Quit Your Way

A Program Guide for Youth and Young Adults



PEI Smoking CessationProgram



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Introduction for Facilitators

This is an 8-week program designed to support youth and young adults (15-24 years old) who use tobacco or vaping products and want to learn more about quitting. It is designed to be delivered by an adult facilitator in a school setting; however, it can be easily adapted for community use.

As leaders and role models, school staff are well positioned to support youth in their quit journey. School-based cessation initiatives typically focus on supporting students to quit by teaching important skills and coping mechanisms, providing social support, and linking students to community resources.

This program will help youth and young adults:

- · Examine why they smoke or vape
- Learn more about nicotine addiction
- · Prepare for quitting
- · Know what to expect when they quit
- · Create an action plan to quit successfully for life!

Each week provides a brief introduction to the topic, an individual self-reflection activity, and a series of questions to prompt discussion about the week's topic. Additional resources are also included to help explore each topic in more depth.

The guide is designed to help facilitators deliver the program consistently. However, there is still lots of room to make the program your own! We encourage you to adjust and supplement program activities to reflect the specific needs and circumstances of each group of participants.

"Every kid is one caring adult away from being a success story."

– Josh Shipp (QUASH App)

WEEK 1: Finding Your "Why"

INTRODUCTION

Everyone who smokes or vapes has their reasons for doing so. Nicotine products are used to fill many needs. You might like how it makes you feel. You may find that smoking and vaping helps you relax, gives you energy, or even helps you deal with stress. It may be something you typically do with others, such as at school, at work, or at parties.

Think about your own relationship with smoking or vaping. Try to identify what is "good" about it for you. What needs of yours are being met? How does smoking or vaping make you feel?

Most people smoke or vape for one, or many, of the following reasons:

Energy

- Pleasure
- Relaxation

- A craving or addiction
- A habit or ritual
- Boredom and loneliness Socializing and peer pressure

Understanding the reasons why you smoke or vape is an important first step. Finding other ways to meet your needs - and finding healthier ways to replace the role smoking or vaping play in your life - can make it significantly easier to remain nicotine-free. It is also important to figure out why quitting is important to you. These reasons for wanting to quit – "your why" – will help motivate you in the days and weeks ahead.



See Appendix A for this week's self reflection activity.



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1. What do you think are the main reasons why you smoke/vape? Is the reason you started different from the reason you do it now. if at all?
- 2. What is your biggest motivation to guit now? Be specific.



- How Tobacco Affects the Body (TED: Ed, YouTube, 5:20 mins)
- 25 Health Risks of Smoking (NL Smokers' Helpline)
- 101 Things To Do Instead of Smoking/Vaping (VeryWellMind)

WEEK 2: Nicotine Use (The Habit): Identifying Triggers

INTRODUCTION

Do you find yourself reaching for a cigarette or a vape when you feel a certain way, when you do a certain thing, or when you find yourself with certain people? For many, smoking or vaping becomes something they start to do in their lives without even thinking about it.

Recognizing situations, places, and people that may trigger your urge to smoke/vape is an important part of quitting. Learning how to avoid or control these situations will increase your chance of success!

Most triggers are associated with **emotions**, **activity patterns**, **social settings**, or **withdrawal symptoms**. Some common examples include:

Emotions: stress, anxiety, excitement, boredom, and loneliness.

Activity patterns: talking on the phone, drinking alcohol, driving, hanging out with friends, watching tv.

Social settings: situations where other people are smoking/vaping (e.g., mealtimes or breaks at school/work) or being with family and friends who use. Physical and social environments play a powerful role in shaping our behaviour. Some settings and situations may trigger your urge to smoke or vape more than others.

Withdrawal symptoms: cravings, needing something to do with your hands, feeling restless, or smelling cigarette smoke or vapour.



See Appendix A for this week's self reflection activity.



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- 1. When, where, and how often do you feel the urge to smoke/vape?
- 2. Are any of your triggers avoidable? If you cannot avoid these triggers, what can you do to manage your reaction to them?
- 3. After thinking about your own use and/or that of others, have you recognized any triggers that you had not previously considered? What are they?



