



Summer 2002

First
TO THE

ANNUAL REPORT OF **The Lung Association's Youth Tobacco Team**
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care



THE  LUNG ASSOCIATION

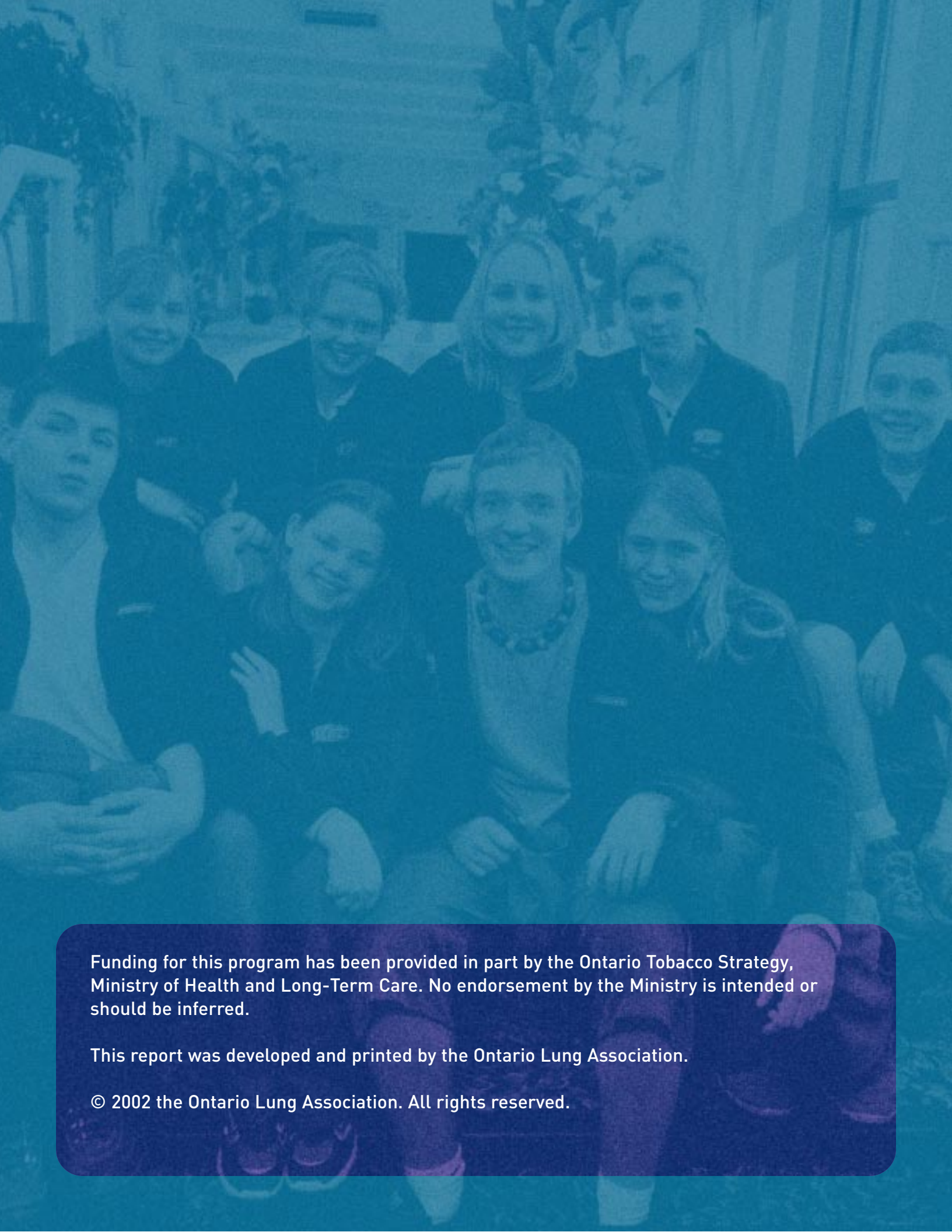


**CLEAR
THE AIR**



“We are here to be the **voice of the youth** —
so we can all have a voice and speak up about the issues that
are important to us. If we can inspire **one teen** to not
light up then **that is all that matters to us.**”

“**FOR** the
youth, **BY**
the youth.”



