

**Smokeless
Does Not Mean
Harmless**



TOOLKIT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Smokeless Tobacco Questions & Answers	1
Community Mobilization	3
Policy Changes	3
Moving Toward a Tobacco-Free County Fair and Rodeo Policy	4
Counter-Marketing Basics	5
Earned Media	5
Tips for Working with the Media	5
Earned Media Tools	6
Media Advisory	6
News Release	6
News Conferences	8
Letters to the Editor	8
Editorial	9
Public Service Announcements (PSA)	10
Talking Points	11
Suggested Activities	11
Cessation	11
Green Ribbon Activity	12
Pizza Box Flyers	12
Spit Tobacco Ingredient Display	14
Make Your Own Spit Tobacco	14
The Spit Tobacco Makeover	16
More Ideas	16
Quit Spit Kits	17
Additional Resources	17
Sources	18

Smokeless Tobacco Questions and Answers

Q: What is smokeless/spit tobacco?

Answer: There are two main types of smokeless tobacco—snuff and chewing tobacco. Snuff comes in a round tin can or is packaged in small packets that look like tea bags. It is finely ground or shredded tobacco. Typically, the user places a pinch or dip between the cheek and gum. Another variety of snuff is a fine powder that is inhaled or snorted into the nose. Chewing tobacco is available in loose leaf chew, plugs, or twist. These products come in cellophane or in a pouch. This information is available in the pamphlet *Smokeless Tobacco: A Deadly Addiction* by Herbert H. Severson, Ph.D. www.chewfree.com, IT 2007

Q: Do we call these products spit/chew or smokeless tobacco?

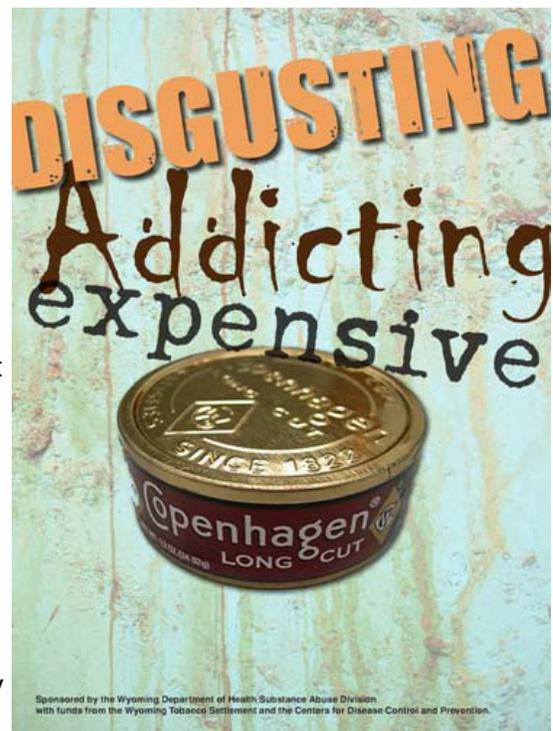
Answer: This is a common question that lacks a concrete answer. Smokeless tobacco is the term the tobacco industry uses. Using the term “smokeless,” unfortunately, sounds like “harmless.” Therefore, whenever possible, it is important to refer to these products as spit or chewing tobacco. In some instances, one may have to use the word smokeless; for example, when conducting Internet research, many studies are listed under smokeless tobacco. To further complicate matters, the tobacco industry has created new products, some of which are known as “spitless tobacco,” so the debate on what to call smokeless tobacco will be ongoing. Other common terms for spit tobacco include dip, chew, snuff, and snus.

Q: What makes spit tobacco so addictive and harmful?

Answer: All tobacco products contain cancer causing agents and nicotine, which is very addictive. According to the Mayo Clinic (www.mayoclinic.com), some spit tobacco products contain additives that increase the rate nicotine is absorbed into the body. If you look at the types of spit, chew and snuff sold in retail outlets, you will notice different products for the beginner; they are easily identified by their sweet, fruity flavors (apple, cherry, peach, etc.) and often come in easy-to-use pouches. Over time, the spit and snuff user graduates to products that contain more nicotine. Someone who has chewed for a long time uses a stronger product and uses it more frequently to receive the same effect. Check out the American Dental Association Web site (www.ada.org) for a list of some of the cancer-causing chemicals found in spit tobacco.

Q: Are spit, chew and snuff safe alternatives to cigarettes?

Answer: No, they are not a safe alternative. U.S. Smokeless Tobacco Company (USSTC) promotes its products by claiming they are less of a health risk than smoking cigarettes. All tobacco use is risky and may cause cancer as well as other diseases.



Q: Which populations in Kansas are most affected by spit/chew use?

Answer: In Kansas, 17.4 % of Kansas high school males use spit tobacco (BRFSS 2005). The type of people targeted by the smokeless tobacco industry remains sports participants, blue collar workers, cowboys, hunters, and now, the professional business man.