- How to Combat Vaping Triggers | Quitters Episode 4 (TruthOrange, YouTube, 4:45 mins)
- Understanding Your Vaping Triggers (SmokeFree Teen)

WEEK 3: Nicotine Use (The Addiction)

INTRODUCTION

Nicotine is a highly addictive substance found in all tobacco and most vaping products.

When you smoke or vape, your brain becomes used to (or dependent on) receiving nicotine. Nicotine floods the brain with a chemical called dopamine that makes you feel good – relaxed, energized, and happy – for a short period of time. However, when the level of nicotine in your body starts to decline, your brain begins to crave it and your body starts to feel uncomfortable.

Anyone who vapes or uses tobacco is at risk of developing an addiction to nicotine; however, there are several factors that make some people more likely to get addicted:

- 1. Genetics
- 2. Family and friends (social environment)
- 3. Age
- 4. Co-occurring mental health problems
- 5. Other substance use

Once addicted, people who smoke or vape need more and more nicotine to feel the same relaxing effects that they used to feel when they first started. Stopping or lowering the amount of nicotine you use can lead to withdrawal symptoms. These symptoms can be very unpleasant which makes it difficult for people to quit.

YOUTH AND NICOTINE

Nicotine can have long term consequences for brain health in youth and young adults, as the brain is still developing up until the age of 25. As a result, developing brains can become addicted to nicotine at lower levels than adults, which may lead to cravings even if you only use it occasionally. The younger you start, the more likely you are to become addicted.

Common signs associated with nicotine addiction include:

- Having the urge to smoke or vape within 30 minutes of waking up
- Smoking or vaping at regular intervals throughout the day
- Developing "triggers" to use (e.g., between classes, after a meal, when feeling anxious, etc.)

Risk of Nicotine Addiction

Some people are more likely to develop an addition than others. A combination of factors is believed to increase your risk of developing an addiction. These factors include your physical and social environments; genetics; family history of substance use and mental illness; personality traits; and experiences of stress. As a result, it is important to consider what factors in your own life might put you at an increased risk for developing a nicotine addiction.



See Appendix A for this week's self reflection activity.



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- 1. Have you experienced any of the common signs of nicotine addiction? If so, which ones?
- Can you identify any factors in your own life that may put you at an increased risk for nicotine addiction (e.g., smoking in your home; friends that vape; school stress, etc.)?



- How Does Nicotine Work? (Quit Victoria, YouTube, 3:10 minutes)
- Addiction and the Brain (Addiction Policy Forum, YouTube, 4:01 minutes)



WEEK 4: Nicotine Withdrawal

INTRODUCTION

Nicotine withdrawal symptoms are common when trying to quit.

Many people experience a range of physical, mental and emotional withdrawal symptoms. The symptoms are unpleasant; however, they usually do not last longer than a few weeks and typically will become less frequent the longer you go without using nicotine. Youth can experience withdrawal symptoms after smoking less than five packs of cigarettes!



Physical Symptoms of Withdrawal	Mental / Emotional Symptoms of Withdrawal
Insomnia	Urges or cravings for nicotine
Hunger or increased appetite	Anxiety
Headaches	Depression
Nausea	Anger
Dizziness	Frustration and irritability
Constipation or diarrhea	Difficulty concentrating
Cough, dry mouth, sore throat	Tired, restless, bored
Chest tightness	

Once the physical and emotional withdrawal symptoms decrease, you should start to notice other positive changes in your health:

- Decreased anxiety, depression, stress
- Increased feelings of calmness and positivity
- Brighter, clearer skin
- · Improved quality of life

When you are less controlled by cravings, you will start to feel better. Quitting smoking or vaping will help your mood and will reduce anxiety in the long run; however, it doesn't always happen right away. Trust the process! Mood swings are common. You might feel angry, restless or down, as your brain, body and lifestyle go through a lot of changes.

Even when physical symptoms lessen, youth often continue dealing with a different kind of withdrawal – a social one. The potential loss of social connection, the risk of not 'fitting in' anymore, and a lack of peer support for quitting are some of the unique challenges faced by youth. This is why it is so important to identify your support system early on; think about who can be there to encourage you, keep you on track, and help you get through the difficult moments in your quit journey.



See Appendix A for this week's self reflection activity.



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- 1. What withdrawal symptom(s) are you most worried about? Why?
- 2. Do you know others who have been successful in quitting? Can you identify any coping strategies they used during their quit journey?
- 3. What coping mechanisms could you use to help with any withdrawal symptoms you experience?