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Our Mission Statement

THE YOUTH TOBACCO TEAM WAS DEVELOPED TO ACT IN AN ADVISORY CAPACITY TO THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND LONG-TERM CARE ON ISSUES RELATED TO YOUTH SMOKING. COMPRISED OF YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 14 TO 18 FROM COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCE, THE YTT WILL PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MINISTRY REGARDING WAYS TO CURB TOBACCO-USE AND ACHIEVE GREATER LEVELS OF SMOKING CESSATION AMONG YOUTH.

who we ARE

The voices of youth resonate in every corner of the province. Our nine-member team does its best to represent them. We are all personally committed to preventing youth from starting to smoke, and to helping smokers quit. Some of us do not smoke and never will. Some of us struggle with the addiction and curse the day we started. We can only be effective if we represent and understand all sides of this complicated issue.



Krystle Maki

age 18, Eganville

"Smoking has always been a part of my life. Five years ago I started smoking and last year I finally quit. I'll never forget how much it sucked to stop something that had become a part of me. I just wanna send the message that smoking sucks. There is nothing positive or worthwhile that results from it. So I'm sayin' be critical of the decisions you make in life and don't fall victim to the tobacco life."

Sean Wilson

age 16, Warkworth

"Every once in a while an opportunity like this one comes around — the chance to make a difference in a world that makes you feel very small. I'm just here to educate people that everyone has a voice, but it takes a leader to use it. I want to teach people about the most preventable cause of death in the world and show them what that path has to offer."



Ali Shepherd

age 16, Ramore

"As a student myself, I'm aware of the smoking problem among youth. Since I have both smoking and non-smoking friends, I'm really adamant about having mutual respect between both groups. We're here as a group to try to create and maintain this level of respect."

“...don't fall
victim to
the tobacco
life.”



Jenn Elliott

age 18, Toronto

"As a smoker, I hope that with the knowledge I now have I can help reduce youth smoking rates. As long as I can stop one kid from smoking, I have done my job properly. I hope that in fifteen years smoking will not be a youth health issue."





Peter Dewey

age 14, Rockwood

"The lives of so many people I know are messed up from tobacco-use. I am asthmatic and when my grandparents and other relatives smoke, I cough and hack and my throat swells up. So I have first-hand experience about this. I just want to make people realize what the tobacco industry is trying to hide."



Chantal Lortie

age 16, Cornwall

"My presence here was to help encourage and support our strong intentions. To see children exchange a smile instead of a cigarette would be my greatest reward. Sadly many people die because of war; why should our children have to die due to smoke?"

Jake Skelliter

age 18, Sudbury

"I am at the YTT meetings because I really wanted to help youth and adults learn about the effects of smoking, learn about the tobacco industry, and make this information available to the population. One of the main messages that I want youth to learn is 'if you don't start, you don't have to quit.' This group is here to fight a common enemy — that is the tobacco industry, of course."


"...if **you**
DON'T START,
you don't
HAVE TO QUIT."



Jen Hyatt

age 17, Petrolia

"Tobacco is the most addictive drug. I want to raise awareness of this issue. My purpose as a member of the Youth Tobacco Team is to show teens that there is no reason to start this crazy addiction."



Ashley Clayton

age 17, St. Catharines

"Before being on the Team I didn't really know too much about tobacco. Now, after every conference I am shooting out statistics and stating my opinion firmly about the tobacco companies' lies. The people I've met, the skills I have learned, and the exposure to politics and media has made my YTT experience all worthwhile. If anybody gets the chance to participate, I would suggest not to think twice!"



"...there is
NO REASON
to start this
crazy
addiction."

Summary

We have learned so much over the past year with the

Youth Tobacco Team (YTT): about the dangers of smoking, about the deceptive practices of the tobacco industry — and about how to influence government policy! We think high school students throughout Ontario should have the opportunity to learn more about the number one cause of preventable death — smoking — **and to participate in making a positive difference in their communities.**

In this report we make some recommendations to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care regarding youth and tobacco-use in this province. We think that the Ministry should:

Youth Access

1. Make it compulsory for retailers of tobacco to purchase a license (issued by the province) without which they can't sell cigarettes.
2. Put more onus on retailers to comply with laws regarding underage buyers of tobacco.
3. Enforce Ontario's tobacco laws more rigidly and strongly.
4. Require store clerks to be at least 18 years old before they can sell tobacco.

5. Require retailers of tobacco products to only display provincially-approved signage (as opposed to signage that promotes programs — such as *Operation I.D.* — which are in reality nothing more than deceptive public relations exercises created by the tobacco industry).

tobacco-sponsored point-of-sale displays.

