looking great).
 - **Livelihood/lifestyle** (eg having pocket money to spend on other things, feeling good about yourself, not worried about low fitness levels).
 - **Law/legal** (eg not getting into trouble for buying cigarettes while underage, being able to go into places such as shopping centres, sports stadiums, restaurants, beaches where smoking is banned).

Process the activity using the following questions.

Ask

- *Why do people try smoking even when they know it is bad for them?* (eg they think they will only smoke occasionally and they can stop when they want to; to fit in with a certain group; curiosity; to rebel; they believe smoking makes them look older, more adult; someone in their family smokes or they think that everyone does it so it must be okay).
- *Which three physical harms make smoking less appealing to you? Why?*
- *Is it easy to stop smoking?* (Smokers become dependent on the drug nicotine which is in tobacco and so it may take them several attempts to stop. Explain that people who call the Quitline 137 848 when trying to stop smoking have a better chance of achieving this than if they try on their own. The best way not to have problems with smoking is not to start).
- *What other things make smoking less appealing to you?*
- *If you were asked to create a health advertisement targeting young females and smoking, which physical harms would you focus on? Why?*
- *Would your advertisement be the same for young males? Why?*

3. Complete all activities on page 27 of *Be Ready*.

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

Strategy sheet – *Agree/disagree* – photocopy one set of signs – page 117

Internet access

Blank A4 paper – one sheet per group

Activities

1. Explain that e-cigarettes have recently become fashionable and are 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. Ask students to **brainstorm** (refer to page 107) things they have heard about e-cigarettes and write these on the board.
2. Explain to students that it is important to know the similarities and differences between smoking tobacco and e-cigarettes. Have each group draw a **venn diagram** (refer to page 113) and record information about the harms and laws associated with smoking tobacco and e-cigarettes. The following websites will provide some useful information:

- Australian Drug Foundation <http://www.druginfo.adf.org.au>
- WA Health Department http://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Electronic-cigarettes-in-Western-Australia
- Smarter than Smoking <http://www.smarterthansmoking.org.au/>
- Cancer Council WA <https://www.cancerwa.asn.au/prevention/tobacco/>

Explain to students that they will write the things that are common to both in the overlap area of the diagram. Tell students that the other areas of each circle are for facts about tobacco and e-cigarettes that are not common with the other.

Tobacco E-cigarette

3. Using the information recorded in their venn diagram, have groups answer 'true' or 'false' to the following questions. The answers are provided.
 - a) E-cigarettes are battery operated devices that look like a cigarette. (True. Electronic cigarettes are battery-powered devices which heat a cartridge containing nicotine, flavouring and other chemicals into a mist which is inhaled through a mouthpiece, and then exhaled by the user as a visible vapour).

- b) It is legal to sell e-cigarettes as they don't contain tobacco. (False. It is illegal to sell e-cigarettes unless the retailer has a licence and the product is sold to a person who has a valid permit).
 - c) It is legal to use e-cigarettes in public places. (True. E-cigarettes are permitted to be used in public places however owners/managers may choose to implement a policy applying to their premises which prohibits the use of e-cigarettes wherever smoking is prohibited).
 - d) Smoking tobacco has more harms than smoking e-cigarettes. (False. Any drug has the potential to cause harm. There is research to show that the harms associated with smoking tobacco and e-cigarettes are similar).
 - e) Nicotine is a stimulant drug that speeds up the messages travelling between the brain and body. (True).
 - f) Some of the effects from smoking cigarettes include dizziness, headaches, fast heart beat and bad breath. (True. As with any drug the effects may differ for each person however these are some effects that are usually experienced).
 - g) It is illegal to sell, use or possess e-cigarettes that contain nicotine. (True. Regardless of whether they contain nicotine or not, e-cigarettes cannot be sold in WA and it is an offence under the *Tobacco Products Control Act 2006* to sell these products. E-cigarettes may only be sold by a retailer with a licence, and may only be purchased by persons with a valid permit).
 - h) It is illegal to sell a product that resembles a tobacco product in Western Australia. (True. 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).
 - i) The liquid form of nicotine used in e-cigarettes is classified as a Schedule 7 poison under the *Poisons Act 1964*. (True. Schedule 7 poisons must meet labelling and packaging standards. They may only be sold by a retailer with a licence, and may only be purchased by persons with a valid permit).
4. After the quiz, set up a **values continuum** (refer to page 113) labelled 'agree' and 'disagree'. Ask students to consider the following statement: *It would be safer for a 15 year old to smoke e-cigarettes* and stand on a point along the continuum to indicate their opinion. 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. Ensure that tobacco prevention education messages are included in the discussion such as smoking is anti-social. Also remind students that most young people do not smoke.

Use the following questions to process the activity and further the discussion.

Ask:

- We have all read the same information about smoking and e-cigarettes. Why might we then still have differing views? (eg our attitudes can also be influenced by other factors such as the media, friends, family).
- What skills did we practise in the continuum discussion? (eg valuing and respecting others' opinions, considering our own opinions, active listening).
- Statistics about young people and smoking have been steadily decreasing over the last 20 years, which is great news. What information about smoking will influence your decision not to smoke?
- What would you say to someone who offered an e-cigarette and said, 'Come on, they aren't like cigarettes.'

