Holding on to the Torch of NO Tobacco

May 31 is the World NO Tobacco Day and we are highlighting another way to “Choose Full Life” which is “Say NO to Tobacco” in all its forms. Adventists have been pioneers in the fight against Tobacco and its negative health consequences. Programs such as the 5 days to stop smoking have touched the lives of many who came in contact with a healthy way to quit the habit. Not long ago I was at an Award Celebration of a Health Professional Organization and when the Foundation President learned I was an Adventist he could not stop his enthusiasm in sharing how grateful he was to Adventists because it was thanks to an Adventist Hospital in Tennessee 35 years ago that he quit smoking.

By hearing God’s message about the harmful effects of smoking and sharing the principles we were able to alert the nation and the world of the problems associated with smoking and we offered practical solutions. This happened when doctors did not really care about it yet and science was lagging behind. Today, after decades of intensive public health initiatives encompassing all sectors of society, including many policy changes, we see that the prevalence of tobacco went from 1 in 3 (33%) to 1 in 5 (20%) around the world. Many laws have been passed that prohibit smoking in public places and these policies protect others from second hand smoking health hazards. These positive facts are a result of intensive efforts by everyone, including faith based organizations.

However, we must be aware that among young people the rates of smoking are no longer declining. Since 1964 the office of the Surgeon General in the United States has written reports on the problems of Tobacco and this year the 31st tobacco-related Surgeon General’s report was released called “Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults”. Some of the alarming facts are that:

- Nearly 9 out of 10 people start smoking before the age of 18
- Tobacco companies spend more than 1 million dollars every hour in the US alone to market their products and they target youth
- Some cigarette-sized cigars contain candy and fruit flavoring, such as strawberry and grape.
- Price reducing and sales make it more affordable to young kids

The Surgeon General states that a comprehensive strategy in this fight includes mass media campaigns, higher tobacco prices, smoke-free laws and policies, evidence-based school programs, and sustained community-wide efforts.

Adventists continue to be a part of the solution. In NAD we are teaching young kids at church and school to “Say NO to Tobacco” as a way to choose full life. More than that, we are mingling and partnering with others in the community in creative ways to spread the message. For instance, recently several SDA Conferences in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Arkansas, and Louisiana signed letters along with other Faith leaders in their region, addressed to their State Governors asking for increased taxes on tobacco products. Supporting policies for health is one of the ways to clearly show we deeply care about healthy living and about this issue. In these ways we continue to hold the torch for the health of our kids and families. How are you holding on to this Torch?

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ReACH ACROSS

Health Ministries Resources

- **Adventists InStep for Life (AISFL)** is a Division wide health initiative. The website provides information and resources to explore ideas on how your church, school, or health care organization can become involved. To learn more participate in this month’s FREE webinar on May 29 at 8pm EST (register at https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/718777585). Plan for LETS MOVE DAY now, order materials, and explore the resources for coordinators in our website below. The photos in the website of the most recent Adventists InStep for Life Award ceremony held at the NAD Health summit are also available. Visit the website for more information: www.adventistsinstepforlife.org.

- **CHOOSE FULL LIFE Resources** A set of resources to boost your health ministry’s visibility and provide your church with the latest information on the 10 ways to choose a full life. Resources include booklets, posters and calendar/bookmark containing the themes explored in the 2012 monthly newsletters. Orders can be placed in the online store of the website site below. The Choose Full Life theme song is also available for your church to sing – and it is FREE at www.nadhealthministries.org.

- **NAD HEALTH SUMMIT 2012 AUDIO FILES** Sermon and seminar presentations for the 2012 NAD Health Summit are available for download at www.NADhealthsummit.com thanks to www.audioverse.org.

- **May is National High Blood Pressure Education Month!** The National High Blood Pressure Education Program (NHBPEP) is coordinated by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI). The goal of the NHBPEP is to reduce death and disability related to high blood pressure. Programs and materials available: www.nhlbi.nih.gov.

- **May is National Physical Fitness and Sports Month!** For people who want to make physical activity and healthy eating part of their everyday lives, the President’s Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition provides a wealth of information, Fitness Tests for both youth and adults, grants and resources, and more. www.fitness.gov.

- **May is National Mental Health Month!** Two important themes are addressed this year: “Do More for 1 in 4” is a call to action to help the 1 in 4 American adults who live with a diagnosable, treatable mental health condition; “Healing Trauma’s Invisible Wounds” focuses on the impact of traumatic events on individuals and communities. Information, downloadable toolkits and other materials available: www.mentalhealthamerica.net/go/may.