Q: What suggestions do you have for spit users who want to quit?

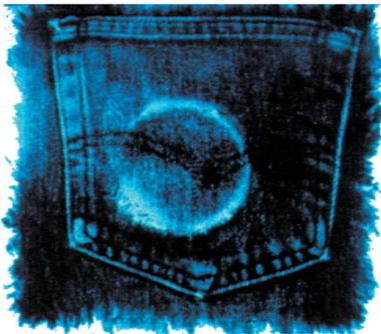
Answer: Make a plan and list your reasons for quitting. Review your daily routine of spit tobacco use. Recognize how you will need to change your routine. Ask for support: your family, friends, or co-workers will support your plan. Talk with your doctor, dentist, pharmacist or a health professional about available quit medications and products. Find what works for you. Review the suggestions discussed below about non-tobacco alternatives. Call the Kansas Tobacco Quitline (1-866-KAN-STOP).

Set a quit date. Put spit tobacco substitutes in places you previously kept spit tobacco. Learn about possible withdrawal symptoms. Plan periodic rewards with the savings you will have from not buying any more chew or snuff. Many people who quit try many times before becoming a non-chewer. If you relapse, don't get discouraged. Don't give up. Remember it is hard to change everyday habits. TRY AGAIN!

Spit tobacco cessation products include non-tobacco alternatives, which usually come in containers shaped like a can of spit tobacco. Learn more about some of these products from cessation experts, or on the Internet. Go to www.goldeneaglechew.com, www.dipstop.com, www.smokeysnuff.com, or www.chewfree.com. Spit tobacco users can also try nicotine replacement therapy (NRT's) such as gum, patches and lozenges and use quit medications. It is important to check with your pharmacist, doctor or other health care provider about proper dosage. Without proper dosage, the quit attempt may not be as successful. Because of the higher amounts of nicotine in spit tobacco compared to cigarettes, the recommended NRT doses may need to differ depending on the amount used and the length of time a person has used chew.

Q: What suggestions do you have for early detection of negative health effects from spit tobacco use?

Answer: Spit tobacco users should check monthly for damage to teeth, gums, the tongue and surrounding tissue that may indicate early warning signs of cancer. As deadly as mouth cancer is, your chances of surviving are much better when found early. At a minimum, on a monthly basis, conduct an oral screening using a mirror and good lighting. Consider the following steps:



**First Warning Sign
of Cancer**

- **Face and neck:** Look in the mirror. Do both sides of your face and neck look the same? Gently press your jawbone to feel for lumps.
- **Check lips and gums:** Pull down your lower lip. Are there white or red patches or sores that bleed easily? Are there any signs of irritation, like tenderness, burning or a sore that will not heal? Look very carefully at where you place your tobacco. Do you see color changes or rough areas? Squeeze your **lip and cheek** between your fingers. Are there bumps or soreness?
- **Roof of the mouth:** Tilt your head back and open wide. Do you see any discoloration, sores, bumps or swelling?

- **Floor of the mouth:** Put the tip of your tongue on the roof of your mouth. With one finger, press around the floor of your mouth. Do you feel sores, bumps or swelling?
- **Tongue:** Stick your tongue out. Grab it with a clean piece of cloth or paper towel. Move your tongue from side to side. Do you see any color changes or bumps? If you answer YES to any of these questions, see a doctor or dentist right away. Be sure to tell your health care provider that you use spit tobacco.

Warning: If you see any discolored skin, feel any bumps or soreness, or have a sore in the mouth that does not heal within 2 weeks, this may be an early warning sign of cancer.

Community Mobilization

Community mobilization is the process of getting community members and groups to support your cause. This support can include action (participation in your activities), votes and public opinion.

Community Mobilization Strategies

- Involve local tobacco control coalition if possible.
- Involve “non-traditional” partners, such as police/fire departments, faith-based community, local environmental coalitions (litter concerns, etc.), hospitals, health care providers, oral health professionals and others.
- Hold educational meetings or events so that the community is aware of the dangers of tobacco use and will provide support.
- Have a booth at the county fair or rodeo with information regarding the dangers of tobacco, specifically spit tobacco.
- Invite the Kansas High School Rodeo Association to support efforts.
- Invite 4-H youth to join and support efforts.

Policy Changes

Tobacco-Free County Fair and Rodeo Policy Rationale

Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs states, “To achieve the individual behavior change that supports the nonuse of tobacco, communities must change the way tobacco is promoted, sold and used while changing attitudes, and practices of young people, tobacco users and nonusers. Effective community programs involve people in their homes, work sites, schools, place of worship and entertainment, civic organizations, and other public places.”

Steps in Moving Toward a Tobacco-Free County Fair & Rodeo Policy

Questions To Get You Started

What is the current policy at your county fair or rodeo, including the grounds?

What could be done to improve the policy?

Are there any concerns related to the strength of the policy, enforcement, etc.?