- How Quitting Nicotine Can Improve Your Mental Health (Truth Initiative)
- Former Vapers Explain Why Quitting Improved Their Mental Health (NBC News, YouTube, 6: 57 mins)



WEEK 5: Creating an Action Plan

INTRODUCTION

Now that you have explored the reasons why you smoke or vape, your triggers for use, and the many benefits of quitting, it is time to make a commitment and a plan! These are some important steps that will help you be successful:



EXPLORE YOUR MOTIVATION

Think about why you want to quit. Knowing your reasons can help you stay motivated.



SET A QUIT DATE

Choose a time that's right for you! Give yourself time to think things out and prepare. Avoid stressful times, like during exams or before big sporting events.



MAKE A PLAN

Think about how you will fight cravings, avoid triggers, and deal with withdrawal.



IDENTIFY/AVOID YOUR TRIGGERS

If you know that certain people, feelings, or situations cause you to smoke, try to avoid them.



STAY POSITIVE

Try to keep a positive mindset and focus on the present. Reward yourself for 24 hours smoke/vape-free!



IDENTIFY YOUR SUPPORT SYSTEM

It is important to have support throughout your quit attempt to hold you accountable and be there for you when needed. You don't have to do it alone. Often youth will lean on friends or family for support when quitting; however, consider other trusted supports in your school and community as well – if you feel comfortable talking to a teacher, counsellor, healthcare provider, or coach, ask how they might be able to help you.

Remember, **change is a process**, not a single event! Lasting change (i.e., successfully quitting) is more likely when it is self-motivated, supported by others, and rooted in positive thinking.

Are you still unsure if you're ready to stop altogether? That's okay – quitting does not have to be an 'all-or-nothing' process! As a first step, consider making some smaller, more achievable goals for your action plan, such as reducing the number of times you smoke or vape per day.



See Appendix A for this week's self reflection activity.



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- 1. Of the steps outlined for an action plan, which step do you think will be the most difficult? Why?
- 2. Can you identify one or two trusted adults in your life that could support you in your quit attempt? Who are they and how can they help?



- Make Your Quit Plan (SmokeFree Teens)
- What is the Single Best Thing You Can Do to Quit Smoking? (Dr. Mike Evans, YouTube, 12:47 mins)



WEEK 6: Healthy Habits to Cope with Stress

INTRODUCTION

People of all ages deal with **stress** in both healthy and unhealthy ways.

Some healthy coping habits, such as exercise or mindfulness, can help reduce feelings of stress and anxiety. Other less healthy ways of coping, such as smoking or vaping nicotine, may temporarily relieve uncomfortable feelings but actually increase the effects of stress over the long-term.

A big problem with using smoking or vaping to cope is that it won't help with why you are feeling stressed in the first place - it will only mask the feeling. In fact, nicotine withdrawal might be the underlying cause of your feelings! This is because nicotine-induced relaxation fades quickly and leads to strong cravings and mood swings.

An important part of quitting is finding new **coping skills** to deal with uncomfortable feelings. In turn, managing your stress can help you to avoid a major trigger for smoking or vaping. **Mindfulness** is a great tool for developing healthier coping skills. It teaches you to be aware of your habits and cravings, while helping you to recognize and accept how you are feeling.

MANAGING UNCOMFORTABLE FEELINGS AND THE URGE TO USE NICOTINE

Different people manage their feelings in different ways. The important thing is that when you feel stressed or anxious, you're not reaching for a vape or cigarette. Here are some ideas to help you deal with your stress or anxiety in healthier ways:



- Lean on your support system. Talk to a friend, family member or other trusted adult in your life (e.g., counsellor, youth worker, teacher, etc.) about what is bothering you.
- Do things you enjoy like reading, texting, watching tv, or listening to music.
- Find ways to move your body that make you feel good. This could be going for a walk or bike ride, playing with your dog in the backyard, or even just taking a few minutes to stretch.

- Fuel your mind and body! Choose foods high in fiber (e.g., fruits, vegetables, and whole grains) and try to avoid skipping meals.
- Stop and breathe! Practice breathing in through your nose, expanding your stomach (rather than your chest) and exhaling through your mouth.
- Identify your stress triggers. Try to be more conscious of situations, people, or places that cause you stress and may give you the urge to smoke or vape.