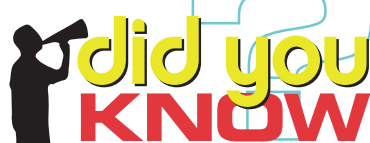
2. Allow tobacco to be sold only in controlled LCBO-style outlets.
3. Outlaw candy products that mimic tobacco products (e.g. chewing gum packaged like chewing tobacco, licorice pipes, etc.).
4. Get serious about requiring cigarettes and other tobacco products to be sold only in plain packages.
5. Ban the use by tobacco companies of product descriptors such as “gold” and “silver” — descriptors should be limited to number codes that have no positive associations.
6. Ban the efforts of tobacco companies to market aggressively to the 19–24-year-old age group — since members of this group often serve as key role models for younger teenagers.

Taxation

1. Raise tobacco taxes to be in line with the rest of the country — Ontario has the cheapest cigarettes in North America!
2. Dedicate the revenue obtained from tobacco tax increases to the funding of programs and other efforts that will keep people from starting to smoke and help smokers quit.

Marketing

1. Require tobacco retailers to sell products out of sight, banning “power walls” and other



**did you
KNOW**

Tobacco-use costs the Ontario economy more than \$3.7 billion per year, from treatment of tobacco-caused diseases and lost productivity. In contrast, the annual social and economic costs of illicit drug-use in the province amount to only \$0.5 billion.¹

In order to make this happen, the government needs to allocate a lot more money to tobacco-control activities. Right now the Ontario government spends **\$20 million per year** — or about **\$1.70 per person** in Ontario — on all of its anti-tobacco programs. This may sound like a lot, but the government spends more than **\$1.1 billion per year** treating diseases caused by tobacco-use. Doesn't it make sense to spend more money to prevent people from starting to smoke and to help those already smoking to quit, since doing so will save millions and millions of dollars down the road in health care and other costs?



Smoking Restrictions

Smoking ban on school property

1. Revise the current law regarding smoking on school property to put the responsibility for enforcement on school administrators, with supervision from health inspectors and/or the police.
2. Revise penalties for smoking on school grounds to include measures that will help the offender deal with their smoking problem.

Smoking bans in workplaces and public places

1. Ban smoking in all workplaces

and public places, including bars, uniformly across the province.

Education

1. Increase in-school education on tobacco and tobacco industry practices.
2. Require all schools to routinely survey their own students on their attitudes toward smoking and on their smoking habits.
3. Supply tools such as in-school magazines and posters on smoking to all schools to enhance the curriculum.
4. Improve adult education on smoking issues, incorporating it into such things as parenting and pre-natal classes.

Mass Media

1. Provide a greater variety and frequency of ads targeted at youth, focusing on the tobacco industry and personal health problems caused by tobacco-use.
2. Sign celebrities to endorse anti-tobacco messages.

Quitting

1. Provide more support to students who want to quit, with peer support groups in every school and partial coverage by OHIP of products such as nicotine gum and the patch.

Youth Involvement

1. Set up YTT-style teams in every community, facilitated by health professionals and/or interested educators.
2. Allow participation in anti-tobacco activities to count toward the 40-hour community service requirement for graduation.
3. Enhance the resources available to the YTT so a website can be established to communicate with community youth anti-tobacco groups.



what we've done

the year in review



The first year of operation for the Youth Tobacco Team (YTT) was definitely a year of new experiences and new challenges — for both Team members and organizers at the Ontario Lung Association! During our three meetings and two teleconferences, we learned a lot about tobacco issues and about how we could take on the tobacco industry — as a group and as individuals. These are some of the highlights from our year:

YTT Launch

In November we met Minister of Health and Long-Term Care Tony Clement and held a news conference to launch the Youth Tobacco Team. We got a tremendous amount of media coverage. Although most of this coverage was good we did get a bad rap from a couple of reporters who focused on the fact that our Team includes some smokers and suggested that these people are hypocrites for participating in an anti-tobacco group. The smokers on the Team want to set the record straight: "We think we need everyone's views to do our job. And just because we made a mistake doesn't mean we don't want to help others."



YOUtv Tour

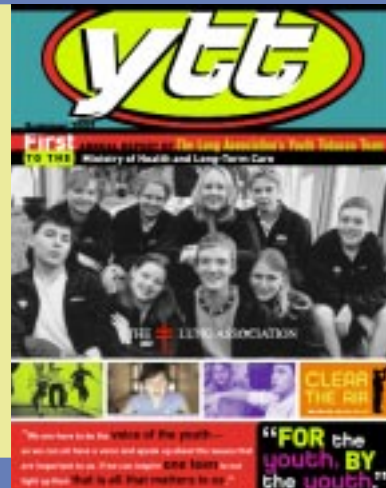
In April, we were involved in another launch — the YOUtv "Speak Out and Clear The Air" campaign pilot in London, Ontario. The campaign involves using Speakers Corner video booths in high schools to get youth talking about tobacco issues. We are really impressed with the first set of clips we saw of London teens talking about how second-hand smoke has affected their lives. And we are really looking forward to seeing the best clips made into anti-tobacco ads. The first ads are set to air on London's the *New PL* in June. If the pilot proves successful, the campaign will be expanded to high schools throughout the province.