- What strengths do you possess that can help you to refuse your friends in a respectful way? (eg courage, forgiveness, honesty, kindness, perseverance).
2. Conduct a **snap decisions** (refer to page 112) using the following scenarios. Have two volunteers be either the 'positive' or 'negative' thoughts person and stand either side of another volunteer who is to listen to the comments provided by these two students and then make a 'snap decision' based only on the comments they have heard. Have the class watch and also make a decision based on the comments given. Ask the student in the middle what their decision would be and why. Check with the class to see if they made a similar decision and discuss why this may be. For example, often the fun element of a potentially risky situation may take over our sense of what we know to be best for us and therefore it takes a strong commitment to stand by our decisions and refuse offers from friends.

Activity 3 Refusal strategies for smoking-related situations



Learning intention

- Students identify effective ways to refuse cigarettes
- Students practise refusing offers of cigarettes in a range of situations

Equipment

Be Ready student workbook – Refusing offers – page 28
Activity sheet – Offer cards – photocopy and cut into cards
Family information sheet – Being smoke free – photocopy one per student

Activities

1. Explain that students need to know a range of ways to refuse offers of cigarettes and other drugs such as alcohol and to have the confidence to apply these techniques requires practise. Invite six students to play a game of 'Refuse me'. Have five of these students stand in a line behind one another. The other student is to stand in front of the line with a card that has an offer to smoke a cigarette. The student is to give the offer to the first student in line who must then refuse the offer before moving to the end of the line. If a student uses the same response or can't give a refusal quickly enough, they are out of the game. The winner is the last student in the line.

Repeat the game with a new group of students and 'offer card' until all students have participated. Have students write some of the refusal comments they heard used that they think would be useful for them during the game in *Be Ready* on page 28. Listen to the students' answers then ask the following questions.

Ask

- How do you usually feel when your friends behave in a certain way and you think you should try to be like them?
- How difficult is it to resist someone when they won't take 'no' for an answer or they make fun of you, or reject you?
- Does being confident in your opinion and standing by your decision help you to refuse these pressures from your friends?

Scenarios

- You notice a group of your friends standing outside the shopping centre. Some of them are smoking. When you say hello, you are offered a cigarette.
 - You are at the beach with your best friend. She has started smoking recently and asks you to go and have a cigarette with her further down the beach outside of the flagged area.
 - You have been practising to get into the school musical and auditions are being held today. One of your friends suggests that you both go to the back of the school and have a cigarette to calm your nerves.
 - You are going to an interview for a part-time job at the local swimming pool. One of your friends is standing outside when you arrive. You tell your friend you are really nervous about the interview. Your friend offers you a cigarette and says it will help you to relax.
3. Send a copy of the Family information sheet – *Being smoke free* home with each student to share with their family.



Offer cards

Do you want a
smoke?

It won't kill you.
Try it.

Go on. Everyone
else is and
they're all
watching us.

I thought you
were my mate.

Come on, have
a smoke, it will
impress the
guys/girls.

Have a smoke.
It will calm you
down.

Hurry up it'll be
gone before you
have a puff.

Here your turn,
light up!



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 4 Analysing tobacco campaigns



Learning intention

- Students consider the different effects of smoking, including passive smoking and dependence
- Students critique anti-smoking television advertisements
- Students write a persuasive text that promotes the benefits of not smoking

Equipment

Be Ready student workbook – *Refusing offers* – page 28
Internet access

Activities

1. Explain to the class that the Critics' Choice is an initiative of the *Australian Network on Young People and Tobacco* as part of a strategy to reduce the prevalence of tobacco smoking amongst young people. Explain that students will be asked to critique several anti-smoking advertisements, sourced from around the world, and to identify different issues surrounding tobacco use.
2. View each of the advertisements at <http://www.quit.org.au/criticschoice/default.asp> then ask the following questions.

Ask

- *What were some of the key messages in each advertisement?*
- *Which advertisement did you like the most?*
- *Which was your least favourite and why?*
- *What methods were used to persuade viewers to change attitudes or behaviour?*
- *How does the advertisement make the viewer feel about the topic of smoking?*
- *How does the advertisement appeal to your emotions?*
- *What words are emphasised to influence the viewer?*
- *Which advertisements had no effect on your attitude to smoking? Why?*
- *If statistics show that smoking rates have been steadily decreasing over the last 20 years, why are anti-smoking advertisements and campaigns still being implemented?*
- *Who or what would be a reliable source of information on the health effects of smoking?*

3. Have students decide which of the advertisements were most effective in discouraging young people to smoke then indicate their preferences by completing the voting page on the Critics' Choice website.
4. Explain that writing a persuasive text requires the author to consider both sides of a topic or issue before forming an opinion. The author then needs to clearly state and support their opinion with reasons and examples before writing a conclusion or summary of the main points trying to convince a reader to agree and take a course of action. Suggest that students complete the persuasive planner on page 28 of *Be Ready* before writing a letter to the editor of the local newspaper promoting the benefits of not smoking.