

## Here's **Breakfree!** **Say No to Smoking**



Learning to be a grownup is very exciting. As you grow older, you are able to make more choices about the things you like to do. In order to make choices, however, you need to have the facts and know how your choice will affect you.

Using cigarettes and chewing tobacco is one of those choices. You may see adults smoking or have friends who say it is a "cool" or "super" thing to do. It may even make them look and feel grownup. But the facts are, using tobacco in any form is dangerous to your health. The younger you are when you start smoking, the more it hurts your body. Here are some plain, simple facts:

### **One cigarette will:**

- put carbon monoxide (a deadly gas) into your blood
- cause your heart to start beating faster and harder
- leave a sticky dark substance called tar in your lungs
- make it hard to breath, especially when you're playing.

### **After several cigarettes, you will:**

- begin coughing because the hot gases have burned and irritated your throat
- become weak due to not having enough oxygen in your blood
- have shortness of breath due to shrinking air passages



- get stains on your teeth from tobacco tar
- have bad breath and have less ability to taste food
- get more colds and other illness due to damaged air passages
- smell bad from tobacco smoke in your clothes and hair

After smoking for a long time, you will have a much greater chance of getting the following smoking related illness:

- cancer of the mouth, throat, voice box, lungs and stomach
- heart disease
- stroke, when narrowed blood vessels break in your brain
- emphysema, a fatal condition that exists when lungs have been damaged beyond repair.





## Smokeless or Chewing Tobacco

Just because you don't light up, tobacco is still deadly. If you chew tobacco, you will get:

- tooth and gum decay, and therefore more visits to the dentist
- discoloured teeth, bad breath, and ugly sores in your mouth
- less ability to taste and smell
- a greater risk of developing mouth cancer.

## Don't be fooled into thinking smoking is cool.

Look at how cigarettes are advertised. Tobacco companies know what they sell kills people. In order to convince you that smoking won't hurt you, they have healthy looking people doing active sports while smoking. But the fact is, if these people really smoked, they wouldn't have any breath or strength to go very far.

Cigarette smoke is just as deadly as smoking itself. Cigarettes contain cyanide, arsenic, formaldehyde, ammonia and nicotine, which is passed on through smoke to non-smokers. Nicotine is a drug. It makes smokers feel relaxed while making their bodies work harder. Smokers begin to crave nicotine and can't stop themselves from smoking more and more. It's a deadly trap you don't want to fall into.

Talk over the facts with your family and how you feel about smoking. If someone in your family smokes, ask them why. Try to work together to find a way to help them cut down on smoking or quit altogether. You will both have healthier, happier lives when you do.