Report

to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Our greatest achievement has been putting together a set of comprehensive recommendations for Ontario's Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care — the report that you are reading right now. It took a lot of discussion and a lot of debate to come up with recommendations that we could all agree on regarding policies and programs that would help youth stay tobacco-free or help them quit smoking. We are proud of what we have accomplished.



Community Initiatives

IN ADDITION TO OUR WORK AS MEMBERS OF THE YTT, WE HAVE BEEN ACTIVE IN OUR COMMUNITIES AS YTT AMBASSADORS AND SPOKESPEOPLE ON TOBACCO ISSUES:

Ashley conducted a survey of students in her school of 700, collecting valuable information on teen attitudes towards smoking and their smoking habits.

Sean has been busy helping to organize “Drug Awareness Week” activities for Campbellford District High School, including a presentation he will be making on the YTT and on tobacco company efforts to get teens hooked on tobacco.

Ali and **Jenn E.** represented the YTT at a national youth tobacco conference in Ottawa last January, and they will be delegates at the second national youth tobacco conference to be held this August in Kemptville, Ontario.

Jenn E. was a keynote speaker at an international substance-abuse

conference in Athens, Greece. She has also made presentations on tobacco issues to students in Grades 7—10 and to several youth tobacco conferences. As well, she is working with youth in Kenya on a Youth Tobacco Action Project.

Jen H. organized “Weedless Wednesday” activities for nine high schools in Lambton County, including a “quit smoking for a day” contest.

Krystle met with her local tobacco-free council to discuss tobacco issues and to inform the panel about the Youth Tobacco Team’s mission. She also conducted an independent research study on the tobacco industry which helped her realize how important it is to tackle youth smoking — and how corrupt the industry really is!

Chantal and **Sean** were interviewed on the “Body and Health” television show.

Chantal is the youth representative for the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Tobacco Committee and was very involved in the process leading to the passage of a local bylaw banning smoking in public places, including restaurants.

Jake and **Ali** will be facilitating youth discussions during the Youth Summit in North Bay in June.

what
we've
done
the year in review

what we think

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ONTARIO MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND LONG-TERM CARE

What follows are specific recommendations we'd like the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to consider regarding youth and the Ontario Tobacco Strategy. The recommendations are categorized under the following headings:

- Youth Access
- Taxation
- Marketing
- Smoking Restrictions
- Education
- Mass Media
- Quitting
- Youth Involvement

youth access

We are concerned about how easy it is for young people to buy cigarettes.

We think there should be more onus on retailers to comply with the law that says they can't sell tobacco to anyone under the age of 19. We also believe that all tobacco retailers should have to purchase a license to sell tobacco. The license would accomplish several things: First, it would let the government know who

is selling cigarettes and where they are. Second, retailers would have to renew their license every year, with the license fee (and the fines for selling tobacco to minors) going into a special fund to help pay for enforcement. And last, if the same retailer is convicted a third time of selling tobacco to an underage youth, then the retailer should permanently lose his or her license to sell tobacco. Tobacco is an addictive and deadly product — it's time retailers took their responsibility not to sell it to kids seriously!

More effort needs to be put into enforcement. Almost no one we know has ever been asked for I.D. by a retailer when attempting to purchase cigarettes. There should be more compliance checks of stores and a toll-free phone number for people to call and report retailers who sell to minors. The toll-free number should be well advertised and printed in large type on a sign in each store, along with

**Tobacco is an
ADDICTIVE
and DEADLY
PRODUCT...**

the store's license number. Getting the public involved would put a lot more pressure on retailers to obey the law. An easy change that we think would improve compliance is to allow people to purchase tobacco products *only* if they have an Age of Majority-type card (i.e. a photo I.D. card that is only issued to those 19 and over). Retailers would be required to scan the card before they could sell any tobacco products.

We would also like to see the law changed so that store clerks have to be at least 18 years old to *sell* tobacco products. Teens are more likely to sell tobacco to other teens; so just as with alcohol, we believe that clerks should have reached the "Age of Majority" before they can handle these dangerous products.