- **National Women’s Health Week – May 13-19** “It’s Your Time” is the theme for 2012. National Women’s Health Week empowers women to make their health a top priority. It also encourages women to take the necessary steps to improve their physical and mental health and lower their risks of disease. Website provides info for age specific screenings, other ideas and materials. Might be a great way to celebrate Mom’s Day! www.womenshealth.gov/whw.

- **Health Calendar Emphasis - MAY**
  Canada: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/calend/index-eng.php
  USA: http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/nho.asp#m8

  **May 2012**
  - May 1-31: Mental Health Month
  - May 1-31: National High Blood Pressure Education Month
  - May 13-19: National Women’s Health Week
  - May 30: National Senior Health & Fitness Day
  - May 31: World No Tobacco Day

  **Looking Forward**
  - June 11-17 – Men’s Health Week

**Dates to Remember**

2012
- **May 4-6**
  Sanando al mundo un cuerpo a la vez
  Southern California Conference
  951-313-8958

- **May 10 - 13**
  Health & Fitness Symposium 2012
  Andrews University
  http://www.andrews.edu/cas/nutrition/symposium

- **May 19**
  National Kids to Parks Day
  http://www.kidstoparks.org

- **May 29**
  Adventists InStep for Life Webinar
  8pm (EDT)
  www.adventistsinstepforlife.org

- **June 10-11**
  Southern University Wellness Summit
  423.236.2852
  garver@southern.edu

- **August 5-10**
  2012 Natural Remedies and Hydrotherapy Workshop
  Andrews University
  www.andrews.edu/go/nrhw

- **September 23**
  Let’s Move Day
  Division Wide
  www.adventistsinstepforlife.org

- **September 23-29**
  Let’s Move Week
  Division Wide
  www.adventistsinstepforlife.org

www.NADhealthministries.org
Allegheny East Conference Summit Attendees

NAD HEALTH MINISTRIES

April was filled with planning and training events for Health Ministries across the NAD, particular in the Columbia Union region. NAD Health Ministries director Katia Reinert was involved in several meetings and trainings that took place highlighting the importance of using the right arm of the gospel in reaching large urban cities in our Division. The Chesapeake Conference held a Summit on “Reaching the Cities with Health Evangelism” held at Tridelphia SDA Church on April 13-15. Attendees created a strategy to reach the large cities in the region. Also, the NY13 committee met to discuss plans for reaching New York City in 2013. A major undertaking is planned where health outreach will play a major role while several ministries are coming together for planning and strategizing. The training phase began this Spring and Allegheny East (AEC) was the first Conference to hold its training. It took place on April 13-15, 2012 at the National 4-H Conference Center in Chevy Chase, Maryland with the theme “Diffusing Health Disparities”. The day was filled with rich presentations on health by some of the nation’s leading research professionals and experienced church leaders. Presenters covered every facet of the health dilemma facing the church and urban cities in the nation. More than 170 health leaders and professionals attended the successful Health Ministries Summit. Another major NY13 training will take place this summer as 5 conferences will come together to be trained for health outreach. Health Ministries training for the NY13 initiative will culminate on the NAD Health Summit to be held in New York City on March 13-17, 2013.

OHIO CONFERENCE

On April 15, Ohio Conference’s Hillsboro SDA church members participated in their second 5K run/walk to fund a community garden. There were 39 participants. The Runner participants ranged in age from 12 – 70+, while Walkers ages ranged between 16-50+ years. The church is working with Marilyn Hiestand who developed the nonprofit Highland Quality Living. “Gardening is a good place to make friends,” she says. “We are also supporting good health and eating really good food.” Neighbors have already donated seven acres a few blocks from the church. One of the organizers, Kathy Decker states: “We wanted people who don’t have a garden be able to grow their own tomatoes or beans or whatever they want.”

Panel of presenters AEC Health Summit

NEW JERSEY CONFERENCE

The Tranquility Adventist School in New Jersey is passionate about engaging the students in gardening and they have a 80’ square garden and a 12’ X 32’ greenhouse. They found creative ways to incorporate physical activity that also brings forth produce. They have put 6’ tall deer fences around the garden and greenhouse to preserve the produce, says principal James Hunt. The students also tend the flower gardens around the school and mow some of the lawn with a no-motor push mower. The school offers Spring and Fall class for the church school students and a Summer children’s gardening class for the community and the homeschoolers in the church. The greenhouse cost only $30 due to donated parts. Currently, the students are taking home large amounts of collards, kale, spinach, lettuce and probably before the school is out they will take heads of broccoli as well. The A,B,C’s of education! Kudos to the Tranquility Adventist School!

