



Suvaguuq

National Newsletter on Inuit Social and Cultural Issues

PAUKTUUTIT INUIT WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

Volume XI, Number 2, 2000

Hello from Reepa and Catherine at Pauktuutit

We are happy to launch a special issue of *Suvaguuq* made possible through funding from Health Canada. Our aim is to inform, encourage and support community workers in their efforts to address tobacco issues at the community and regional levels.

Building awareness about tobacco addiction and the need for prevention and cessation takes time. Much like other health issues, the results of your work are often not seen for a long time. This can be a challenge but you don't have to feel alone. We can help each other by sharing our stories of the tobacco work we are doing in our communities and by sharing our ideas on how to meet the needs of smokers.

We have been noticing an increased awareness in the communities of the health effects of tobacco smoking.

There is also great concern for children and youth who smoke. Last year, we interviewed health workers and teachers across the North who reported that more and more homes are becoming smoke-free. Smokers are now asking for help on how to stop smoking. This is good news!

There is a lot of work to do to respond to the needs of smokers. We know that for many people stopping smoking is one of the hardest things they will do in their life. The first step is to raise community awareness about the health effects of smoking.

We are grateful for funding from Health Canada that enabled us to produce two kits called *Aniqsaattiarniq-Breathing Easy*. They provide community health workers and teachers with resources and information on tobacco that can be used with adults, youth and children.

The next step is to deepen our understanding of tobacco addiction and to learn how to help someone cut down or stop smoking cigarettes or chewing tobacco. Community health workers have been asking for training and resources to do this work.

cont'd on page 2

WHAT'S INSIDE

News from Inuvik workshop participants 2

A Look at Tobacco Addiction 5

Tobacco Resources from Pauktuutit 6

World Health Organization article 8

News from the Inuvik workshop participants

Baker Lake

Joan Killulark, Community Health Representative (CHR) Ex-Smokers Share Stories on Radio

12 ex-smokers and tobacco chewers phoned in to a radio show to share their quitting experiences and to encourage others. Joan Killulark hosted the hour-long

radio show in Baker Lake on January 27. The community response was so positive that the nurse has started a stop smoking group. Joan has offered her knowledge and support as needed.

Several of the callers were elders who had stopped for many years. Their main messages were to encourage young smokers to stop smoking and to tell those who haven't started to remain smoke-free.

Some of the questions Joan asked were, "Why did you decide to quit?"; "What method did you use to quit?"; "How did you feel when you first stopped?" and "What helped the most during your really bad cravings?"

One person who was smoke-free for only 5 days called in to share his experience. Others called in to

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Pauktuutit was able to get more funding to respond to these requests. We conducted a week-long training in Inuvik in November, 1999 on how to use the *Community Resource Kit* and the *School Kit* and how to help people stop smoking. We are encouraged by the workshop participants who are carrying on tobacco work in their communities. Since our time together in Inuvik many of the participants have been interviewed on the radio. They are using the kits to make presentations in schools and in their communities. Some were very active during National Non-Smoking Week in January and some are starting stop smoking groups.

Publishing special editions of *Suvaguuq* is a way for workshop participants to stay motivated and connected and to begin to network with others who are interested in tobacco issues. Pauktuutit plans to produce these special editions annually or semi-annually as resources allow. In the meantime, we welcome your feedback anytime and news about tobacco activities in your community. You can reach us at 1-800-667-0749, fax Catherine or Reepa at (613) 238-1787 or E-mail Catherine at <famviol@pauktuutit.on.ca>.



Alasie Saviadjuk of Salluit, a workshop participant and the "official photographer" for this report, posing outside Aurora College, Inuvik, where the workshop was held.

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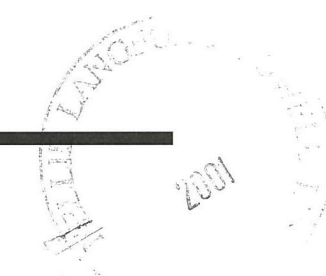
Pai Aklunark of Rankin Inlet and Joan Killulark of Baker Lake

congratulate him and encourage him to continue on. They told him what to expect and gave him suggestions on how to deal with cravings.

The community lent their support by donating prizes for ex-smokers who called in to the radio show. The prizes included a bag of flour, fancy soap, a CD case, a cookbook, tea and candles.

Joan suggests to others who might do a radio show that finding prizes and taping the show would be good ideas.

Good work, Joan!



Holman

Alice Kimiksana, CHR A Personal Story

Alice smoked one pack a day when we first met her. She has reduced her smoking to 2-3 cigarettes a day. She is walking more and was going to a women's support group when we last spoke with her. Congratulations Alice! Keep on going!

Cambridge Bay

Julia Ogina, CHR Youth Recommend Tobacco Education

Julia has been making presentations on tobacco in her community. She reports that the Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program will include information on tobacco in their program. A youth council recently included tobacco education as one of their three recommendations.