We are strongly opposed to charging minors for buying or

possessing tobacco. It's not the teen's fault for falling into the tobacco companies' trap. Practically speaking, there are far too many teens for the law to be effectively enforced, so it makes much more sense to focus enforcement on retailers. Also we are concerned that the police could use this law as an excuse to harass teens or search them for illicit drugs or weapons.

We all agree that the *Operation I.D.* program sponsored by the tobacco industry has got to go. Confidential internal documents reveal that tobacco companies have no real interest in preventing kids from smoking. Programs like *Operation I.D.* just make it look like they care. These programs create lots of great PR for the tobacco companies and delude parents and politicians into believing that the problem of youth smoking

PROGRAMS LIKE **Operation I.D.** JUST MAKE IT LOOK **like** **they care.**

has been taken care of. Meanwhile effective solutions that include raising taxes, banning smoking in public places, penalizing retailers for selling to minors, and making teens part of the solution are ignored. An easy way to get rid of *Operation I.D.* is to allow retail stores to display only government-approved signs. This is what the Saskatchewan government recently did, and as a result *Operation I.D.* has basically been outlawed in that province!

taxation

It makes no sense to us that Ontario has the lowest cigarette prices of all provinces in Canada — and all U.S. states!

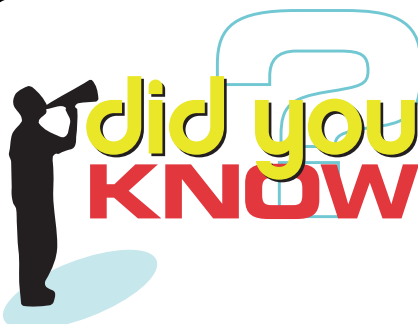
Clearly Ontario has to raise tobacco taxes to be in line with the rest of the country, but so do Quebec and New Brunswick to avoid inter-provincial smuggling problems. If these governments do not act quickly to

raise their taxes, we think this issue should be a top priority for the next meeting of Health Ministers. We understand the research shows that cigarette prices have a big impact on how much people smoke. From the personal experience of the smokers on our team, we believe that a large increase in the cost of cigarettes has a greater impact than several small increases.

The money raised from the increase in provincial tobacco taxes should be used to fund programs and

other initiatives to keep people from starting to smoke and to help smokers quit. These programs and initiatives would include:

- > Education programs
- > Mass media
- > Youth groups
- > Quit-smoking programs
- > OHIP coverage for nicotine replacements, such as the patch and nicotine gum
- > Research into safer nicotine-delivery systems



Research shows that for every 10% increase in price, tobacco-use decreases by 3 — 5% among adults. Price increases have an even greater impact on teens. Fewer teens smoke and smoking teens smoke fewer cigarettes when prices go up.²

The Ontario government takes in about \$475 million each year in tobacco taxes (at the current low rate of taxation)⁴ and spends only \$20 million a year on anti-tobacco programs.⁵

marketing

It is obvious to us that society doesn't think that tobacco is as harmful to youth as alcohol.

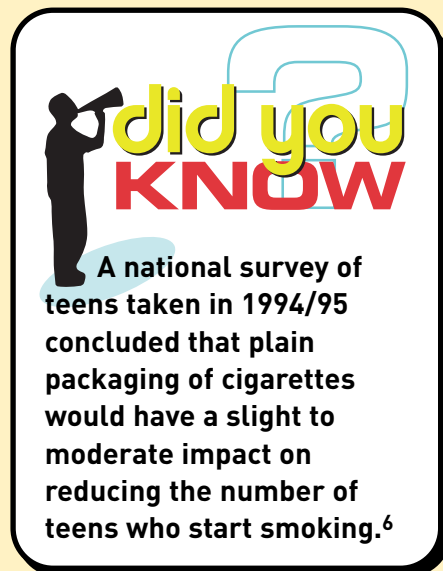
If they did, cigarettes wouldn't be "in your face" in every community — for sale in every corner store, every grocery store, every gas station, and even some restaurants. This attitude needs to be changed if tobacco-use is going to be denormalized. As a first step, the Ontario government should require all retailers to store cigarettes and other tobacco products out of sight — as the Saskatchewan government recently did. Having "power walls" and countertop displays of cigarettes in stores encourages kids to experiment with smoking and to buy cigarettes on impulse — "you see it, you want it." Also, there should be no signs that advertise cigarette prices visible outside the store. Ultimately, we think that tobacco should be sold only in LCBO-type stores. These stores are much more careful about not selling to minors. As well, there are far fewer liquor stores than corner stores, grocery stores and gas stations; and these LCBO-type stores would have restricted hours, so it would be harder for smokers to buy cigarettes.

