

A VERY PERSONAL CRUSADE AGAINST SMOKING

Introduction

Focus

Barb Tarbox, a 41 year- old former model and lifelong smoker from Edmonton, was diagnosed with lung cancer in the fall of 2001. Shortly after her diagnosis she made it her mission to turn as many young people as possible away from smoking. This *News in Review* story focuses on the heroic crusade of Barb Tarbox as well as the current state of the anti-smoking war in Canada.

 Sections marked with this symbol indicate content suitable for younger viewers.

"You can't get this kind of pain. It's just not worth the cigarettes. You have to quit smoking." — Barbara Tarbox

Barb Tarbox finishes her presentation in a gymnasium packed with high school students and waits for one-on-one questions from students with the courage to approach her. The effects of cancer are clear. She has lost her hair. She is quite thin and she looks fragile. One 17-year-old boy approaches her, crumples his pack of cigarettes and places it in her hand. He vows never to smoke again. "You're going to make it," says Tarbox.

Some have described her as "the anti-smoking lobby's most powerful weapon." Since being diagnosed with stage-four terminal lung cancer, Tarbox has made it her mission to convince as many teens as possible to say no to smoking. Working with her best friend Tracy Mueller, Tarbox has spoken to over 15 000 high school students, mostly in her home province of Alberta. Tarbox hopes to reach 50 000 students before she dies.

It is the candour and honesty of Tarbox's message that has hit home with those who attend her presentations. Tarbox describes how she lost her mother when she was 21. Her mother smoked for 40 years before being diagnosed with lung cancer. One of the oncologists (cancer specialists) working with her mother asked Barb Tarbox if she was a smoker. When he heard the answer, he said, "You have to quit or I'm going to see you here in 20 years." Nineteen years later, Tarbox was shocked to learn that she had terminal lung cancer. She recalls making excuses for not quitting smoking at the time of her mother's death, thinking that they would find a cure for cancer before she would need to quit. Upon receiving her

diagnosis, she recalls telling the doctor, "I don't even have a cough." The doctor said, "Fifty per cent of lung cancer victims have zero symptoms, and 50 per cent of lung cancer patients at diagnosis are terminal, stage four. You're dying."

With this dire reality staring her in the face, Tarbox gained the courage to help others to avoid her fate. Working with Tracy Mueller, Tarbox began accepting invitations to speak at Edmonton-area schools. She fashioned her presentations on the blunt recognition of her own mistakes and the effects of cancer on her body. "You are looking at the world's biggest idiot," she tells students. She recalls beginning smoking at the end of grade 6 and, despite getting violently ill after her first puffs, maintaining the habit to fit in with the cool kids. By grade 9, Tarbox was smoking a pack a day. By grade 10, the cool kids were no longer cool and Tarbox was addicted to nicotine. She encourages teenagers to avoid the trappings of labels like "cool" or the "in crowd." Instead, she encourages them to foster a sense of self-confidence and pleads with them to learn from her example.

Tarbox's message also focuses on the physical dimension of living with lung cancer. She tells students how the cancerous tumours have spread through her body. She speaks of the way cancer has started to slur her speech and disfigure her body. "Look at my arms," she says. "I don't know if you can see it but it's where the bones stick out. You know what? The bones stick out of every area of my body now. My feet, my legs are blue, or they like to call it *cyanotic*, which is like a purple tinge.

Did you know. . .

An estimated 24 per cent of young people, aged 14-18, smoke in Canada? The largest single group of Canadian smokers is in the 20-24 years range.

And you know what happens? When your tissues start to die, they turn black. Oh yes! Oh yes, people. They turn black. And there isn't perfume on the market that can hide that smell. All the result, 100 per cent smoking."

Finally, Tarbox deals with the emotional price she is paying for smoking. During each presentation, she asks students to imagine saying goodbye to someone they love, and to imagine that they are never going to see that person again. This is the reality that Tarbox faces each day, knowing that her death is near, and that she will have to leave her best friend Tracy Mueller, her 10-year-old daughter Mackenzie, and her husband Pat, far sooner than she had imagined. The effect of this message on

the hearts of Tarbox's audience is dramatic as people are forced to deal with their own mortality and the mortality of those they love.