FLORIDA HOSPITAL AND FLORIDA CONFERENCE

Indigo Christian Junior Academy (ICJA) in Daytona Beach is making news this year as the pilot school for CREATION Health Schools - a three-way partnership between ICJA, Florida Hospital, and Florida Conference. “We are not only seeking to teach CREATION Health principles to our students; we want to help them live it,” says Jerry Wasmer, Daytona Beach Church pastor. “As a board, as staff, and as a whole school, it became clear we would have to live it also”. Board members decided they wanted to see these principles reflected in the DNA of the school. Nothing would be off limits. The school board systematically measured every area of the school against the ideals, taking note of areas needing improvement and already strong areas that could be built upon. Students collectively set classroom goals for the 2011–2012 pilot year with teams of students empowered to implement the following goals and ensure they were reached:

“Christ’s ministry reaches the whole person,” explains Pastor Wasmer, “and our schools are a prime venue for impacting the current and future health of our children. All we’re really doing is trying to sense God’s direction and join His mission to help His kids live healthy, happy, and productive lives.”

Karen Thomas’ Grades 1-4 students learn to make healthy, delicious, whole grain bread. (Photo: Lee Bennett)

Grades 5-8 class on a fitness trail near the school to stay active and enjoy the environment at the same time. (Photo: Lee Bennett)

Principal James Hunt and students helping build the greenhouse

Panel of presenters AEC Health Summit

REACH OUT
Tobacco epidemic kills nearly 6 million people each year, of which more than 600,000 are people exposed to second-hand smoke. Each puff of cigarette smoke contains about 5,000 toxic compounds. The inhaled irritants cause chronic lung epithelial cell inflammation and cell death, leading to lung cancer, emphysema, asthma, and other pulmonary diseases.

Although many smokers are aware of the dangers of second-hand smoke and take precautions to not smoke around children, learning about the potential health risks of what is called “third-hand smoke” may lead to changes in attitudes about smoking, conversations, and decisions to give up the habit or not ever start it.

Smokeless tobacco use among high school boys has jumped by more than a third since 2003. Most popular are teabag-like tobacco pouches and dissolvable tobacco products that do not require spitting and are more easily concealed. Their use can lead to gum disease, tooth decay, mouth lesions, oral cancer, and nicotine addiction. Additionally, high school students who use smokeless tobacco products are four times more likely to use marijuana, three times more likely to ever use cocaine, and almost 16 times more likely to consume alcohol.

Faith communities can make a difference in the impact that tobacco use has on our youth and families. Join the fight against tobacco on the next World No Tobacco Day, which will take place on Thursday, May 31, 2012. You can find many useful ideas and resources for getting youth involved at www.kickbuttsday.org.

Tobacco use is one of the leading preventable causes of death. The global tobacco epidemic kills nearly 6 million preventable causes of death. The global tobacco epidemic kills nearly 6 million people each year, of which more than 600,000 are people exposed to second-hand smoke. Each puff of cigarette smoke contains about 5,000 toxic compounds. The inhaled irritants cause chronic lung epithelial cell inflammation and cell death, leading to lung cancer, emphysema, asthma, and other pulmonary diseases.

The health benefits of smoking cessation are immediate and substantial. Quitting smoking not only improves pulmonary function but also dramatically reduces the risk for lung cancer, other types of cancer, heart attack, stroke, and chronic lung disease. For example, in the first year following smoking cessation, there is a 50% reduction in cardiac events, and the risk of stroke is reduced to that of a nonsmoker’s within 5 to 15 years.

A study by Nicorette released last year found that the average smoker takes five years and seven attempts to kick the habit for good. Unsuccessful attempts to quit can leave smokers feeling alienated and discouraged.

Studies show that personally tailored psychological support increases the chances of successfully changing behavior. Whether or not your church offers a Breathe Free tobacco cessation program, you can provide the individual support, daily contact and encouragement that is critical to successful quitting. No matter how much or how long someone has smoked, we can extend hope by sharing personal victories and helping people tap into the power of God to break habits.

References: