

# Take Down Tobacco Day Ideas

This is a national day of action on April 1 each year, promoted by Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids. For more information, see <https://www.takedowntobacco.org/about>



**Involve your student council in selecting a theme, reading intercom announcements, and in organizing activities.**

**Use your school marquee** to announce the day, or post messages the entire week.

## Intercom messages

Include messages in morning announcements or throughout the day, and throughout the week. Some ideas are listed below:

### Younger Grades

1. "If someone offers me a cigarette I can say, 'No thanks, I don't like the smell.'"
2. "I'm not going to smoke or chew tobacco because I want to play sports, like basketball and football."
3. "Be tobacco free, like Tony Hawk. " [or Jackie Chan, or another role model.]
4. "I can run fast because I don't smoke!"
5. "Smokers lose out."
6. "Smoking makes your teeth yellow and your clothes and breath smell funny."
7. "Tobacco is a dead end street."
8. "Smoking is NOT cool!"
9. "Being tobacco free is always in style."
10. "Tough guys don't smoke!"
11. "Pretty girls don't smoke."
12. "Tough guys don't chew tobacco!"
13. "Chewing tobacco can cause mouth sores and makes you a worse athlete."
14. "(Name of school) students are too smart to use tobacco."
15. " \_\_\_\_\_ "

### Older grades

1. "At (name of school) we are proud to have a tobacco free campus, and tobacco free events. That includes electronic cigarettes."
2. "At (name of school), we are proud to have a tobacco free sports program. "

3. "Tobacco reduces blood flow and increases risks of erectile dysfunction, premature birth and birth defects."
4. "Big tobacco companies spend \$110 every MINUTE in Nebraska, trying to get you hooked. That's \$58 million dollars a year. After all, they are trying to find new users to replace the ones who die!"
5. "Tobacco companies care only about their money; not about you."
6. "Cigarettes sell for \$5 a pack, but they really COST a lot more: yellow teeth, wrinkled skin, bad breath, bad smelling clothes, bad health. Sounds pretty EXPENSIVE!"
7. "Tobacco is an **ADDICTION**, not just a habit! An addiction tells you **WHAT TO DO** and **WHEN TO DO IT**, and **NEVER LEAVES YOU ALONE!**"
8. "Smokers' hair is more brittle than non-smokers'. How does a **BAD HAIR DAY EVERY DAY** sound?"
9. "According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, smoking harms nearly every organ of the body."
10. "Even using chewing tobacco for a short time can cause cracked lips, white spots, sores and bleeding in the mouth."
11. "Nicotine narrows a person's blood vessels and puts added strain on the heart. Be your best; don't use tobacco or electronic-cigarettes."
12. "The aerosol from electronic cigarettes contains chemicals that can harm the lungs of users, and bystanders."
13. "Smoking causes **MOUTH WRINKLES** and premature aging!"
14. "People who don't smoke live an average of about **12 YEARS LONGER** than those who smoke."
15. "Smoking increases your risk of heart disease, stroke and heart attack."
16. "When young women smoke, it lowers their level of estrogen and increases their risk of developing osteoporosis."
17. Nearly one in every five deaths in the United States is caused by a tobacco related disease.
18. "Here is some good news: most teens and most adults, do NOT use tobacco."
19. "There is a great Web page to help people quit smoking or chewing- [Quitnow.ne.gov](http://Quitnow.ne.gov)."
20. "Smoking doubles your risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis."
21. "Smokers are more likely to develop **DIABETES**. Smoke a pack, give yourself an insulin shot. SOUNDS FUN, doesn't it!"
22. "Being tobacco free is always in style."
23. "When pregnant women use nicotine, it not only harms them, but harms the developing baby and increases the risk of premature birth, or stillbirth."