Candy products that imitate tobacco

**...store
cigarettes
AND OTHER
tobacco
products
OUT OF SIGHT**

products (e.g. candy cigarettes, chewing gum packaged like chewing tobacco, licorice pipes, etc.) are another encouragement for kids to experiment with smoking. These products give children and teens the message that smoking is a "normal" activity and tobacco isn't that harmful — since the real cigarettes are sold right near the candy ones!

We think the government should get serious about requiring cigarettes and other tobacco products to be sold in plain packages. Attractive colours, logos and typography on packaging enable manufacturers to attach a certain image to a particular brand and then relate the cigarette packages to sponsorships and other kinds of promotion. Plain brown packages with ugly lettering would help to break this association.



Tobacco companies should also not be allowed to segment their brands by false categories such as "light" and "mild," or to replace these terms with appealing names like "Gold" and "Silver." The government should restrict how the companies differentiate their products, perhaps by limiting them to number codes that have no positive associations.

**Tobacco
companies should
also not be allowed
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"LIGHT" AND
"MILD" ...**

We were really concerned to learn that tobacco companies have begun aiming their marketing at university- and college-age students. In fact, there are some indications that the percentage of new smokers in this age group (19–24 years) has started to increase. Young adults in university and college are key role models for teenagers. Therefore, we believe that targeting this age group will have as much influence on teen smoking as when the tobacco companies target teens directly.

The government should not permit tobacco advertising in bars. As well, they should ban cigarette sponsorship ads in adult consumer magazines. Many teens and young adults read these magazines and so continue to be exposed to tobacco industry promotion. We are also troubled by the new magazines that tobacco companies have developed, like Imperial Tobacco's *Rev* and *Pursuit*. The government needs to monitor very closely whether these magazines really are being direct-mailed only to adults, or whether they are just another way for the tobacco industry to get around restrictions on tobacco advertising.

smoking restrictions

SMOKING BAN ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

We think the smoking ban on school property is an important step towards denormalizing tobacco-use.

However, it's clear that the ban is not being enforced at all in some schools, while in others enforcement is inconsistent or ineffective. If the ban is to have any impact on youth smoking, it must be executed properly and enforced uniformly across the province. Because some teachers don't take the ban seriously or because they look the other way if they catch a "favourite" student smoking, the principal and vice-principal should be put in charge of enforcement. Their patrol of the school grounds should be reinforced by surprise visits from health unit inspectors and/or the police. The penalties for smoking on school property should be the same everywhere in Ontario:

First offence: a warning plus a phone call to parents

Second offence: a \$50 fine plus attendance at a quit-smoking program

Third offence: a \$100 fine

Fourth offence: a \$100 fine plus in-school suspension with extra schoolwork given

We think these penalties are severe enough for students to take the ban seriously; but they also include measures to help students deal with their smoking problem, such as informing parents and giving kids help in quitting.

SMOKING BANS IN WORK-PLACES AND PUBLIC PLACES

When youth don't see adults smoking everywhere they go, they are less likely to want to smoke. This reality has a positive impact on both non-smokers (who are less likely to want to start smoking) and smokers (who smoke less often and have more incentive to quit). While we believe that it is important to have respect for each other's rights, we are all adamant that smokers do not have the right to harm other people's health. The simple solution is to ban smoking in all *indoor* public places and workplaces, including bars! Smokers would simply have to step outside (away from the

doorway) to have their cigarettes, and non-smokers would not have to breathe in the harmful chemicals in second-hand smoke.

It doesn't make sense to us that each city and town has to go through the same process and the same public debates to pass a no-smoking bylaw. The Ontario government should show leadership and ban smoking in all indoor public places and workplaces throughout the province. Although there are differences between rural areas and cities, especially when it comes to enforcement, and although there will always be some problems associated with a total ban, people know that a public smoking ban has been coming for some time. Most people will adjust. After the law is passed, there should be a 6—12-month period before it is implemented to allow businesses and smokers to prepare for the changes. The government should use this time to educate the public about the need for the ban.

education

It is obvious to us that there isn't nearly enough anti-tobacco education in schools.

Only one member of our group has had more than one unit on tobacco; and some of us have had no anti-tobacco education in school at all. Traditionally, smoking is discussed in Health class, as part of the unit

on substance-abuse. But teenagers need to learn a lot more about the subject, especially what the short-term health consequences of smoking are and how the tobacco industry manipulates us so they can get rich from our addiction. For example, there should be more education about tobacco company promotional activities such as product placement in movies.

