

# Tobacco Papers



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## Santa Rosa County Health Department awarded grant funding for tobacco prevention program



On July 1 2009, the Santa Rosa County Health Department was awarded a grant from the Florida Department of Health for tobacco prevention and cessation in the community. The grant enables the health department to educate the community on the dangers of tobacco use and abuse, as well as provide cessation opportunities to those citizens interested in quitting tobacco for good.

The smoking rates in Santa Rosa County rank among the worst in the state in the percentage of adults who are current smokers (23.5%) compared to the state average (19.3%). The percentage of high school youth who are current smokers (31.0%) is also higher than that of the state average (19.3%).

Tobacco prevention and cessation are key to reducing the prevalence of tobacco use in Santa Rosa County. To accomplish this task, the health department has 4 key areas of focus: prevent initiation of tobacco use; eliminate secondhand smoke exposure; promote cessation of tobacco use; and establish infrastructure. The health department has partnered with many different organizations to support this effort, including local law enforcement, area physicians, local school district, and other non-profit organizations. "Community support is essential to the success of the tobacco prevention and cessation program. We are very proud to be able to provide tobacco education and cessation opportunities with the grant funding provided by the Florida Department of Health," said Sandra L. Park, ARNP, Administrator, Santa Rosa County Health Department. For more information on the tobacco program, call (850) 983-5200.

## Secondhand Smoke: Protect Your Family

Secondhand smoke is the smoke that comes off the end of a burning cigarette, cigar or pipe. It is also the smoke that is exhaled from a smoker after they take a "drag" off their cigarette. Unfortunately, secondhand smoke is considered very harmful and can lead to deadly illnesses such as heart disease and cancer. However, there are ways to protect you, your family, and family pets from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke.

There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. When one smokes in their home or car, simply opening up the window does not protect the other inhabitants from exposure. Furthermore, secondhand smoke can cause ear infections, respiratory illness and asthma in children. Some children are too young to ask their parent not to smoke around them and are put at risk daily. Smoking outside of the car or home is the best way to protect young ones from deadly exposure to secondhand smoke. Here are some tips to keep your family healthy:

- Avoid smoking in enclosed spaces, such as the home or car
- Do not allow your children to ride in cars with adults who smoke
- Tell your children it's okay to politely ask someone not to smoke around them

Don't forget your four-legged family members! Family pets are also susceptible to the harmful effects of secondhand smoke. For example, dogs that live with smokers are 3 times more likely to die from lung or nasal cancer than dogs that live with non-smokers. Protect your loved ones!



## Students Working Against Tobacco—Fighting Big Tobacco



STUDENTS WORKING AGAINST TOBACCO

Youth from twelve counties across the panhandle united to take a stand against big tobacco October 15-18 in Milton at the Region 1 unSpoken Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) retreat. The retreat included participants from Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton, Bay, Washington, Jackson, Calhoun, Leon, Wakulla, Madison, and Jefferson Counties.

The three-day retreat offered an array of activities such as leadership training, teambuilding, advocacy, media relations, and how to create, plan, and implement events. The main focus of the event was on secondhand smoke prevention and policy change. These tools were crafted so that youth can become self-sufficient when planning their own anti-tobacco program.

Participants at the retreat, along with Tobacco Free Florida, the statewide anti-tobacco marketing campaign, were out in force at the Milton - Crestview football game on Friday night in Milton with messages about secondhand smoke.

### Santa Rosa County Tobacco-Free Coalition

In September 2009, the Santa Rosa County Tobacco-Free Coalition celebrated its one year anniversary as a partner in tobacco prevention and cessation. The coalition meets quarterly to share information on prevention and cessation resources available to the community. Additionally, the Santa Rosa County Tobacco-Free Coalition is focused on changing the norms associated with smoking in cars with children under the age of 17 present. The coalition recognizes that some parents simply do not know that secondhand smoke is a danger to young lungs and can cause respiratory related illnesses in their children. The coalition's goal is to educate the community on the dangers of secondhand smoke and reduce its prevalence. For example, for every 5 cigarettes smoked indoors by a parent, the child inhales the equivalent of one cigarette. If you would like more information about secondhand smoke, or if you are interested in joining the coalition, the next meeting is February 3 at the Santa Rosa County Health Department, 5527 Stewart Street in Milton at 4:00pm. Please call (850) 983-5200 ext. 142 for more information.

Tobacco Free Florida also had their "Smokifier Van" and street team present to give away free prizes.

After the retreat, students from Milton, Pace, Gulf Breeze, and Holley Navarre Middle school participated in the unSpoken campaign on October 30. The students wore tape over their mouths, only responding to their teachers, to silence their voices for the day to honor those who have lost theirs to big tobacco.

The students also coordinated events for the Great American Smoke-out to educate the community about the 88 Floridians that die daily from tobacco use. They were able to get proclamations signed by their high school principals and by Milton Mayor Guy Thompson proclaiming November 19, 2009 as the Great American Smoke-out.



### Interested in Quitting Tobacco?

Quitting tobacco is a very hard addiction to break. Luckily, there are free resources available to anyone interested in quitting smoking or spit tobacco. The Santa Rosa County Health Department, in conjunction with West Florida Area Health Education Center (AHEC), is offering free smoking cessation classes. The program is called "Quit Smoking Now!" and is a 6 week program that covers all of the aspects of quitting, such as setting a quit date, dealing with cravings, and how to avoid relapse. The next class begins January 5 at both health department locations. Please call (850) 983-5200 ext. 142 or (850) 398-6965 for more information

The Florida Quitline is another option available to Florida residents. Since 2001, the Quitline has provided free one on one telephone counseling for tobacco users, including pregnant women. The Quitline can also provide callers with free nicotine replacement therapy (gum, patches or lozenges) to those who qualify, while supplies last. For more information call 1-877-822-6669 or visit [www.floridaquitline.com](http://www.floridaquitline.com).