



Health Awareness

Snuffing Out Secondhand Smoke

(NAPSA)—In a report last June, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control estimated that while 70 percent of smokers want to quit, only 5 percent are successful each year. That leaves about 45 million people who still light up every day, and lighting up doesn't just put smokers at risk.

U.S. Surgeon General Richard Carmona announced that no level of secondhand smoke is safe, and emphasized the need for continued education about the serious health risks posed by secondhand smoke.

A new public service campaign may help. However, rather than using shocking images and alarming statistics to attract attention to the dangers of secondhand smoke, it uses humor.

"Daddy's gas could kill us all!" exclaims a young girl in one of the public service spots developed for the American Legacy Foundation® and the Ad Council. Entitled *Don't Pass Gas*, the campaign seeks to capture people's attention about the potentially fatal dangers of secondhand smoke by using an unorthodox approach to inspire viewers to laugh and learn.

The public service announcements (PSAs) include the talents of first-time commercial director and Emmy-nominated actor Jason Alexander. Through TV and radio PSAs as well as Web ads, the campaign will educate Americans—especially parents—about the dangers of secondhand smoke, and encourage them to create smoke-free environments for their



Humor may help teach about the dangers of secondhand smoke.

families and other loved ones, young and old. Audiences will remember Alexander as the character George Costanza from the popular TV show "Seinfeld."

In the U.S., one out of every five children who has a smoking parent is exposed to secondhand smoke at home. These children are at increased risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), lung infections, ear infections and severe asthma.

"We're confident that our partnership with the Ad Council will attract the public's attention and lead them to make positive decisions for their families," foundation President and CEO Cheryl Heaton, Dr.P.H., said. "We recognize how powerfully addictive smoking is and how tough it is to quit. Many smokers lack the tools and resources to do so effectively. We encourage smokers to get the help they need to quit and provide programs to help them do so. This campaign asks smokers that are

continuing to struggle with their addiction to please be mindful of protecting their families and other loved ones from the devastating effects of secondhand smoke and not smoke around other people—especially their children."

The two spots, "Dinner" and "Movie," focus on family members or friends wanting to step away to "pass gas." The audience learns that the "gas" being referenced is actually secondhand smoke. Secondhand smoke is a mixture of gases and extremely small solid materials; thus the irreverent play on words. *Don't Pass Gas* is the first national, multimedia campaign to address the issue of secondhand smoke.

Cigarette smoke contains more than 4,000 chemical substances, including several known human carcinogens. In 2004, Legacy released data showing that a small reduction in tobacco smoke exposure would spare thousands of children from serious health problems, including fewer low-birth-weight babies, fewer cases of asthma and fewer ear infections.

The best action parents can take to protect their families from secondhand smoke is to make their homes and cars smoke-free and to stop smoking around children.

You can visit www.DontPassGas.org for more information on the dangers of secondhand smoke and to find resources for your family. People can also phone the toll-free number (888) No-Pass-Gas to receive more information.