Barb Tarbox made it to Christmas of 2002, despite being told by doctors that she was at death's door. She thinks that the teenagers that she is speaking with are giving her the energy to live longer than most expected. She says, "Nothing is going to slow me down at this point—even if I'm blind and in a wheelchair—I will keep going." In the meantime, as the cancer progresses, Tarbox is using her remarkable willpower to cheat death and, through her message, save the lives of many young people. (Quotes are from www.cbc.ca/national/news/finalact/.)

To Consider

1. Why do you think some people refer to Barb Tarbox as the "anti-smoking lobby's greatest weapon"?
2. What warnings did Tarbox get that indicated that she needed to quit smoking?
3. Why do you think it was very hard for Tarbox to quit smoking?
4. What does Tarbox think has been giving her the strength to live longer than anyone expected?

Reflection

Imagine having to say goodbye to someone you love. Imagine you are never going to see them again. Write a 250-500 word letter to that person, telling them how much you care for them and how much you are going to miss them.

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Video Review

Answer the questions on this page during and after viewing this video story.

Did you know . . .

Canadian laws demand that cigarette packages carry emission levels for six toxic chemicals found in cigarettes? They are formaldehyde, benzene, hydrogen cyanide, nicotine, tar, and carbon monoxide.

"Barbara may save more lives in the time that she's speaking to people than I may be able to in my career." — Dr. Ross Halpern, Barbara's doctor

1. What are some of the physical effects of cancer that Tarbox speaks about?

2. Briefly outline the feelings of Al Stafford and Greg Southam regarding Barb Tarbox.

3. How many students does Tarbox want to speak to before she dies?

4. Do you think Tarbox can "scare" people into quitting smoking? Explain.

5. How is Tarbox's daughter reacting to her mother's illness?

6. Describe the reactions of some of the people interviewed near the end of the video.

7. What is your overall reaction to Barb Tarbox's message? Do you think her message is powerful enough to convince people to avoid smoking or to quit smoking?

8. (For current smokers only) What impact has Barbara Tarbox's message had on you? Be specific.

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Health Canada: The Facts About Smoking

To get an indication of how much you know about the effects of smoking, try this Health Canada quiz. The answers may surprise you.

Did you know . . .
Cigarette packages in Canada must carry one of 16 possible health hazard warnings?

Test Yourself!

1. When you smoke a cigarette, it's like inhaling car exhaust.
True _____ False _____
2. You'll find cyanide, formaldehyde, and toilet bowl cleaner in cigarettes.
True _____ False _____
3. Tobacco can be harder to quit than heroin or cocaine.
True _____ False _____
4. In all, tobacco smoke contains about 400 different chemical compounds.
True _____ False _____
5. In Canada, 49 per cent of teenagers don't smoke.
True _____ False _____
6. Of every 10 people who try smoking, eight get hooked.
True _____ False _____
7. If you are taking birth control pills, smoking will increase your chances for serious heart disease, stroke, and high blood pressure.
True _____ False _____
8. Smoking causes early tooth decay and gum disease.
True _____ False _____
9. Deep breathing and exercise could help you quit smoking.
True _____ False _____
10. How toxic is nicotine?
 - a. Not toxic at all
 - b. Causes severe abdominal cramps and bloating in some cases
 - c. Only toxic if in conjunction with other substances found in tobacco products
 - d. Deadly in high doses
11. Red blood cells carry oxygen through your body. By how much does carbon monoxide found in cigarettes reduce red blood cells' ability to perform this task?
 - a. 2 per cent
 - b. 6 per cent
 - c. 12 per cent
 - d. 28 per cent
12. How many cigarettes a year do Canadian teenagers smoke?
 - a. Eight million
 - b. Over a billion
 - c. Approximately 740 million
 - d. About 200 million

"Lung cancer kills 85 per cent of the people who get it. . . . It's by far the leading cancer killer in this country." — Doctor Gail Darling, Surgeon at Toronto General Hospital (*Toronto Star*, April 3, 2003)