1. Gaining Support

What methods could be used to gain support for the policy, including an informal survey, supporting documentation, etc.?

Who are your key partners in this initiative?

2 Policy Development

Who sets the policies for your county fair or rodeo?

Other than health effects, why would your county fair or rodeo consider having a Tobacco-Free grounds policy?

When, where and who will the policy affect?

What are the consequences for violating the policy?

3. Decision Makers Presentation

When and where does your county fair or rodeo board meet?

What is the process for getting on their agenda?

Will your presentation be formal or informal?

Key information on health effects and secondhand smoke should be covered in your presentation to the school board. What other components should be included in your presentation, including information on spit tobacco?

4. Enforcement

Should enforcement be addressed in the policy? If so, how?

Who will be responsible for enforcing the policy?

Will cessation services be offered for policy violators, such as the Kansas Tobacco Quitline?

5. Policy Announcement

What is your communication plan once the policy has been passed?

Who should be included as your audience for communicating the new policy?

Will signage be used to announce the policy?

In addition to signage, what other means are available for announcing the policy?

6. Support for the Policy

Once the Tobacco-Free grounds policy is passed, is continued support for the policy needed?

Will cessation services be offered for individuals violating the policy, such as the Kansas Tobacco Quitline?

Awareness programs are one of the ways of supporting the policy, what are other means of supporting the policy?

Counter-Marketing Basics

Counter-marketing attempts to oppose pro-tobacco influences and increase health messages and influences. Counter-marketing involves a wide range of efforts, including paid television, radio, billboard, and print advertising; earned media and other public relations techniques using such tactics as media releases, local events, and health promotion activities; and efforts to reduce or replace tobacco industry sponsorships and promotions.

Counter-marketing activities can promote quitting tobacco and decrease the likelihood that youth will start using tobacco. In addition, counter-marketing messages can have a powerful influence on public support for tobacco control, and school and community efforts.

Earned Media

One of the major parts of most tobacco counter-marketing efforts is earned media. Earned media is basically free media coverage. Earned media includes news stories (print, TV and radio), editorials, letters to the editor and public service announcements (free ads).

Earned media is generated through activities that attract media attention (news conferences, community events, rallies, contests, etc.), news releases, letters to the editor, and conversations with newspaper editorial boards that generate editorials.

Importance of earned media – News stories can often have more influence on opinion than advertising, because they are seen as unbiased. Earned media also provide more exposure than we can afford. Both earned and paid media are important to get the message out.

Tips for Working with the Media

Make sure that anything you send to the media has news value. We often consider tobacco-related issues to be exciting, but reporters have their own criteria for news. The following are elements most reporters look for in a story (try to have more than one element in your story):

- **Timeliness** – Make sure your story is relevant right now – a current activity or campaign. You may want to tie into another hot topic.
- **Local angle** – Highlight how the story relates to your local community. If a national tobacco study is released, provide information on the tobacco problem in Kansas or in your community.
- **General Interest** – Make your issue as interesting as possible.

- Conflict – Media love a good conflict.
- Human interest – Provide a human side to the issue to create emotional appeal. Tell them the story of one person’s fight with throat cancer or tobacco addiction.
- Celebrity - People pay attention to celebrities. The celebrity should be someone who appeals to your target audience and whom the media would think is worth covering.

Determine which category of news your story fits into and send the information to someone who works in that section (the section editor or beat reporter). Take a good look at your local paper(s) so you are familiar with the section in each paper. The following are a few of the categories your story might fall into:

- News – Factual and timely information about important events or developments.
- Feature – These are generally human interest stories. Feature stories help the reader understand someone’s experiences, thoughts and feelings.
- Editorial – The editorial section is also known as the opinion section. These are letters to the editor, editorials and columns that give the opinions of individuals or groups.
- Entertainment
- Public service – Information that is a service to the community (event calendars).

Earned Media Tools

Media Advisory

A media advisory tells the media about an upcoming event (generally with photo opportunities or a big announcement) and advises the media to cover it. An advisory is basically a teaser that gives the media enough information to generate interest but not enough to write the story. An advisory should be sent 3 - 5 days before the event to get the event on a reporter's schedule. An advisory is generally used if you want the media coverage after the event, because it is asking the reporter to come to the event to get the story, take pictures and maybe interview people. If you use a media advisory, also prepare a news release to give reporters at the event and to send to other media outlets after the event. *See the sample advisory on page 9.*

News Release

A news release provides a story to reporters. If the release is well written, many papers will print the news release exactly as written. A news release is written as straight news without many adjectives. Keep the adjectives (exciting, valuable, disgusting, etc.) and statements of opinion in the quotes used within the release. News releases are written in inverted pyramid style with the most important information at the top. Try to keep releases to one page. If your goal is to get the public to attend an event, you'll want to send the release 3 - 5 days (or more for weekly papers) before the event.