24. "Smoking increases the risks for liver cancer, colon cancer, rectal cancer and lung cancer."
25. "Smoking by pregnant women increases the risk of their unborn babies developing cleft lips or cleft palates."
26. "Smoking puts stress on your heart and makes it beat faster. Smokers can't run as fast and have to stop oftener just to catch their breath."
27. "Each year, tobacco kills more people than AIDS, alcohol, drug abuse, car crashes, murders, suicide and fires combined!"
28. "Chewing tobacco can cause mouth sores and makes you a worse athlete."
29. " \_\_\_\_\_ "

### **Have a flash mob assembly –**

See "Putting on a Flash Mob" and other resources at [CommunityConnectionsLC.org/tflc](http://CommunityConnectionsLC.org/tflc) (click on "Resources for Teachers").

A "flash mob" can take many forms and can be more or less spontaneous. For example, you could give cheerleaders or drill team members the opportunity to make up lyrics and an action/dance routine, and teach it to P.E. or other classes over the previous week. Then you could have a flash mob assembly, involving the entire school, or get something started on the school yard and encourage others to join..

### **Submit pictures for Community Connections Facebook page**

If you have pictures of student posters, decorated doors, etc., you can email them to [tflc@communityconnectionsllc.org](mailto:tflc@communityconnectionsllc.org) to be put on <https://www.facebook.com/CommunityConnectionsLC>

**OTHER ACTIVITIES** (Suggested grade ranges are shown for each)

***Idea: Have older students conduct activities with younger students.***

**(K-12) Tobacco makes it harder to breathe**

(Not for students with asthma or breathing difficulties.)

*Materials needed: a straw for each student participating.*

Hand each student a drinking straw. Have them breathe through the straws with their noses pinched closed, for 30 seconds. Tell them if they get too uncomfortable before the 30 seconds is over, they should quit.

Discuss how it felt and talk about the fact that smoking makes it harder to breathe. *How do you think smoking affects your ability to breathe?*

Explain that when kids smoke their lungs may not develop full capacity, so when they are adults they may not be able to do as much as adults who never smoked.

Discuss: *Do you want to be able to run fast when you are in high school? Do you want to be able to run when you are in your 20s? 30s? 40s, 50s, 60s?*

**(K-12) Message on a Fence**

*Materials needed: cups (some may be available from TFLC).*

Students use cups to create a message in a fence, visible to people passing by.

Message ideas include:

- Kick the habit.
- Call it quits.
- Tobacco kills.

**For more information about Kicks Butts Day, and activity ideas, go to [KickButtsDay.org](http://KickButtsDay.org)**

**(5-12) That's a Lot of Money! – Math Activity**

It costs a lot to smoke or chew! A pack of cigarettes typically costs about \$5.50, a carton (10 packs) costs about \$54.00 and a can of chew costs about \$5.00, including all taxes. Have the class do the math to determine answers to the following questions.

What does it cost per day, month, year, 10 years, 30 years, if someone uses a can of chew or smokes a pack of cigarettes a day.

What could be purchased for that amount of money?

## (6-12) Media Messages

Listen to popular music or read the lyrics, look at magazine ads, look at movie clips, or analyze other media, and discuss the messages that make tobacco, alcohol or other drugs appear attractive. Discuss how different the messages might be if they realistically portrayed the problems associated with the use of these substances.

## (4-9) Big Money Relay – Tobacco Marketing in Nebraska

*Materials needed: 22 play (or real) five dollar bills, four buckets, calculator, white board and marker.*

Background: Tobacco companies spend about \$58 million marketing their products each year in Nebraska alone.

Divide students into two teams of equal number. Each team is to relay \$5 bills, one at a time, from one end of the room to its bucket at the other end, 30 to 50 feet away.

Each team's starting bucket has 11, five dollar bills in it. On signal, the front person in each team grabs a five dollar bill and runs to the other end of the room, drops it into the team bucket there, then races back, then his/her team member does the same. Continue for one minute, and see whether the teams are able to transfer all the five-dollar bills to the target buckets.

Then dump one bucket into the other and add any non-transferred five dollar bills, for a total of \$110. Explain that tobacco companies spend that much money marketing their products in Nebraska, **every minute.**

Hand a child a calculator and have him/her multiply \$110 by 60 (minutes in an hour), by 24 (hours in a day) and then by 365 (days in a year). (Write out the equation and the answer on the white board). In a year, tobacco companies spend about \$58 million trying to get people, including kids, in Nebraska, to buy their products. What do they care about – you, or getting your money?