The Answers

1. True. The same thing that sputters out of a car's tail-pipe, carbon monoxide, is found in cigarettes, and ends up in your lungs.
2. False. When you smoke, you're inhaling cyanide and formaldehyde but not toilet bowl cleaner.
3. True. Tobacco can be harder to quit than heroin or cocaine.
4. False. There are 4000 chemicals in cigarettes; at least 50 of those chemical compounds are known to cause cancer.
5. False. Teen smoking is on the decline. In fact 77 per cent of teens 15-19 today are saying "no thanks" to smoking.
6. True. Eight of every 10 people who try smoking do get hooked.
7. True. If you are taking birth control pills, smoking will increase your chances for serious heart disease, stroke, and high blood pressure.
8. True. Smoking does cause early tooth decay and gum disease.
9. True. Deep breathing and exercise could help you quit smoking. A lot of people who smoke say they do it because they're stressed. But actually, smoking just makes it worse. Your heart races and your breathing gets shallow after taking a puff or two. Concentrate on deep breathing to relax instead. Or get outside and get active.
10. The correct answer is "d) Deadly in high doses." Most people don't realize that nicotine is actually deadly. In fact pure nicotine can kill you. For every cigarette a person smokes, he or she likely inhales about 3 mg of nicotine. Fortunately, the body quickly breaks down this nicotine to keep it from building to a fatal dose.
11. The correct answer is "c) 12 per cent." Red blood cells carry oxygen through your body. Less oxygen makes breathing and physical activity difficult—and even though 12 per cent might not seem like a lot, it's certainly enough to make you breathe harder when climbing stairs or going for a run.
12. The correct answer is "b) Over a billion." Teenagers smoke more than 1.6 billion cigarettes each year—resulting in retail sales worth more than \$330-million. Just think about what else could be done with that money.

Source: www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hecs-sesc/tobacco/youth/scoopskillz.html

Questions

1. How well did you do on the quiz? Which answers surprised you? Explain.
2. If smoking is so bad for people's health, why do you think they start to smoke in the first place?
3. Have you started smoking? Why or why not?

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Why Do People Smoke?

Did you know . . .

According to Health Canada the following are some of the cancers linked to smoking: cancer of the lung, mouth, voicebox, throat, kidney, bladder, cervix and bowel? This can apply to smokers and non-smokers who come into contact with tobacco smoke.

When anti-smoking crusader Barb Tarbox recalls the main reason why she started to smoke, she remembers feeling pressure to fit in with her friends. She had just finished grade six. This invites the question: why would an 11- or 12-year-old turn to smoking to gain acceptance from her friends? Moreover, what factors contribute to a person's decision to start smoking?

There are many contributing factors that lead to someone's decision to smoke. One factor is the example set by parents. If a teenager comes from a family where smoking takes place they are more likely to light up. A second factor is peer pressure or peer influence—the kind of pressure that Tarbox felt when she was finishing grade six. If a peer group values a certain activity, like smoking, a person is more likely to join in. However, the most significant contributing factor leading to a person's decision to start smoking relates to one's feelings. Smoking becomes a coping mechanism to help a person deal with how they are feeling. The unfortunate result of this coping technique is that it is extremely harmful to that person's health.

What feelings can lead a person to smoking? Health Canada identifies a number of feelings that can trigger a person's decision to smoke:

- anger or an argument
- school pressure
- troubles with family or friends
- loneliness
- stress
- boredom
- rewarding oneself
- depression or sadness
- rebelliousness

- relationship problems
- trying to fit in

In other words, these trigger feelings can contribute to a person's decision to acquire a more desirable feeling. Let's say a teenager gets into an argument with her parents over her grades at school. In an effort to calm down after the argument she may identify smoking a cigarette with a way to calm herself. It might simply be that smoking is associated with the good times she has had with her friends and this is the thought that leads her to a state of calmness. Therefore, the trigger is the argument. The argument creates anxiety. In the mind of the teenager, the cigarette is the medicine that replaces the negative emotion—*anxiety*—with a more positive emotion—*calmness*.

Educators are trying to teach young people that there are other ways of dealing with emotional issues besides smoking. One successful technique in the battle against smoking relates to the ongoing shift of society away from acceptance of tobacco use to flat out rejection of the practice. All levels of government in Canada—drawing on the declining popularity of smoking—have passed laws that limit advertising by tobacco companies, restrict access to tobacco products for young people, and increase the price of cigarettes. They have also passed regulations restricting where people can smoke. Presently, public opinion is in the anti-smoking corner, so if a person wants to turn to smoking to cope with how they feel, they are more likely to encounter a negative reaction from their peer group and society in general.

Responding

1. What are the factors contributing to a person's decision to start smoking?

2. Which factor do you consider to be the most significant?

3. Which factor has influenced the smokers that you know personally (including possibly, yourself).

4. Do you think a person's emotional state contributes to their decision to smoke? Explain your answer.

5. Do you support or reject government attempts to curb smoking? Explain.

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Hollywood and Smoking

Municipal, provincial, and federal governments in Canada have done an effective job in limiting the ability of tobacco companies to market their products. Despite these efforts, people continue to smoke. According to some, one of the central problems is the depiction of smoking in movies. Anti-smoking groups claim that the tobacco companies are sneaking around existing legislation worldwide by having Hollywood movie stars smoke in movies.