If you want the media to attend the event and you want the public to attend, send the media advisory and the news release before the event. In this case, be sure to tease them with something in the advisory that isn't in the release so they still have a reason to attend. This teaser information can even be a description of great potential photos. *See sample on page 9.*

Sample Media Advisory

[Date]	Contact: [TASK Member Name] [TASK Member Phone Number & e-mail address]
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MEDIA ADVISORY

[Headline – Get their attention]

Who: [Youth group/community group – everyone involved]

What: [One or two sentence description of event]

When: [Date and time]

Where: [Location (event address & city)]

Why: Smokeless tobacco is a deadly addiction that can lead to cancer, disfigurement and death. Kansas youth are working to spread the word that Smokeless Does Not Mean Harmless and decrease the number of Kansans impacted by this addiction.

[Add any specific information for media – photo opportunities, where to park, entrance, etc.]

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Sample News Release

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE	Contact: [TASK Member Name]
[Date]	[TASK Member Phone Number & e-mail address]

[HEADLINE: KEPT IT SHORT, ALL CAPITAL LETTERS]

[City], Kan.- [1st paragraph is the brief who, what, when and why. Two sentences maximum.]

Kansas currently has a higher than average use of spit tobacco. According to the 2005 Kansas Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 17.4 percent of high school males report currently using spit tobacco. The estimated national rate is 13.6 percent among high school males. According to the 2002 Kansas Youth Tobacco Survey approximately one out of every three youth do not know that smokeless tobacco is not a safe alternative to cigarettes.

[Quote from an expert involved that emphasizes the significance of the event.]

[More details on the event.]

About [Community Name] TASK
[Community Name] TASK works to inform teens of big tobacco manipulation and reduce teen tobacco use in Kansas. [Provide some information on your local TASK group – how many members, schools they represent, etc.] TASK works in conjunction with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment’s Tobacco Use Prevention Program and the Tobacco Free Kansas Coalition. For more information on TASK visit www.kstask.org.

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News Conferences

A news conference is an opportunity to invite all the local media to one location and make a big announcement. At a news conference one or more speakers will share remarks and then take questions. For a news conference to be valuable to reporters it must have good visuals and/or a celebrity speaker. If you don't have either of these things, you'd be better off sending the information in a news release and skipping the news conference.

If you are having trouble deciding whether or not you need a news conference, please feel free to contact the TUPP Media Coordinator (Ginger Park, 785-296-1118) to discuss the idea.

If you decide to hold a news conference, here's a preparation checklist:

- Decide on a location for the news conference. Think about interesting places that support your message, such as the steps of your school.
 - Get permission from the appropriate person to use your chosen location.
- Schedule it for a time when an audience and reporters are most likely to show up.
 - Mid-morning on a Tuesday or Wednesday is generally the best time to get media to attend.
- Decide who will speak at the press conference and how long it will last.
 - A good length would be about 30 minutes, including time to answer questions from reporters.
- Invite VIP guests early, such as the mayor or a local legislator.
- Decide what visuals will best convey your message
 - You could create large posters showing compelling pictures.
- Have a big sign with your group's name on it.
- Prepare a media advisory (see sample media advisory on page 9) and mail, fax or e-mail it to reporters on your media list so they'll see it one week before the news conference.
- A few days before the press conference, follow up by phone and encourage reporters to attend.
- Assemble handouts or media kits to give to reporters that include a news release, a fact sheet of smokeless tobacco statistics, photos of your group fighting tobacco and/or graphics that help explain smokeless tobacco.
- At the location, leave enough space for television cameras on the sides or in the back of the room.
- Ask all members of the media to sign in so you have a list of reporters to follow up with.
- Be sure you begin and end on time.
- Thank the media and your guests for attending.

Letters to the Editor

Coordinate a group of volunteers to write letters to the editor. Make sure letters are submitted to local and statewide papers. Provide the volunteers with the following:

- Spit Tobacco Talking Points
- E-mail addresses and mailing addresses for newspaper
- Word-length limits for newspaper
- Designated time to send in letter

Editorial

Editorials are written by a newspaper’s editorial board or guest editorials are written by an expert in a particular area.

Editorial board

Your group can request a meeting with the editorial board to ask them to write about an issue or event. Before you set up a meeting with an editorial board, determine what you will tell the board to convince them to meet with you. Editorial boards typically get many requests for meetings, so be prepared to make a strong case for your issue.

Newspaper we want to meet with: _____

Contact person for editorial board meetings: _____

Phone number/address: _____

Sample Introduction Letter to Editorial Board

Dear [name],

We would like to meet with your editorial board to discuss an issue of great importance for your readers. We are a coalition of _____ working to _____. Our coalition includes [list type of participants and/or number of community members represented].

The specific issue we would like to discuss with you is _____. This is an important issue because in Kansas 17.4% of high school males use smokeless tobacco, which can cause cancer, disfigurement and death.

We would be happy to provide you with additional material on this issue. We look forward to hearing from you soon about when we can meet.