...teenagers need to learn... HOW THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY MANIPULATES US so they can GET RICH FROM OUR ADDICTION.

tobacco companies OFFER INCENTIVES TO MOVIE-MAKERS to have their product FEATURED IN A FILM...

Kids need to be made aware that tobacco companies offer incentives to movie-makers to have their product featured in a film or to have a certain character smoke, even if smoking is not vital to the character's development or goes against reality. Think about Lois Lane in the movie *Superman II*: she was a chain-smoker — even though her character never smoked at all in the comic books!

More schools need to bring in

motivational speakers like The Winston Man, Alan Landers — (who became afflicted with lung cancer as a result of cigarette-smoking) — and to put on presentations like “The Pig’s Lungs.” Seeing the actual effect that smoking has on real lungs creates a much more powerful impact than just being fed a bunch of facts.

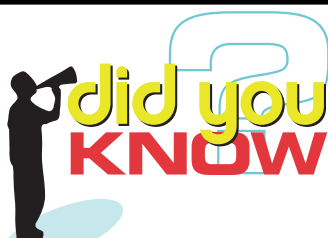
We also think that schools should conduct their own smoking surveys. These surveys would provide meaningful and up-to-date information on attitudes towards smoking and on smoking habits which would help in the planning of programs and activities that the students most need. This information would be taken much more seriously by the students than impersonal statistics about the province as a whole. For instance, one of our YTT members surveyed her own high school in St. Catharines and was surprised to find that about half of the students had *never* even tried smoking!

Although we would like to see more time in school devoted to the tobacco issue as a whole, we understand the practical problem of trying to fit even more into the new curriculum. The Florida and Massachusetts programs provide a good example of how this could be done, since they integrate tobacco facts into all kinds of school subjects, such as Civics, Psychology, Business, and Science. A useful resource is the youth magazine *GASP*. It’s really out there, man. It’s bold, loud, and in-your-face — but this is the main reason that the messages get through to you and stick in your



mind. The Ontario government should either get permission from BC to reproduce and distribute *GASP* throughout Ontario high schools or develop its own similar magazine, with input from youth. We also like BC’s “Tobacco Industry’s Poster Child.” It really takes the glamour out of smoking and provides a clear visualization of the health problems

...about half of the students HAD NEVER EVEN TRIED SMOKING!



Smoking in movies increased greatly in the 1990s after declining for more than three decades. In fact, leading actors in movies are four times more likely to smoke than their real-life counterparts! Just as in traditional tobacco advertising, smoking in the movies is associated with positive traits like health, good looks, and success.⁷

...Find interesting ways TO INFORM TEENS about tobacco issues

caused by smoking. We were really happy to learn that the “Poster Child” will be included in The Lung Association’s *Lungs Are For Life* program for high school students.

Another really awesome resource used in BC is the *Critics Choice* program. The YTT had a great discussion about



tobacco issues after seeing these innovative anti-tobacco ads from around the world, and we believe they would have the same impact on students in school. The YOUtv “Speak Out and Clear the Air” campaign was designed with the same goal in mind — to find interesting ways to inform teens about tobacco issues so we are motivated to talk about and then do something about the problem.

Parents also need a lot more education on tobacco issues, especially about their importance as role models to their kids and the impact of second-hand smoke on their children’s health. Anti-smoking education should be part of parenting and pre-natal classes. There should be a way for kids who are forced to breathe second-hand smoke at home to report the problem, especially those with a health condition like asthma that gets worse when they breathe tobacco smoke. In our view, it’s child abuse.

In our view, IT’S CHILD ABUSE.

mass media

We think that mass media anti-tobacco ads can be really effective in raising awareness of tobacco issues, especially ads with attitude.

These media campaigns could be a lot more effective, however. More ads on different smoking-related subjects are needed and they should air after school and during prime-time — the times when kids are most likely to be watching TV — and on stations that youth watch most. The bottom-line is that more funding is needed so that the ads can be shown a lot more frequently. Ads have to be seen in order to be effective!

There are two kinds of advertisement that we agree are most effective with teenagers:

- 1** Anti-industry ads that focus on tobacco company deception and teen activism
- 2** Ads that personalize health problems caused by tobacco-use in a way that youth can relate to

We feel that celebrity endorsements are most effective with pre-teens. If celebrity ads are going to be targeted at a teen audience, it is important to choose celebrities who teenagers view as role models — not public figures who we can’t relate to or who we know would never consider smoking in the first place.

Ads have to be seen IN ORDER TO BE effective!

quitting

A lot more support is needed to help teen smokers who may want to quit.

