

Leaders: Help Your Youth Stay Tobacco Free

Know the Facts . . .

- Throughout the United States, 3,000 young people start smoking every day.
- Smoking slows lung growth, decreases lung function, and reduces the oxygen available for muscles used in sports.
- Smokers suffer from shortness of breath almost 3 times more often than non-smokers.
- Spit tobacco and cigars are not safe alternatives to cigarettes.
- Nicotine is addictive in ways like heroin and cocaine.
- Young people who use tobacco may be more likely to use alcohol and other drugs such as cocaine and marijuana.
- Young people who do not start using tobacco by age 18 will most likely never start.

**SMOKE OPPONENTS
NOT
CIGARETTES!**

Here's What You Can Do!

- Be a positive role model and be certain not to use or possess tobacco around your players.
- Recognize your influence with young people and remind them of the importance of being tobacco free.
- Remember young people relate more to messages about the immediate effects of tobacco use (such as poorer athletic performance) than to its long-term health threats.

**OUR ONLY ADDICTION
IS THE GAME!**

- Support tobacco-free policies for recreational settings. Explain to your team why the policy is important.
- Send a copy of the tobacco-free policy home for parents to review.
- Help make all meetings, practices, and games tobacco free by posting signs at events.
- Call your local health department or your cancer, heart, or lung association to learn how you can get involved.

What are the benefits of a tobacco-free recreation program?

- Encourages youth not to start using tobacco products.
- Protects the health of youth by eliminating exposure to the harmful effects of second hand smoke.
- Demonstrates that adults want youth to remain tobacco free.
- Helps change community norms regarding tobacco use.
- Young people look to adults to set clear standards when making lifestyle decisions.

**Sports and
tobacco
don't mix!**