Sincerely,
[your name, address, phone number and e-mail address]

Guest Editorial

Find an expert (such as a doctor, cessation counselor, former or current tobacco user, or tobacco program manager) to submit an editorial (a factual article/opinion piece) to local and statewide newspapers. Contact the newspaper to gauge interest and determine word length.

Possible topics:

- Personal stories of achievement (quitting spit tobacco)
- Tragedy (a death or disease due to spit tobacco)
- Stories of the human spirit (overcoming obstacles)
- Stories of tobacco industry manipulation/advertising
- Interviews of survivors, users, chewers, cowboys, coaches, physicians
- Policy issues surrounding spit tobacco

Public Service Announcements (PSA)

PSAs are free ads that are aired on radio or TV stations. They are generally from non-profit or government organizations and address a community issue or public health/safety message. Your cause meets these criteria. We will discuss radio PSAs because they are easier to get.

Contact your radio stations' community relations person, public affairs director or program manager to ask them about getting a PSA on air. Tell them about Smokeless Does Not Mean Harmless and get them interested in supporting it.

PSAs are generally 10, 15, 20 or 30 second spots. If you write your PSA using 12 pt Courier font with one inch margins, one line of text equals 4 – 5 seconds of air time. Read your script out-loud and time yourself. Write a PSA like you speak, not like an English assignment. Use commas where the reader should pause, which may not be grammatically correct. Put hyphens between letters or numbers that you want read individually. If you want sound effects, put them in parenthesis and use the abbreviation SFX. For example (SFX: door slamming).

Sample Radio PSA Script

Contact: [Name and phone number]
Public Service Announcement
30 Seconds

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
[Date]

END DATE: [This is the date you want the PSA to stop airing]

[Headline] Smokeless Does Not Mean Harmless

Smokeless tobacco is not a safe alternative to smoking. Smokeless tobacco is addictive, can cause throat and mouth cancer, and can cause you to lose part of your face or even your life. If you are ready to quit, call the toll-free Kansas Tobacco Quitline, 1-8-6-6-KAN-STOP. 1-8-6-6-K-A-N-S-T-O-P
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Talking Points

The talking points below may be used to provide an overview of the most pertinent topics related to spit tobacco use in Kansas. Use them as a resource for interviews and other media venues or as handouts to educate coalition members, partners and others.

- Almost all first time tobacco use occurs prior to high school graduation.
- Kansas has a higher than average use of smokeless tobacco. According to the 2005 Kansas Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 17.4 percent of high school males report currently using smokeless tobacco. The estimated national prevalence is 13.6 percent among high school males.
- According to the 2002 Kansas Youth Tobacco Survey, approximately one out of every three youth does not know that smokeless tobacco is not a safe alternative to cigarettes.
- Constant exposure to tobacco juice causes cancer of the esophagus, pharynx, larynx, stomach and pancreas. These cancers can form within five years of regular use. (S.T.O.P. Guide, 1997; Hatsukami, D. & H Severson, Nicotine and Tobacco Research, 1999.)
- According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, oral cancer is the sixth-leading cancer in men, with 30,000 cases per year. Almost 75% of people diagnosed with oral and pharyngeal cancer use tobacco. About one person dies every hour from the disease. Oral cancer is one of the most difficult cancers to diagnose, treat and cure. Only half of those diagnosed survive longer than five years. (Hurt, R.D., 2001, Mayo Foundation for Medical Education & Research)
- U.S. Smokeless Tobacco (USSTC) sponsors numerous events in Kansas, including rodeos, where free samples are handed out to advertise and hook a new generation of users to its addictive product. The estimated portion of tobacco advertising for Kansas marketing annually is \$125.9 million. (www.tobaccofreekids.org)
- According to Oral Health America, in 2006, Kansas was one of the 12 worst states for spit tobacco. Kansas received a D for high school male spit tobacco use and an F for tax rates on spit tobacco.

Suggested Activities

This section of the toolkit will give you ideas for activities you can replicate in your community. These activities can be expanded, so let your creativity flow! Consider different ways each activity can be developed for the most impact. For example, nearly all activities can become vehicles for earned media. Use the ideas presented here as a springboard for your own ideas.

Cessation

Promote available resources in the local community whenever possible through radio, newspaper, television, brochures or other materials you produce. Promote the state's free resource:

Kansas Tobacco Quitline 1-866-KAN-STOP (1-866-526-7867).

Provide and promote free Quit Spit Kits. Use local media to provide information on where people can get Quit Spit Kits.

Green Ribbon Activity

The green ribbon activity is a great way for health care providers and other interested community advocates to bring state and national awareness to the problem of spit tobacco use. The green ribbon commemorates the memory of a loved one who died as a result of tobacco addiction.

