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Quit the Sticks in 2006!

by Wendy DiMatteo/SAISD



Many of you may have seen the ABC News *Quit to Live* series dedicated to the memory of Peter Jennings who died as a result of years of smoking. You may have been inspired to quit as a result of watching this program and may have even made a resolution to quit in 2006. Well, it's time! As you know, if you've tried to quit before, you must be willing to deal with the suppressed feelings that will inevitably surface when you quit smoking. In our society, it's generally not desirable to express our true feelings and so it's not surprising that we use substances such as alcohol and drugs to distract us from our real feelings. We can overeat, take to gambling, develop a computer/internet addiction and look for other means to "feel good". Well, using cigarettes as a way to feel good may eventually lead to feeling "real bad". *Imagine*; you're purposely inhaling toxic smoke into your lungs! If a factory was built next to your house and you had to breathe in those toxins, you would revolt!

As Bruce mentioned in the last SAISD article in the DRN, exercise can give you a natural high which can reduce stress. Stress is a major factor in causing a smoker who is trying to quit, to pick up again.

The first week of not smoking, you will most likely experience a sense of loss. You became dependent on something that is no longer there for you. If you're prepared for this awareness, it will shorten the grieving process. Just remember that this is also a gain for you. A positive replacement may be necessary to make it through. I'm not suggesting that you become overactive. In fact, this is a good time to use your internal coping and relaxation skills. "Mind over matter" when quitting smoking, means staying determined and not giving in to the craving. If you need to stop at the store for something, pause before entering the store and tell yourself "smoking is not an option". This should give you the extra boost you need to follow through with your plan. Another action that may help ward off the craving is taking a deep breath and holding it for ten seconds. It helps you become aware of your lung capacity and satisfies the need to draw something into and release out of your lungs.

For additional support when you feel the need to smoke, try:

- Online chat group at www.quitnet.org (click on "talk").
- www.whyquit.com
- There are local Nicotine Anonymous meetings in the Rochester area. They are listed at www.nicotine-anonymous.org. Please discuss your need for an interpreter with the meeting members.
- You can make an appointment with an SAISD counselor for help with tobacco and other drug recovery support. My contact information: Wendy DiMatteo 585-475-4978 (v/tty) wmdgrl@rit.edu. Please take a look at our website for more information about our program; www.rit.edu/sa/coun/saisd.
- Another good way to feel supported is by engaging in Deaf community activities. The Deaf Rochester News is a wonderful resource for listing and describing the various groups that are open and welcoming to all.
- Look to find personal enjoyment in the small pleasures and most importantly, learn to be comfortable with who you are at the core. If you can get in touch with your feelings and learn to work through them without having to act in a way that is harmful to yourself, your quality of life will be much more rewarding.

**I KNOW YOU CAN DO IT! HAVE FAITH IN YOURSELF AND
YOU WILL SUCCEED!**

Oh, and please share this information with your kids, because:

The ABC News *Quit to Live* series <http://abcnews.go.com> stated that "Studies show 90 percent of adult smokers started when they were teenagers, and if present trends continue, 5 million teens will eventually die from a smoking-related disease."