

Who is at Greatest Risk?

Young people are more likely to use tobacco if they:

- Have access to tobacco products - especially low cost or free tobacco.
- Have friends, parents or other family members who use tobacco.
- Watch movies that have smoking in them.
- Are not doing well in school or have friends who are not doing well in school.
- Are not engaged in school or religious activities.

What Can Your Community Do?

1. Restrict access to low cost or free tobacco products.
2. Ban the sale of single roll cigarettes. It is illegal according to Fiji's Tobacco Control Decree.
3. Ban smoking in public places - such as workplaces, school compounds and community halls.
4. Ban smoking during gatherings where children are present.
5. Become one of Fiji's proud declared "Healthy Communities". Contact the Ministry of Health to find out how.
6. Establish a tobacco-free support group.



Nabiti "Tobacco-Free" Village



Keeping Fiji's Children Tobacco-Free TIPS FOR PARENTS

Environmental Health Department
Tobacco Control Unit
Namosi House, Amy Street, Toorak
P.O. Box 2223 Government Building
Suva, Fiji
Phone: 3215-056
Email: TobaccoFreeFiji@yahoo.com
Website: www.health.gov.fj



Protect Your Children

For parents, keeping children from using tobacco products might not seem as serious as other issues. In fact, some parents may feel that children who start will outgrow the behavior as they get older. However, once teens start using tobacco, they can quickly become addicted, and that addiction can lead to a lifetime of serious health problems.

The best way for parents to protect their children from tobacco related health problems (including asthma, heart disease, cancer, and lung damage) is to prevent tobacco use altogether.

To help keep your children from starting to use tobacco, take these important steps:

FACT: Nearly 90% of smokers start smoking before they're 18 years and almost no one starts after the age of 25.

- Tell your children directly that you don't want them to smoke cigarettes.
- Start talking to your kids about smoking when they are five years old and continue through their secondary school years. Explain the health dangers, as well as other physical effects (such as bad breath, discolored teeth and nails, premature wrinkles) of smoking.
- Set a good example for your kids by not smoking. Parents who smoke are more likely to have children who smoke.
- If you're a parent who smokes, the best thing you can do is to quit. Talk to your kids about how difficult it is to quit smoking and how much easier it would have been if you'd never started. In the meantime, don't smoke around your children and don't ever let them have any of your cigarettes.
- Establish a tobacco-free policy in your home. Don't allow anyone to smoke indoors at any time.
- Support tobacco-free schools and insist that school health programs include tobacco-use prevention education.
- Know if your children have any friends that smoke. Talk with your kids about ways to refuse a cigarette.
- If you find out that your teenager has already started smoking, your first reaction may be to order him or her to quit immediately. It's important to realize that teen smokers become addicted to nicotine quickly and that can make quitting very difficult. Be patient and supportive as your child goes through the quitting process.
- If you caught your teen smoking, try to avoid punishment. Ask a few questions and find out why your child is smoking; he or she may want to be accepted by a group, or want your attention. Talk about what changes can be made in his or her life to help your child stop smoking.



Keep in Mind

Even though smoking is glamorized in movies, remember that parents are the most important influence in their children's lives.

“My father never had to tell me not to smoke. He showed me the way.”

Actions speak louder than words. Give your children an example they can live with.