Up until 1989, tobacco companies paid movie studios and actors to use their brand of cigarettes in movies. After accusations of cigarette “payola” being levied against the tobacco companies and the studios, both parties voluntarily withdrew from the payoffs. However, product placement of cigarettes in movies still goes on, even if no money is directly changing hands between the moviemakers and the tobacco companies. One person who has taken action against this practice is Stanton A. Glantz, a professor of medicine at the University of California at San Francisco. Glantz has developed a Web site called “Smoke Free Movies” (<http://smokefreemovies.ucsf.edu/problem>). His goal is to work with the public to put pressure on Hollywood to eliminate smoking from film. Glantz points to the fact that smoking kills about 5 million people world-wide per year—more than murder, suicide, illegal drugs, and AIDS combined. He says that film is a primary marketing tool for tobacco companies. He cites some chilling statistics:

- In a comparison of 1996-1997 movies to 1999-2000 movies, depictions of smoking in films rose by 50 percent.

- Teenagers who see their favourite movie star smoking on screen are 16 times more likely to try smoking.
- In 1997-1998, 88 per cent of the top 50 box office movies contained tobacco use; in 74 per cent of those movies the lead actors were shown smoking.
- In the 1990s, 9 out of 10 movies dramatized the use of tobacco. Twenty-eight per cent of movies—including one in five children’s movies—showed tobacco brands.
- The smoking rate among major characters in films is about 300 per cent higher than the average in the real world.

Stanton Glantz and his colleagues at Smoke Free Movies fear that young people in particular are getting the wrong impression when it comes to smoking. His research reveals that Hollywood glamorizes smoking and this is turning many young people into smokers.

Smoke Free Movies is getting some support from Hollywood insiders. In August 2002 Joe Eszterhas, a screenwriter for the films *Basic Instinct*, *Jagged Edge*, and *Showgirls*, wrote an article in the *New York Times* in which he claimed to have been “an accomplice in the murder of untold numbers of human beings.” In the article, Eszterhas revealed his long-term love of cigarettes, the lengths that he would go to defend his right to smoke, and his liberal portrayal of smoking in his movie scripts. Things changed for Eszterhas when he was diagnosed with throat cancer and had to have part of his larynx removed. Suddenly, faced with

the possibility of death, Eszterhas took time to reflect on the possibility of never seeing his family again and the role that smoking played in his life and his movies. He said that, before being diagnosed with cancer, he used smoking to demonstrate the personality of his characters. Since being diagnosed, he said he could think of a thousand “better and more original ways to reveal a character’s personality.” In the end, Eszterhas thinks that tobacco “should be as illegal as heroin” (*New York*

Times, August 9, 2002).

Smoke Free Movies has also gained an ally in Rob Reiner of Castlerock Entertainment. Reiner, a staunch anti-smoking activist, recalls seeing Meg Ryan smoking in the movie *Proof of Life* and wondering what her smoking did for the plot of the film. Since then Reiner has made it company policy that, if a director wants to depict smoking in a movie made by Castlerock, they have to meet with him to demonstrate why smoking needs to be shown.

Questions

1. Why is showing a character smoking in a movie considered an effective marketing strategy for tobacco companies?
2. Think of your top 10 favourite movies and fill in the following chart:

Names of your favourite movies	Does the film show a character smoking in the movie?	
	Yes	No

3. What do the results of your survey indicate? Were there any surprises?
4. Think of three movies that show characters smoking. Is the depiction of smoking important to the plot of the film? Explain your answer.
5. Smoke Free Movies is pushing to have any movie that shows characters smoking receive an “R” or restricted rating. Do you agree with this idea? Explain your answer.

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Canada and the Anti-Smoking Movement

Canada is considered to be at the forefront of the global anti-smoking movement. It appears that Canada is making progress in the battle against smoking. In 2000-2001, 24 per cent of Canadians (just over 6 million people) were identified as smokers compared with 31 per cent in 1994 and 38 per cent in the 1980s. One factor contributing to the decline is Canada's aggressive approach to restricting the rights of smokers. Here is a summary of anti-smoking legislation.