Health care providers and other partners can distribute the cards with the green ribbon to families who have lost a loved one to tobacco or to anyone who is interested in raising awareness about the dangers of spit tobacco. People can wear the green ribbon to honor an individual or simply to raise awareness. The more people who wear the ribbon, the more conversation is generated by people or patients asking about the ribbons and their significance.

Directions: Use the example to the right.

(1) Add in your program's contact information.

(2) Make copies on green paper and cut the cards apart.

(3) Take a piece of green ribbon six inches in length, fold it over and make a loop. Then pin it to the top right-hand corner of each card.

(4) If you don't want to make the ribbons, you can order self-stick awareness ribbons from

www.TobaccoFreeEarth.com or Drug

Prevention magazine (available in packages of 100). There is also a metal green ribbon you can order if you prefer to have a longer-lasting ribbon. You can buy the ribbon in spools in craft departments or craft stores (usually about 10 yards in each spool).

Smokeless Does Not Mean Harmless

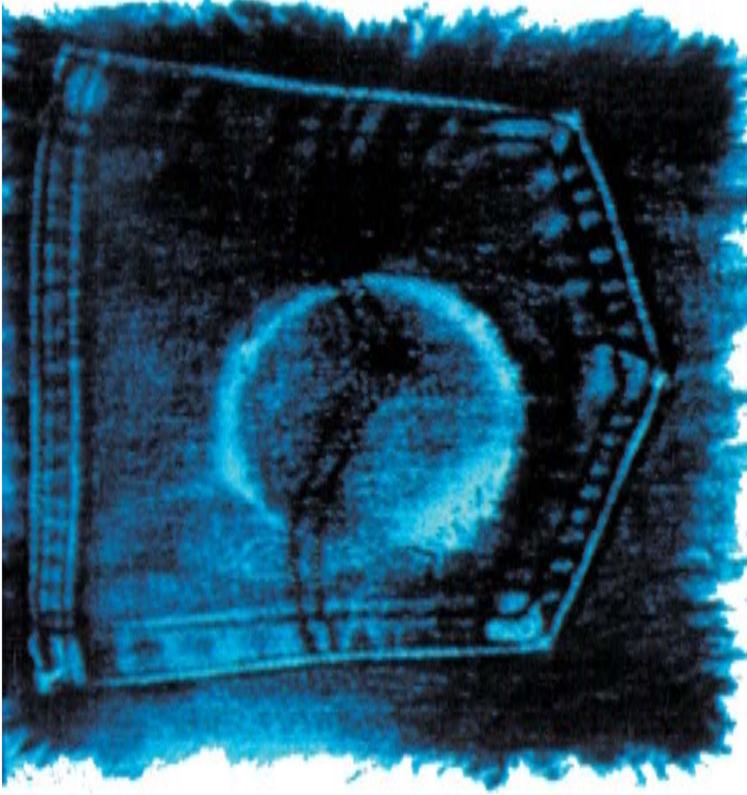
Tobacco Ribbon

This ribbon honors the memory of a loved one lost because of their addiction to tobacco. Spit tobacco kills. In Kansas, youth are using spit tobacco at alarming rates which are among the highest in our nation. Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of death. Due to its use more than 430,000 Americans die each year. If all of those names were placed on a national monument, it would be equal to seven Vietnam Memorial Walls. This ribbon was designed to raise statewide and national awareness of the death & disease caused from the use of spit tobacco products.

Pizza Box Flyers

Local restaurants, pizza delivery services and other food service providers can reach countless people and inform them of Smokeless Does Not Mean Harmless with these flyers. This activity provides an opportunity to form lasting relationships with community businesses and even assist them in promoting policy change.

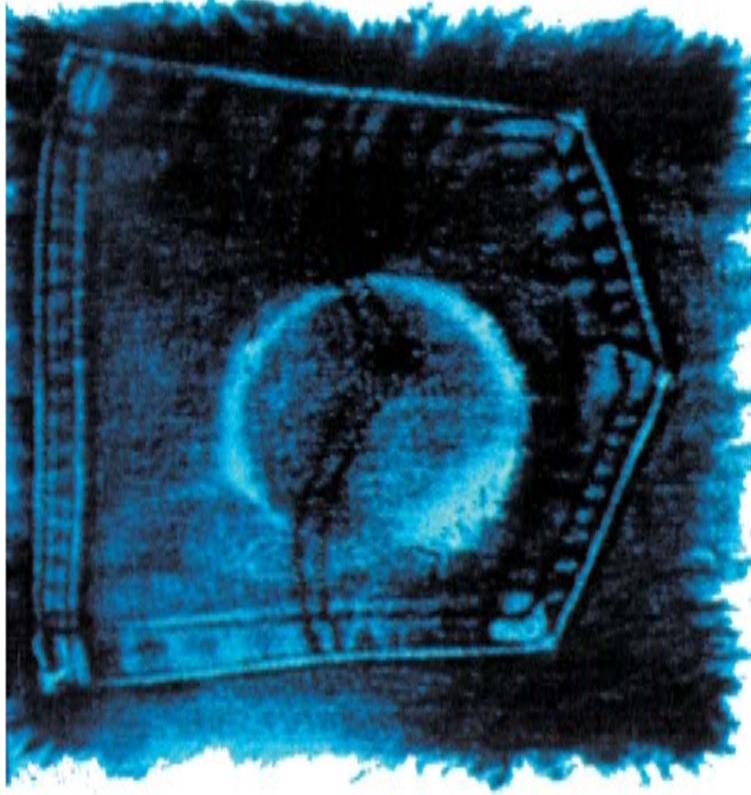
Just ask the business if it is willing to promote Smokeless Does Not Mean Harmless by placing flyers on its to-go boxes, food trays or grocery bags. See page 15 for an example.