There should be peer support groups in every school for students who are interested in ridding themselves of the smoking habit. Drugs that help people quit, like the patch and nicotine gum, should be covered partially by OHIP. If it costs as much to buy nicotine gum as it does a pack of cigarettes, this is going to be a definite barrier to quitting for a lot of young people. One message that might help motivate some smokers to quit is how much money they could save if they weren't buying cigarettes, and what other things that money could buy. Students also need to learn about alternatives to smoking, such as the things they could do when they are stressed or bored rather than lighting up a cigarette. We especially like BC's quit-smoking program for teens called *Kick the Nic*, and we think more programs like it are needed to deal with the special needs of teenage smokers.



youth involvement

We spent a lot of time talking about how to get more youth involved in tobacco-control.

We think the solution comes down to two things:

- 1** increased awareness of tobacco issues and how they affect not just health, but the environment, the economy, and the welfare of developing countries
- 2** funding for student-led activities

There are many different ways to interest youth in getting involved. Local health professionals who visit high schools and interested educators would be logical choices to become coordinators of community-based youth groups. These individuals have a good understanding of adolescent health issues and know a lot of students. Another option would be to explore the possibility of using the Teacher Advisor Program (TAP) to get a student group going. We know that TAP has a bad reputation right now in many schools — among both students and teachers — partly because of the lack

of resources. But starting this fall, a TAP module of the *Lungs Are For Life* program will be available for use in high schools. There are other good resources available on tobacco issues, including a new guide for student advocacy on tobacco (*The Power of Many*) that comes with a facilitator's guide. Participation in anti-tobacco activities should be counted toward fulfillment of the forty hours of mandatory community service — which might provide an incentive for more students to get involved.

Other ways of encouraging students to participate include: using the media to get the word out; having interesting speakers and presentations on different aspects of the tobacco problem; holding poster contests and/or quit-smoking contests; and staging events like school surveys and health fairs to educate the students while getting them involved at the same time.

Youth Tobacco Team members see ourselves as ambassadors on tobacco issues — not only in our own towns and cities but also throughout Ontario. To be more effective, however, we need a way of linking with youth groups in other communities. We would like to set up a YTT website that would provide a forum for youth across the province to learn about tobacco-control and to share ideas for youth-led activities.



what we want you TO know

Fascinating and Disturbing Facts About Tobacco

12,000 Ontarians die every year as a result of tobacco-caused diseases.⁸ **That's four times more than die from motor vehicle accidents, suicide, homicide and AIDS combined.**³

The more people understand about the dangers of tobacco-use, the less they want to smoke. Tobacco companies know this, so they are turning their marketing machine towards developing countries.¹²

"Learning that tobacco companies give out cigarette packs to kids in Europe — that really got me mad!"

YTT Member

25% of teens aged 15 — 19 in Ontario smoke. From 1999 to 2000 there was no change in the percentage of Ontario teens in this age group who smoke — whereas teen smoking rates dropped in many other provinces.⁹ As a further contrast, consider that, in California, where they have comprehensive anti-tobacco programs and smoking is banned in all indoor public places, **only 8% of teens smoke!**¹⁰

Six trillion

cigarettes are smoked worldwide every year. That's a six followed by twelve zeroes!¹¹

One out of every eight trees cut down each year worldwide has been cut down to make room for tobacco-growing or curing.¹⁴

IT CAN TAKE **25 YEARS** FOR THE FILTER FROM ONE CIGARETTE BUTT TO DECOMPOSE.¹³ JUST THINK ABOUT ALL THE BUTTS IN A SINGLE SCHOOL'S SMOKING PIT AND THE KIND OF DAMAGE THEY ARE DOING TO THE ENVIRONMENT!

For decades tobacco companies have been lying to the public and the government. They **LIE** about the health risks from smoking; they **LIE** about the dangers of breathing second-hand smoke; and they **LIE** about the ways in which they promote smoking.¹⁵ Here's the classic **LIE** that they are *still* repeating in 2002: **"We don't want kids to smoke."**¹⁶

“I wouldn't change my time with the YTT group for anything. These guys are amazing. Thanks to all of you.”

Who helped us

Friends We Made Along the Way

We would like to thank everyone who shared their knowledge of tobacco issues with us and taught us valuable skills with which we are now able to fight the tobacco industry:

Joanne Bergen, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care — for teaching us about the Ontario Tobacco Strategy

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Peter Williams, Youth Leader, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health — for telling us about his work with youth on the Ottawa Council on Smoking and Health

Janice Forsythe, Cypress Consulting — for opening our eyes to tobacco company public relations plays like *Operation I.D.*

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