Butting Out

- At least 45 municipalities in Canada have passed bylaws requiring smoke-free restaurants and about 31 have bylaws requiring smoke-free bars.
- Anti-smoking bylaws in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and St. John's, Newfoundland, came into effect on January 1, 2002. They ban smoking in any indoor location where minors are present. Some coffee shops and restaurants got around the bylaw by banning children.
- In January 2003, Nova Scotia banned smoking in many public places, including taxicabs, bowling alleys, and schoolyards.
- The City of Ottawa banned smoking in all workplaces and public spaces, with no allowance for designated smoking rooms. The bylaw came into effect August 1, 2001. Victoria, B.C., and Waterloo, Ontario, have similar bans.
- On Dec. 31, 2002, Saskatchewan passed a law forcing bingo parlours, bars, casinos, restaurants, and bowling alleys to designate 40 per cent of space as non-smoking. The require-

ment will increase to 60 per cent by 2004.

- On May 22, 2001, the City of Edmonton banned smoking in all public places where children are served, except for lounges.
- In Quebec, it is against the law to sell tobacco by mail order, over the Internet, on school grounds or in a health-care, social-services, or childcare facility.
- Ontario prohibits tobacco sales at hospitals, psychiatric facilities, nursing homes, long-term care facilities, and charitable institutions.

Source: www.cbc.ca/news/indepth/background/smokingbans.html

Meanwhile the federal government has done its best to exceed measures called for by the World Health Organization. Besides passing legislation regulating the production and sale of tobacco, the Canadian government has forced tobacco companies to be forthright with their customers. All cigarette packaging must have warning labels that speak to the health consequences of smoking. The packaging must also include a graphic image designed to deter people from smoking. The Canadian government has also passed legislation that prohibits the marketing of cigarettes referred to as "light" or "mild." From a health standpoint, there are no safe cigarettes.

Canadians have grown increasingly intolerant of smoking. The feelings of most Canadians are summarized by Joe Mihevic, a city councillor from Toronto who chairs the city's Board of Health. "The ground has shifted," according to Mihevic. "The time has really come to

live up to the ideal, which is: if you must smoke, this is an activity done outside” (*Toronto Star*, March 4, 2003). Mihevic’s statement recognizes that

people are going to smoke as well as the need to take the activity outside where it is not going to have an effect on the well-being of others.

Questions

1. Do you think that Canadian governments are doing enough in the battle against smoking? What more could they be doing?

2. What laws or regulations exist in your community and/or school that curb the rights of smokers? Do these have your support? Explain.

Follow-up Activity

1. Go to www.hc-cs.gc.ca/hecs-secs/tobacco/youth/scooplabels.html. Take a look at the warning labels that appear on cigarette packages. What is your reaction to the pictures? Which labels do you think are most powerful? Do you think that the labelling of cigarette packages is an effective way to get people to quit smoking? Explain.
2. Design a warning label that you think would be effective in turning teenagers away from smoking. Present your ideas to your classmates.



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A Brief History of Tobacco

Did you know . . .
Tobacco was and is still used as part of ceremonial and religious services among some North American Aboriginal groups?

In November of 1492, Christopher Columbus reported encountering “great multitudes of people, men and women with firebrands in their hands and herbs to smoke after their customs.” The herbs were tobacco, and before long settlers to the New World were smoking tobacco as well. Eventually tobacco was commercially harvested and shipped to Europe where the practice of smoking began to grow. However, it wasn’t until the 20th century that smoking really took off, with more than 50 per cent of the population picking up the habit by the 1950s. With movie stars like James Dean and Humphrey Bogart puffing away for all to see, the cigarette became the symbol of suave sophistication.

This perspective changed in 1952 when *Reader’s Digest* published an article called “Cancer by the Carton.” For the first time, the dangers of smoking became the centre of North American public attention, and the next year cigarette sales declined for the first time in 20 years. Tobacco companies responded by producing what they called a safer cigarette, using filters and lowering the amount of tar in their product. However, such efforts were effectively destroyed with the release of the United States Surgeon General’s report called “Smoking and Health.” In the report, Dr. Luther L. Terry clearly demonstrated that smoking caused cancer. He concluded that: “Cigarette smoking is a health hazard of sufficient importance in the United States to warrant appropriate remedial action.” The effects of this determination were felt world-wide. Suddenly, the world was faced with evidence that a pastime

once thought to be harmless was, in fact, deadly.