Julia has been exploring the "Walk of Life" exercise that we did during the workshop. She tried it with a couple of people when she returned home and used it as a healing tool at a suicide prevention retreat for youth.

Inuvik

Paula Lannon, Nurse Going Smoke-free

On February 29, the night before Paula stopped smoking, she wrote to us to express her heart-felt appreciation to everyone for being able to attend the workshop in Inuvik. She found the information very helpful and made quitting smoking top priority after the workshop. Everyday was a journey of discovery as she learned how to prepare for quit day.

She said, "...tomorrow will be a step on that journey, taking better care of myself, breathing easier and thanking all of you for the invaluable encouragement and support that will undoubtedly strengthen my resolve to take your message to heart – and stop for good."

Paula, we look forward to hearing your updates. Congratulations!





Relaxing at the home of Rose Marie Kirby: Martha Jaw of Cape Dorset and Susan Peffer and Agnes Kuptana of Inuvik enjoy the traditional songs and drumming by Julia Ogina of Cambridge Bay

Iqaluit

Looe Nowdlak, CHR, placed posters at the Northern, in schools and in the hospital during National Non-Smoking Week (NNSW). She is also working on a school lesson plan with the Health Promotion Officer.

Annie Quirke, who was working with the Government of Nunavut when she attended the Inuvik training, began discussions in her department to plan a repeat of the training in Nunavut. Annie has since taken a position with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. We wish her well!

Inuvik

Robbie Joe, CHR, **Agnes Kuptana**, **Paula Lannon** and **Susan Peffer** worked together during NNSW to put up a display at the Northern. They included a sign-up sheet for those interested in joining a stop smoking group. Robbie also went to the Jr. High School and talked to elders at their fitness class.

Inukjuaq

Louisa Eljasialuk, who works as a replacement for the local health worker, spoke on CBC radio about the health effects of smoking for different age groups. During NNSW people called in to share their quitting smoking stories as an encouragement to smokers who want to quit. Louisa posted a blank piece of paper at the entrance to the Health Centre asking smokers to sign their name if they wanted to quit. Forty-four smokers signed their names! Some attended a support group that continued after NNSW.

Salluit

Alasie Saviadjuk, also a health worker replacement, has been trying to get funding to start a stop smoking program.

Hopedale

Elizabeth Dean, School Counsellor, planned to do some advertising in the school for NNSW. She and another teacher hope to start a support group for students who want to quit. Once it's running, they're hoping parents will join.

Rankin Inlet

Pat Aklunark, CHR, copied resource materials in the kits and mailed them to CHRs in her region. Her main message to listeners during her CBC radio interview was that smokers need support, not criticism. Her tobacco work has taken the form of talking to individuals who come into the Health Centre.

Nain

Michael Walsh, School Counsellor, has circulated the kits to several teachers who have found the information and lesson plans very useful.

Cape Dorset

Martha Jaw, CHR, was interviewed on radio and had a teleconference with CHRs to update them on the Inuvik training workshop.



Michael Walsh of Nain, Elizabeth Dean of Hopedale, and Calla Sitatak of Kugluktuk.

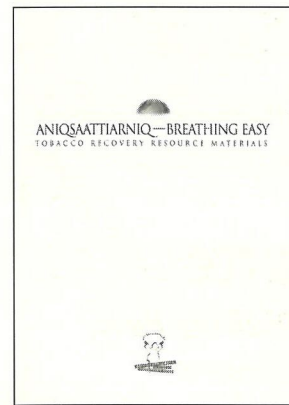
A Look at Tobacco Addiction from Pauktuutit's Newest Resource

Aniqsaattiarniq-Breathing Easy, Tobacco Recovery Resource Materials

In the North, tobacco smoking is beginning to be understood as the serious addiction that it is. In fact, nicotine, the addictive drug in tobacco, only takes 7 seconds to go to the brain. That is faster than heroine and cocaine. Information about tobacco addiction and how to help people stop smoking can be found in Pauktuutit's newest resource, *Aniqsaattiarniq-Breathing Easy, Tobacco Recovery Resource Materials*.

Smoking is more than just a bad habit that goes away by using will power. There are many reasons a person becomes addicted. Addiction can be passed down from one generation to the next. For many, the root cause comes from childhood. For example, it can start when children can't depend on adults because they are alcoholic, abusive or emotionally damaged.

When this happens, many children turn to smoking cigarettes to protect themselves from the emotional pain and fear of bad experiences or other strong emotions. Smoking becomes a way to survive. Peer pressure can also be a major influence in young people starting to smoke. No one is to blame for the addiction and smokers aren't bad because they smoke. When smokers decide to stop smoking they need support not judgement. It's important to know that recovering from tobacco addiction often takes time and many tries to finally stop for good.



