

TOBACCO FREE ENVIRONMENT

This policy is in support of school health programs designed to help student's learn and foster lifestyles by providing them with knowledge, skills, social support, and environmental reinforcement.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Western School District shall be a tobacco free environment.

SCOPE

This policy shall apply to:

- **All** buildings, facilities, grounds and properties under the jurisdiction of the Western School District
- All** vehicles parked on school property, school buses, Board owned or leased vehicles
- **All** staff, students and any person present on School District property, 24 hours a day - every day
- **All** school trips, off-site school activities, and activities outside of school hours
- **Anyone** transporting students to or from school events, and while in the presence of students during those events

DEFINITION

For the purposes of this policy, 'tobacco' is defined to include all cigarettes, cigars, pipes, clove cigarettes or other smoking products, and spit tobacco also known as smokeless, dip, chew, and snuff, in any form.

RATIONALE

The Western School Board believes it has an obligation to provide a safe and healthy environment for all students, parents, employees and visitors. The Board supports current literature and research that tobacco usage is addictive, and it kills and disables. In addition, second hand smoke is a health hazard to others. The Board also believes that allowing tobacco use on school property is in conflict with prevention messages within the curriculum and the classroom.

In addition to the philosophical reasons, schools may face liability issues by allowing tobacco use on their premises, particularly in light of laws that intentionally limit access to and the sale of tobacco products to youth.

PROCEDURE

- Principals shall establish protocols and procedures to implement the District Policy. Since each school has its own unique situation, each should, through a team approach with teachers, students, parents, school councils, neighbors, and other partners, develop a plan which can work for its situation/ property.
- The Director/principals/others shall notify students, families, educational personnel and school visitors of the Tobacco Free Environment Policy through school handbooks, web pages, signage, and other appropriate methods of communication.
- The School District shall have a District contact person(s) to help where necessary with policy implementation. It is recognized that in the beginning, this policy will create some unique challenges that will require a team approach to address.
- This Policy shall be respectful of traditional Aboriginal use of tobacco for ceremonial purposes.

EDUCATION AND SUPPORT

In junior and senior high schools, cessation/quitting aids/programs will be necessary since some students are already addicted. The District and the school staff/community will need to offer organized support to these students. School/District personnel may find it necessary to involve addictions counselors, public health nurses, the Alliance for the Control of Tobacco, Cancer Society, the Lung Association, Smokers Help Line, etc. Students will need a great deal of support if they are trying to quit.

POSITIVE ROLE MODELLING

Children learn to smoke from peers but also by imitating adults. Adults who use tobacco inevitably influence students' attitudes by suggesting it is a responsible adult decision to use a tobacco product. A 24/ 7 tobacco-free environment, combines with educational efforts in the school, provides a genuine opportunity for all adults to serve as positive role models for not using tobacco. It is important that the environment which surrounds a young person be clear in its expectations and in its attitudes towards tobacco use.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- The Director or designee(s) will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating this policy.
- This policy should be reviewed with principals on a periodical basis.

10 GOOD REASONS FOR TOBACCO FREE SCHOOL GROUNDS

1. Tobacco kills and disables. Young people deserved to be protected from it.
2. Tobacco is a drug. Like any other drug, it should be prohibited around schools.
3. Tobacco is addictive. The school setting should be promoting HEALTH, not addictive substances.
4. Second hand smoke kills. All students deserve to breathe clean air.
5. School years are critical in determining whether or not individuals smoke for life. Allowing smoking on school grounds gives young people a means and an opportunity to engage in this dangerous behaviour.
6. Allowing tobacco use around school property conflicts with strong prevention messages in the classroom.
7. Allowing smoking on school grounds allows a perception of social acceptance which can influence a young person's decision to start smoking.
8. Laws intentionally limit access by not allowing children under age 19 to buy tobacco.
9. Schools may face liability issues from those affected by second hand smoke diseases or by allowing a dangerous behaviour to continue with teacher's knowledge.
10. IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

"Every 11 minutes, a Canadian dies from tobacco use. Every 10 minutes, two Canadian teenagers start smoking cigarettes; one of them will lose their life because of it. Yearly, more than a thousand Canadians who never even smoked die - from exposure to tobacco smoke.

Year in and year out, more than 45,000 Canadians perish - because of tobacco. And yet... *tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of premature death and disease in Canada.*"

Health Canada web site, 2006

If you would like would like more information, please contact:

Bill Allan
School Health Promotion Consultant
Western School District
10 Wellington Street
Corner Brook, NL, A2H 6G9
709-637-4021
bill.allan@wnlsd.ca

**LIVING
HEALTHY**



TOBACCO FREE SCHOOLS



Western School District
10 Wellington St.
Corner Brook, NL
A2H 6G9
www.wnlsd.ca

September, 2006