## (4-9) “I Refuse to be a Target”

*Materials: Pens or fine-tipped markers for students to use.*

*Several sheets of card stock printed with a target and the words “I won’t be a target for tobacco companies!” (The electronic file is available by emailing [tflc@communityconnectionsllc.org](mailto:tflc@communityconnectionsllc.org).)*

Explain that the big tobacco companies are always trying to hook new users to replace the ones who die or quit. They are targeting kids. They spend \$58 million dollars a year in Nebraska alone, trying to get people to buy their products. That’s \$120 every minute!

They encourage movie makers to show actors smoking in the movies. They advertise in some of the popular magazines that kids look at. They use “Joe Camel” and other images that can appeal to kids. They make flavored cigars and other products to try to appeal to kids. They want you to use tobacco because they want your money. They don’t care if you get sick, and can’t run well, and have wrinkled skin and brittle hair, get mouth cancer, lung cancer, or colorectal cancer, or die 10 to 15 years earlier than you would otherwise!! They don’t care! They only care about the money.

Let students sign their names, then post the cards in a main area.



**(4-9) 1,300 Every Day!**

*Materials needed: Poster paper, markers and/or crayons.*

Background: More than 1,300 people die from smoking every day in the U.S.A.

Make simple drawings of 1,300 people on a long sheet of poster paper, or divide 1,300 by the number of classes, give each class a sheet and have students draw and color their share of the 1,300.

Or, have each child trace his hands the number of times required to add up to 1,300 for the school, on a long sheet of poster paper, and color them in.

**(5-9) Why do They do it?**

*Materials needed: white board, marker*

Discuss:

*Why do you think tobacco companies spend so much money marketing their products? (To make money.)* [Write a big money sign on the board.]

*Do they want to get new customers? (yes)*

*Why (some of their customers quit and others die)*

*More questions:*

*Who do you think the tobacco companies are trying to get to start using tobacco? (kids)*

*Do they care if you die early? (no)*

*Do they care that it is very hard to quit using tobacco? (no)*

*Do they care if you can't run as fast? (no)*

*Do they care if your clothes and breath smell bad? (no)*

*Do they care about you, or your money? (YOUR MONEY)*

**(K-8) Ways to say 'No' to Tobacco (or drugs)**

*Materials needed: For each student: A sheet of paper, or the "I can say no" activity sheet (available from Community Connections); a pencil. Adapt the idea to the age group you are working with.*

Students use the activity sheet included in this resource, or draw simple characters with dialogue bubbles, and write in ways to say no to tobacco. Students then roll play and practice their ways to say "no." Examples include:

"I want to be healthy."

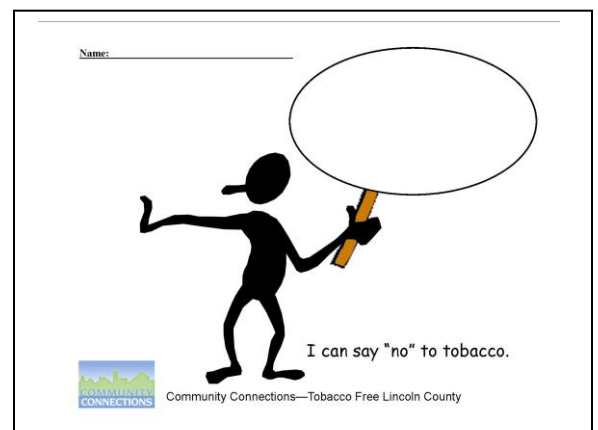
"I only want to breathe clean air."

"Tobacco smells nasty"

"I don't want to get hooked"

"One time WILL hurt"

"I want to be a good football player" [basketball player, etc.]



**(K-8) Activity sheets, stickers and bookmarks.**

Coloring activity sheets, sticker templates, and bookmark templates are available from Community Connections Tobacco Free Lincoln County

