

## TOBACCO! TALK ABOUT IT

Most smokers start smoking in their early teens, some as young as 10 years of age. Within a few years of starting to smoke, most teens want to quit but they can't they as are addicted. As a parent, you can help your child stay a non-smoker by talking openly about the dangers of tobacco and addiction, even if you are a smoker. Parents are a child's greatest role models. Parents may doubt their effectiveness as role models, especially if they are smokers, but the research has shown that parents can reduce their child's likelihood of becoming a smoker just by talking with them.

### How can you protect your children if someone in your house smokes?

Non-smokers exposed to tobacco smoke are more likely to suffer from asthma, colds, pneumonia, ear infections (children) and other respiratory problems. You can protect the non-smokers in your house by:

- ◆ Talking about the possibility of making your home "smoke-free"
- ◆ Setting up a comfortable outdoor smoking section and asking smokers to smoke outside
- ◆ Designating a well-ventilated room as the "smoking room" if smoking outside is impossible
- ◆ Making the vehicle that transports children smoke-free

For more information contact:

- ◆ Your local Health Unit
- ◆ BC Nurse Line (1-866-215-4700) a free call
- ◆ Smoke Free Kids [www.viha.ca/mho/tobacco/smoke free places for kids/](http://www.viha.ca/mho/tobacco/smoke_free_places_for_kids/)

### Health Units:

Esquimalt	360-5600	Salt Spring Island	538-4880
Outer Gulf Islands	539-3099	Sooke	642-5464
Peninsula	544-2400	Victoria	388-2200
Saanich	744-5100	West Shore	478-1757