

Research Shows Talking To Kids Can Encourage Them To Stay Smoke-Free

(NAPSA)—Parents: now is the time to talk to your children about tough topics, like not smoking. Whether a child is in fifth or 11th grade, it's likely that he or she will be confronted with a smoking-related situation during his or her school career—and may have already tried a cigarette.

The good news is that speaking up about smoking can make a difference. Research conducted by Dartmouth Medical School found that adolescents are less likely to participate in negative habits and behaviors, including smoking, if their parents voice strong disapproval of the behavior. So, the crucial assignment for moms and dads is to talk to their kids and let them know that lighting up is not part of the year's curriculum.

"School can be very stressful for children. Pressures outside of the classroom can weigh just as heavily as academic demands do," says Dr. Michael Popkin, spokesperson for "Take 10: Start Talking So Your Kids Don't Smoke," part of Lorillard Tobacco Company's Youth Smoking Prevention Program. "Since kids often try out new behaviors to ease social pressures, it's important for parents to take time out to encourage their kids to make healthy decisions."

Does beginning this dialogue sound harder than writing a term paper? Dr. Popkin, author of the new book *Getting Through to Your Kids*, says it only takes 10 minutes for parents to start talking to kids about tough topics.

Seize Opportunities to Start Talking

Dr. Popkin offers tips to get conversation started.



Parents are encouraged to take a pledge and talk to their kids about not smoking

- Don't lecture. Listen.
- Seize natural opportunities to discuss tough topics, like smoking.
- Find out if there is a smoking section on school grounds.
- Review athletic competition rules. Discuss why sports teams prohibit smoking.
- Ask if your child's health or science class educates kids on lifestyle topics, such as smoking.
- Establish consequences, explain how disappointed you would feel if your child smoked.

Take the "Take 10" Challenge Today

To help parents make the commitment to start a dialogue with their kids, Lorillard Tobacco Company's Youth Smoking Prevention Program has issued the "Take 10" Challenge, which asks parents to take a written pledge to discuss not smoking with their children. Thousands of moms and dads have already accepted the Challenge, and received a "pledge pack" of

free resources to help them start a dialogue with their kids. Parents who want to take the pledge can visit www.2take10.com and fill out the online form.

Here's how it works:

- Log on to www.2take10.com and complete the online pledge form.

- Parents without online access can send a postcard, including their name, address and phone number to: "I Want to Take the Pledge" c/o Rebecca Fried, Weber Shandwick, 676 N. St. Clair, Suite 1000, Chicago, IL 60611.

- Once parents take the pledge, "Take 10" will mail a "pledge pack" that includes tools to help parents keep their commitment.

About "Take 10"

The "Take 10" Program was developed by Lorillard Tobacco Company's Youth Smoking Prevention Program, in conjunction with Dr. Popkin, to encourage parents to discuss not smoking with their children. The program offers resources including an educational brochure, an instructional video for parenting groups and the 2take10 Web site to assist parents in beginning this important dialogue.

Lorillard Tobacco Company's voluntary Youth Smoking Prevention Program is a corporate commitment to address the problem of underage smoking on a national scale with initiatives directed at three influence areas: peer pressure, parental influence and retail access. The effort includes national advertising; grassroots communications, retail employee training and signage to discourage youth access to tobacco products.