How do we stop smoking? We start by making a serious commitment to learn how to stop smoking. It is one of the most difficult things a person can do. But, *it's possible to quit!* Getting started is hard because our bodies are used to having nico-

tine and our minds are fighting to get it back. It is normal to have withdrawal symptoms like headaches, coughing, sleeping problems and feelings like sadness, anger and depression. They won't last.

Recovery can have four phases: *Identify, Share, Grieve* and *Move On*. We identify the losses we suffered in childhood and other reasons that may have caused us to become addicted. We *identify* our "danger zones" (people, places, situations or emotions that make us want to smoke) and then create an "action plan" that will help us prepare for quit day. We also *identify* who and what will help us stop smoking – like friends, family, chemical aids or a group program. Once we feel prepared and have new ways to take care of ourselves, we then set a quit date.

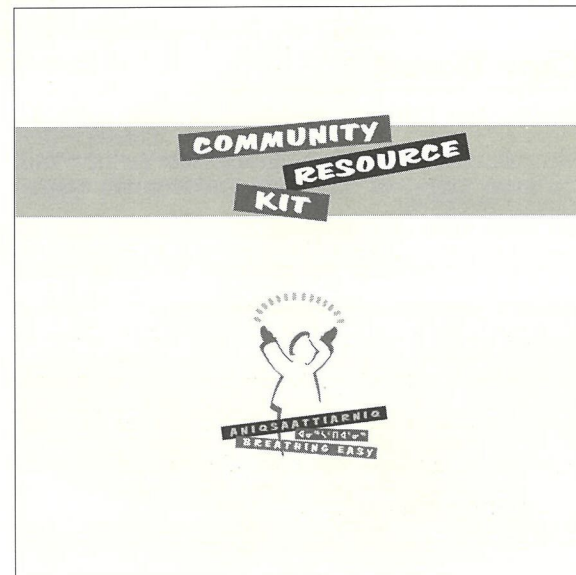
It's important to *share* our feelings with people we trust and to ask for the support we need.

Each person *grieves* their losses that they have identified and says good-bye to cigarettes in their own time and in their own way. People who truly recover from tobacco addiction learn to live through the challenges and joys of their lives without lighting up. They do this without depending on other things like food and alcohol.

The more we accept ourselves, feel and express our emotions and take care of ourselves in healthy ways, the more we are able to heal and *move on* with our lives. This creates the possibility to break the cycle of addiction in us, our families and our communities.

Resources about tobacco reduction available from Pauktuutit

Aniqsaattiarniq-Breathing Easy Community Resource Kit



This health workers' resource binder (126 pages) is available in English and Inuktitut syllabics. It includes 2 videos: *Breathing Easy, How tobacco use affects everyone* and *Breathing Easy in Your Community - How to use the Community Resource Kit, a training video for health workers*. It also contains posters and leaflets: 4 posters and 4 leaflets available in English, Inuinnaqtun, Inuktitut syllabics and Labrador orthography.

Aniqsaattiarniq-Breathing Easy School Kit

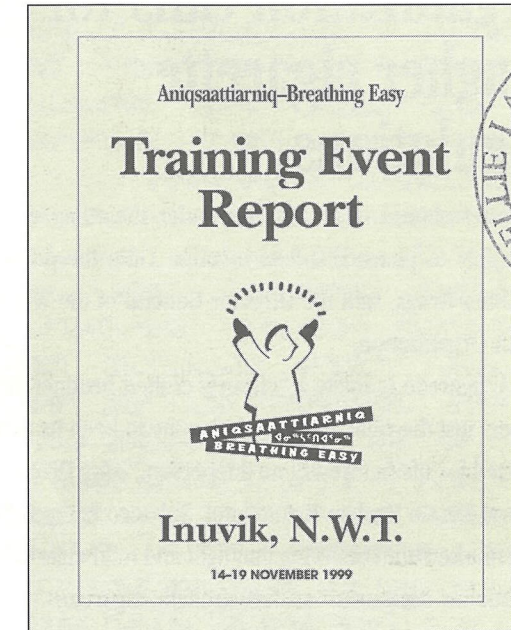


The teachers' binder (112 pages) with activities for Grades K - 5 is in English only. The complete binder includes a *Takuginai* video of a puppet show about not smoking (in Inuktitut and English); the storybook, *Grampa and His Pipe* (in Inuktitut or English) and a *Takuginai* puppet poster (in Inuktitut or English). Items can be ordered individually.

Aniqsaattiarniq-Breathing Easy Tobacco Recovery Resource Materials

This resource contains information on what tobacco addiction is, how we recover and how to help someone quit smoking.

Aniqsaattiarniq-Breathing Easy Training Event Report



This report describes the tobacco reduction training workshop held in Inuvik, NT in November, 1999. It is an interactive report that helps the reader become familiar with the resources mentioned above.

One Step at a Time

This is new leaflet on helping a smoker quit produced by the Canadian Cancer Society.

These resources can be ordered from:

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