First Warning Sign of Cancer.

Spit Tobacco: Not a Safe Alternative

Kansas Tobacco Quitline 1-866-KAN-STOP



First Warning Sign of Cancer.

Spit Tobacco: Not a Safe Alternative

Kansas Tobacco Quitline 1-866-KAN-STOP

Spit Tobacco Ingredient Display

Consider constructing a spit tobacco ingredient display. Once constructed, the ingredient display provides a very powerful, visual message. The display can be located in high-traffic areas throughout your community, such as lobbies, school hallways or grocery stores. Of course, be sure to get advance permission to put the display on view.

Here are some useful facts that can aid in the construction of the display.

What Is In Spit Tobacco

Here are a few of the ingredients found in spit tobacco:

Polonium 210 (radioactive compound)

N-Nitrosamines (cancer-causing)

Formaldehyde (embalming fluid)

Nicotine (addictive drug)

Cadmium (used in car batteries)

Cyanide (poison)

Arsenic (poison)

Benzene (petroleum product used to make DDT)

Lead (nerve poison)

Check out the American Dental Association's Web site for more ingredients.

(www.ada.org)

For a Poster Behind/By the Display

The chemicals contained in spit tobacco are what gives a user a "buzz." They also make it very hard to quit. Why? Every time you use spit tobacco your body adjusts to the amount of tobacco needed to get that buzz. Then you need a little more tobacco to get the same feeling. As your tolerance levels increase, so does the need to increase the amount of nicotine to feel an effect.

Note: Nicotine is a poison. It kills bugs that try to eat tobacco plants. It is even sold as an insect killer. One or two drops of liquid nicotine will kill a person. (ETR Associates, 2004, www.etr.org, About Spit Tobacco)

Make Your Own Spit Tobacco

Give a presentation of what is in spit tobacco. A blender and the various ingredients (all household items, mocked up to look like hazardous items) are used in this presentation. Make Your Own Spit can be done at school (at a sporting event) or at any community event (at the entrance to a rodeo). Make Your Own Spit can even be done outside a Wal-Mart in the parking lot. Again, get permission to give the presentation at the location.

These presentations should be 3-5 minutes, with approximately 5 minutes of questions afterward. Ideally, this presentation would be done many times throughout one day.

What You Need

Obviously we don't want you to use any of the "real" ingredients in your demonstration.

ONLY USE THE ALTERNATIVE INGREDIENTS SUGGESTED BELOW.

- Water (formaldehyde)

- 7-Up (benzene)
- Brown sugar (arsenic)
- Gray cake-decorating balls (lead)
- Shredded beef jerky (tobacco leaves)
- Blender
- Table
- 5 containers (to hold all 5 ingredients)
- Labels for the containers: "Formaldehyde," "Benzene," "Arsenic," "Lead," "Tobacco." (Remember, you'll only use harmless substitutes for these products.)
- Empty "spit" container to present the final product after blending

Set Up

Put the five harmless ingredients into each of their own containers with labels on them. Place the ingredients to the left and right of the blender, which should be in the middle of the table. If you have a banner or sign for your group, place it either on the table front (if small sign) or behind your head on the side of a building or some other structure.

Suggested Script

Hi, my name is _____ and I'm from _____ (name of youth group or tobacco prevention and control group).

Step right up and see what ingredients are in spit tobacco. Big Tobacco calls it "smokeless tobacco" so it sounds like it's harmless. Guess again!

This is the story Big Tobacco doesn't want you to hear. Look at these ingredients. First, you start with tobacco. We've picked a beauty, "Copenhagen." (Put beef jerky in blender.)

But, Big Tobacco doesn't stop there. You've got lead. That's right; lead is in spit tobacco. How many of you read every day about the dangers of lead poisoning? It can cause brain damage and even death if taken in large quantities or over a long period of time. (Put cake-decorating balls into blender.)

But, Big Tobacco doesn't stop there. Spit tobacco also contains benzene. Never heard of benzene? Well, it is a highly flammable substance that is used in gasoline and paints...and long-term exposure is linked to leukemia. It can cause vomiting, rapid heart rate and red blood cells reduction in your body. (Add 7-Up to blender.)

