

New Study Guides launched to tackle Indigenous smoking in school-aged kids

8 October 2012

The battle to reduce smoking rates amongst Indigenous Australians has moved to the classroom. Today a new suite of National Curriculum-linked *No Smokes* Study Guides was launched to equip teachers with culturally-relevant lesson plans on the effects of smoking.

These interactive classroom activities incorporate videos, games and animations, accessible via the No Smokes website www.nosmokes.com.au – a new Menzies School of Health Research project, funded by the Australian Department of Health and Ageing.

The Study Guides follow on from research conducted by the head of the No Smokes project, neuroscientist Dr Sheree Cairney, finding young Indigenous people are more likely to tune into health campaigns that use Aboriginal faces and relevant themes.

“We’ve designed the No Smokes material and the associated Study Guides with a tone and message that speaks directly to young Indigenous people and empowers them with knowledge,” says Dr Cairney.

“No Smokes online tools, like the animated brain showing how tobacco addiction works, help to explain complex notions in a highly visual way that takes into account varying literacy levels and culturally diverse concepts of health.”

As Dr Cairney adds: “We’ve taken the No Smokes project to the next level in creating these Study Guides that enable teachers to incorporate the videos and games into meaningful class lessons that relate to curriculum.”

For schools without adequate internet access, an offline DVD with all multimedia content is also available.

The new lessons give students a greater understanding of the impact smoking has on the individual and the community. Students can investigate how much money their local community spends on cigarettes weekly, and work as a group to create an anti-smoking display that will speak to their friends and family.

The lessons also include a ‘Smoking and Your Body’ Bingo game to learn about the body parts damaged by smoking, and an activity that teaches about the relationship between nicotine, the brain and addiction.

The launch of the Study Guides comes just months after the No Smokes project received an additional \$500,000 grant over two years from the Department of Health and Ageing to fund further content development and create training for health workers and teachers.

The five Study Guides are designed for teachers of Indigenous students in upper primary and secondary school. The No Smokes Study Guides will be available as PDFs at <http://quit.nosmokes.com.au/teachers-and-health-workers/for-teachers/study-guides/> from today.

No Smokes Study Guides at a glance:

- A suite of five Study Guides for teachers of Indigenous students in remote, rural and urban schools
- Designed for students in upper primary and secondary school
- Lesson plans that relate to the National Curriculum (subject areas *English, History, Health, Science and Maths*)
- Available to download as PDFs from the teachers’ section of the No Smokes website (www.nosmokes.com.au) from 8 October
- Adaptable to a range of literacy levels, including contexts where English is a second, third or fourth language.

Relevant links:

No Smokes website : www.nosmokes.com.au

Facebook: facebook.com/nosmokes.com.au

Twitter: twitter.com/no_smokes

YouTube Channel: youtube.com/user/nosmokestv

Menzies School of Health Research: menzies.edu.au/

Media opportunities

Contact Lanie Harris: lanie@nosmokes.com.au; 0418 552 377

Background

Menzies School of Health Research is the national leader in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research. It is the only medical research institute in the Northern Territory and the only one in Australia with a major focus on Indigenous health. Menzies has more than 300 staff working in over 60 communities in Central and Northern Australia, as well as developing countries in the region. Menzies is also a significant contributor to health education and research training.