Since 1964, governments around the world have slowly addressed the problem of smoking, with momentum picking up over the past decade. Efforts to deal with the scourge of smoking have been delayed by the ability of tobacco companies to win over 300 lawsuits filed against them by smokers and the families of smokers over the past 30 years. In some of the lawsuits filed in the United States, the public has been shocked to learn that tobacco companies want smokers to “think of the cigarette as a dispenser for a dose of nicotine” and that young teenagers are considered “replacement smokers.” Statements like these suggest that the tobacco companies have been well aware of the reality of nicotine addiction and the need to replace the smokers who have died with “replacement smokers.” A combination of scientific evidence linking smoking to many types of cancer and some questionable marketing practices by tobacco companies has eroded the power base of big tobacco companies. Even Hollywood has gotten in on the action with movies like *The Insider*. The movie retells the story of Jeffrey Wigand, a senior scientist for Brown and Williamson Tobacco, who blew the whistle on the his employers on the television program *60 Minutes*. Wigand demonstrated that tobacco companies were targeting youth in their marketing and were using chemicals like ammonia to boost the impact of nicotine in cigarettes. In effect, Wigand confirmed what many people had long suspected to be true about the tobacco companies.

By 1999, the tobacco companies could not fight the pressure put on them by the anti-smoking movement any longer. Despite repeated denials over the years, the Philip Morris tobacco company put a message on its Web site admitting that smoking caused cancer and that nicotine was addictive. In 2002, the United States tobacco industry avoided litigation in a series of class-action lawsuits filed in all 50 states by agreeing to a \$206-billion

settlement to go toward health-care costs associated with smoking. Encouraged by legal successes against tobacco companies in the United States, both British Columbia and Ontario have launched lawsuits against Canadian tobacco companies to recover health-care costs brought on by smoking-related illnesses. In addition to this, the federal government has hired Jeffrey Wigand as a special advisor to Health Canada.

Questions

1. Former Health Minister Allan Rock said, "Canadian companies, just like American companies, have been manipulating people, have been doing research to focus on the young and to focus on people who might want to quit smoking" (cbc.ca/new/indepth/smoking/insider). What evidence is there that tobacco companies are targeting young people in their marketing? What techniques are they using to get young people to smoke?

2. In your opinion, what elements of tobacco advertising are successful with teens?

3. What is the significance of the \$206-billion settlement in the United States on the progress of anti-smoking advocates around the world?

Extension

View the movie *The Insider*. Write a 200-250 word review of the movie focusing on three scenes that had the greatest impact on you while you watched the movie. Did the movie impact your view of smoking? Explain.

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Final Activity: It's Time to Quit Smoking!

Further Research

For a more detailed account of the process of quitting, go to: www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hecs-secs/tobacco/youth/quitting/index.html.

Note to Teachers

Educational materials from Lungs for Life can be downloaded at www.on.lung.ca or ordered by calling 1-800-972-2636.

Health Canada identifies five steps in the process of quitting smoking:

1. Get psyched—motivate yourself to quit; determine the benefits of quitting and determine the things that you value in life.
2. Get smart—figure out why you smoke; track the amount of smoking you do in a day and figure out the negative consequences of smoking.
3. Get support—ask for the support of your friends, family, or doctor in your effort to quit; find a friend to quit with you or to hold you accountable for your effort to quit.
4. Get on with it—try to quit. You may want to “practise” quitting first by quitting for a few hours or a few days. You may also want to turn to medications like nicotine gum or the patch. Whatever you decide, expect quitting to be difficult because overcoming nicotine addiction is not an easy task.
5. Quit for life—make a commitment to quit for life.

Choose one (1) of the following options:

Quit smoking! Follow the steps suggested by Health Canada and try to quit smoking. Report to your class, a teacher, or a guidance counsellor as a way to make yourself accountable. Good luck.

OR

Create a poster series for your school encouraging your peers to quit smoking. The Canadian Lung Association is promoting a program called Lungs for Life that is heavy on the “ick” factor. In other words, your posters should take the glamour out of smoking and show the gross or ugly side of the smoking experience (lung cancer, yellow teeth, etc.).

OR

Create a class, grade, or school survey to determine the percentage of your school population that smokes. Make an action plan designed to decrease the number of smokers in your school community. Report your findings to your school on the P.A., in the school newspaper, or at a school assembly.