But, Big Tobacco doesn't stop there. Did you know that arsenic is also in spit tobacco? Arsenic. The chemical of choice for murderers and mystery writers. It's used in rat poison and can cause vomiting, abnormal heart rate and death. (Add brown sugar to blender.)

But, Big Tobacco doesn't stop there. You've got formaldehyde. This stuff is used to preserve dead animals. It's an embalming fluid and, you guessed it, it's in "spit" and "chew" products. (Add water to your blender.)

Big Tobacco doesn't stop there. They add another 15 to 20 ingredients. Some we know about

and some we don't, because they refuse to tell anyone what other ingredients are included in spit tobacco.

But, you wouldn't have a tobacco product if you didn't have this one last ingredient. What do you think it is? Nicotine.

It's not bad enough that all those dangerous chemicals are in spit tobacco. No, Big Tobacco has to hook you on it so they can slowly rot out your gums, throat, cheeks and mouth. (Blend ingredients and put concoction into a "spit" container.)

So, why does Big Tobacco include so much bad stuff in "spit?" Why don't you ask them? If you don't think it's a problem in Kansas, think about this: 17.4% of Kansas high school males say they've tried spit tobacco in the past 30 days, which is higher the national average of 13.6%.

The Spit Tobacco Makeover

The Spit Tobacco Makeover activity is fun for younger groups. The makeover activity is designed to be entertaining as well as informative about the harmful effects of spit tobacco.

Give a presentation to an elementary or middle school group, about the harmful effects of spit tobacco and tobacco industry marketing tactics.

After the presentation, ask the students if they could imagine themselves with rotten teeth, gum disease and any other harmful effects from using spit tobacco. Then give the students some "Billy Bob Teeth" (disgusting, fake teeth). Take before and after photos of what they would look like if they used spit tobacco.

"Billy Bob Teeth" can be purchased from many novelty or discount stores; however, if you don't have the funding to purchase them, you can get creative with Halloween makeup or any other safe, nontoxic, household items.

More Ideas

Visit local schools and give presentations to youth on the dangers of spit tobacco and on tobacco industry tactics.

Conduct a "**Ghost Out Day.**" In this activity, participants "bring to life" a deadly statistic. Research how many deaths are caused by tobacco every year in Kansas. Once the number of deaths is determined, youth are recruited to "die" throughout the day and become ghosts. As ghosts, the youth are not allowed to speak (except to teachers and other adults), thus making it seem like they are not there.

If asked, the ghosts can hand out business cards with facts about the dangers of tobacco on one side and quit information on the other.

Groups can help identify the "ghosts" in a number of ways. Consider trying one of the following:

- Black T-shirts numbered from one to the average number of tobacco deaths in Kansas each week.
- Black numbered stickers
- Black hats (with school's permission)

Invite a tobacco education expert or cancer survivor to visit local communities and schools. Utilize advertising to promote his/her “coming to town” and arrange for policy makers to meet him/her.

Get a survivor, expert or member of your TASK group on the agenda for a meeting of a service club like Kiwanis, Lions’ Club, Optimists, Rotary, etc. Invite reporters.

Quit Spit Kits

Quit Spit Kits are designed to maximize Smokeless Does Not Mean Harmless activities. Quit Spit Kits help those who are interested in quitting chew/spit tobacco. Below is a list of suggested items. Feel free to add items. Use your imagination and be creative!

- 6x10 Zip Lock Bag
- Quit Spit Kit Label
- Information on Quit Spit services
- Smokeless Does Not Mean Harmless Brochure
- American Cancer Society “Cold Hard Facts” Brochure
- Mirror for self evaluation
- 4x9 Rack Card with instructions for checking yourself and for quitting
- Replacement chew samples and information
- Toothbrush, mints and toothpicks with cessation info
- Evaluation card
- Other suggested items: gum, sunflower seeds, jerky, dental floss, lip balm, etc.

Additional Resources

Americans for Non-smokers Rights www.no-smoke.org

Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids www.tobaccofreekids.org

Wyoming Department of Health’s Through with Chew campaign www.throughwithchew.com

TASK Regional Consultants

Western Regional Consultant – Shane Reif, 620-786-9674, reifsh@bethanylb.edu

Central Regional Consultant – Savanna Friend, 785-845-3545, srfriend@ksu.edu

Eastern Regional Consultant – Maranda Collins, 620-433-0381, marandacol@yahoo.com

TUPP Media & Policy Coordinator – Ginger Park, 785-296-1118, gpark@kdhe.state.ks.us

Sources

Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, *Kick Butts Day Activity Guide*, www.kickbuttsday.org.

Wallack L, Woodruff K, Dorfman L, Diaz I. *News for Change: An Advocate's Guide to Working with the Media*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999, p. 117.

Wyoming Department of Health, *Through with Chew Week 2007 Activity Toolkit*, www.throughwithchew.com.