See Appendix A for this week's self reflection activity.



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- 1. How have you used smoking or vaping to cope with stressful situations?
- 2. What are some healthier ways that you are trying to deal with your stress now?



- Anxiety, Stress, and Vaping (SmokeFree Teen)
- Managing Stress (Brainsmart: BBC, YouTube, 2:23 minutes)



WEEK 7: Overcoming Obstacles

INTRODUCTION

Lots of different situations and life challenges may come up as you are trying to quit. Some common causes of relapse, or going back to smoking/vaping, include social influences (i.e., having family or friends that smoke/vape); stress; other substance use; and cravings due to level of nicotine dependence /withdrawal symptoms.

Most relapses occur during the first week of quitting when withdrawal symptoms are the strongest. Later relapses often occur in times of stress or in social situations that are associated with substance use.

It's normal to experience setbacks when trying to quit! It is normal to feel frustrated, angry, or discouraged when this happens; most people make many attempts before they quit for good. Don't focus on what didn't go well. Focus on how and why you're still going to reach your goals!

Three things you can do to try to get back on track:

- 1. Remember your "Why!"
- 2. Remind yourself that your urge to smoke or vape will pass; a change in routine can help eliminate temptations and old habits
- 3. Renew your commitment to quitting by checking in with your support system.



See Appendix A for this week's self reflection activity.



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- 1. If you have had a slip up while making a quit attempt, how did you deal with it? What did you learn from this experience that you can use in the future?
- 2. How do you deal with temptations or triggers in certain 'unavoidable' situations, such as during recess/lunch breaks at school or when hanging out with friends?



- Help for Cravings and Tough Situations While You're Quitting Tobacco (American Cancer Society)
- Vaping: Responding to Peer Influences (OPHEA, YouTube, 4:53 mins)

WEEK 8: A Smoke and Vape-Free Future

INTRODUCTION

You are now equipped with many of the skills and resources needed to quit for life! It is time to shift your focus to staying quit or continuing on the path to get there.



It's important to be positive, but realistic, about the road ahead. Withdrawal symptoms and cravings may still pop up from time to time. New life stresses may challenge you, even with your best coping strategies in place. It is totally normal to find yourself struggling, even if you quit a long time ago.

CELEBRATE!

Be proud of yourself - each day, week and month without smoking or vaping is worth celebrating. Think positively about the change you have made in your life and consider rewarding yourself. Make a list of reasons why quitting is important to you and read it whenever you're having a tough time.

Whether you have quit entirely, reduced your smoking/vaping, or are preparing yourself to begin another quit attempt – remember that beginning your journey to living a tobacco and nicotine-free life is one of the absolute best things that you can do to improve your health!



See Appendix A for this week's self-reflection activity.



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- 1. What was the most difficult part of this journey and why?
- 2. What are you most proud of and why?
- 3. What advice would you offer someone who is just starting their quit attempt?



- <u>Staying Tobacco-Free After You Quit</u> (American Cancer Society)
- <u>Live Fresh: Smoke-Free Living</u> (SDHU, YouTube, 4:34 minutes)

Appendix A: Weekly Self-Reflection Activities

WEEK 1: Finding Your "Why"



THE 'WHY' TEST

Next to the following statements, mark the number that best describes your own experience.

(5 = Always, 4 = Most of the time, 3 = Once in a while, 2 = Rarely, 1 = Never)

A I smoke/vape to keep myself from slowing down.
B Smoking/vaping is pleasant and relaxing.
C I smoke/vape when I'm angry about something.
D When I run out of cigarettes or pods, I find it almost unbearable.
E I smoke/vape automatically, without even being aware of it.
F I smoke/vape when people around me are doing so.
G I smoke to perk myself up.
H I feel pleasure when smoking/vaping.
I When I feel uncomfortable about something, I smoke/vape.
J I am very much aware of the fact when I am not smoking/vaping.
K I smoke/vape with friends when I'm having a good time.
L I light up a cigarette/grab a vape without realizing I still have one on the go.
M I smoke to give myself a "lift".
N I want to smoke/vape most when I am comfortable and relaxed.
O When I feel "blue" or want to take my mind off things, I smoke/vape.
P I always smoke/vape when I'm with friends at a party, after school,

at work, etc.

