

How YOU Can Help Your Children Understand the Dangers of Tobacco Use

Be A Role Model

- Set a good example by not using tobacco and give clear, consistent messages about the dangers of tobacco to your children.
- Tell your children that you do not want them to use tobacco products.
- Provide your children with a tobacco-free environment at home.
- If you smoke, quit! If you are trying to quit smoking, share with your kids how difficult the process is. This sends a powerful message of how important it is to quit.

Educate Your Children

- Share tobacco-use prevention information with your children and talk with them about related homework assignments and projects
- If your children already use tobacco:
 - Help them set realistic goals for stopping.
 - Give them positive reinforcement and encouragement.
 - Help them understand the underlying reasons they're using tobacco (to deal with stress, to feel accepted, to show their independence, etc.).
 - Help them substitute positive alternatives such as physical activity or stress management.

Outside Influences

- Help your children critically analyze messages that glamorize tobacco use on television, in movies, and in magazines and other print media.
- Inform your kids about the misperceptions of advertising.
- Pay attention to what magazines your kids read. In May of 2000, studies have found that cigarette advertising in magazines has increased 33% where there is a large youth readership. Some of these magazines are *Sports Illustrated*, *People*, and *Cosmopolitan*.

Do Something

- Volunteer to help school staff implement tobacco-use prevention activities.
- Work with the school board to provide assistance programs, rather than punishment, for students who violate tobacco-use policies.
- Support coordinated school health programs and insist that they include tobacco-use prevention education.
- Join a coalition working on tobacco prevention, such as Clean Air Kansas City, and guide policies to prevent tobacco use.