Q	I get a real craving for a cigarette/vape when I haven't had one in a while.
R	I've found a cigarette/vape in my mouth and didn't remember putting it there.
THE 'WH	HY' TEST SCORECARD
	tlates me." that smoking gives you energy and keeps you going.
A	+G +M ="Stimulation"Total
"It feels You get a	good." I lot of pleasure from smoking.
B	+N ="Pleasure/Relaxation"Total
	e a crutch." tough to stop smoking if you find cigarettes comforting in times
C	+I +O ="Crutch/Tension"Total
	ked." on to having a psychological addiction, you may also be physically to nicotine. Scoring high in this category is quite common!
D	+ J + Q ="Craving/Addiction"Total
Smoking	of my routine." /vaping has become a habit for you – something you do ically and may not even take much pleasure in.
E	+ L + R ="Habit"Total
	cial smoker/vaper." ke/vape when people around you are doing so and when you are one.
F	+ K + P ="Social User"Total
your scor surprise y	of 11 or more indicates an important reason you smoke. The higher re, the more important the reason. Do some of your answers you? When you know the reasons why you smoke/vape, you can more satisfying substitutes to curb your behaviour.

WEEK 2: Nicotine Use (The Habit): Identifying Triggers



Your results from the "Why Test" (Week 1) should give you some idea of your possible triggers.

For the next week, track your cigarette or vape use in the table below. This will help you to get a better picture of your triggers and identify actions you could take to control them.

When I smoked or vaped			
Day and Time	My Location	My Mood	My Activity
E.g., Friday – 9:00pm	Friend's House	Нарру	Hanging out with friends

My Triggers (I smoke/vape when)	Actions I Can Take (Here's what I can do instead)

WEEK 3: Nicotine Use (The Addiction)



Think about any signs of nicotine addiction you might be experiencing. Write them below

The them below.
1
2
3
List any factors in your own life that may put you at an increased risk for nicotine addiction. Think about your family, your environment, and your own substance use behaviours.
1
2
۷
3

WEEK 4: Withdrawal and the Health Benefits of Quitting



Self-Reflection

Identify three coping mechanisms you will try for dealing with v	withdrawa
symptoms:	

1	
2	
3	

WEEK 5: Creating an Action Plan



YOUR PERSONALIZED ACTION PLAN

MY QUIT DATE:

My top reasons for quitting:	
1	
2	
3	
My top triggers (e.g., emotion	al, social, habit-related):
1	
2	
3	
Strategies I will use to deal wi	th cravings:
1	
2	
3	
My support system:	
1	
Signature:	Date:

WEEK 6: Healthy Habits to Cope with Stress



What are healthier ways to deal with stress? Think about what you are already doing, or could do, that would help in each of these 'healthy coping' areas:

Kinds of Coping	How I Cope:
Environmental (Living in a clean and safe environment)	
Emotional (Positive feelings, optimistic view on life, ability to express and process emotions)	
Intellectual (Growing knowledge and abilities, learning new skills and activities)	
Physical (Physical health and activities)	
Social (Positive relationships with family, friends, community; asking for help when needed)	
Spiritual (Connection to your meaning and purpose)	

MINDFULNESS 101

If you're looking for a way to ease the stress that may be contributing to your cigarette or vape cravings, consider giving meditation a try!

1. Find a quiet place

Whether it's your bed, a couch, or on a yoga mat, just make sure you feel comfortable and relaxed!

2. Focus your attention

Use your breathing, a word, or an image to help focus and clear your thoughts. Don't worry if your thoughts wander — like any new skill, meditation takes practice. Try to bring your thoughts back whenever you notice them getting away from you. Over time, this should happen less often.

3. Be open

No matter what happens during your meditation practice, do what you can to stay open and non-judgmental of how "good" you are at it. Meditation is meant to ease stress, not cause more of it!



WEEK 7: Overcoming Obstacles



Think about your routine, your environment, and the things currently happening in your life. Write down 3 situations that might tempt you to smoke, and how you would deal with them.

1	
2	
3	

If you have had a slip since starting your quit journey, here are some questions you can ask yourself to get back on track.

What triggered you to have a cigarette or vape?

Where were you?

Who were you with?

What can you do to avoid a slip the next time you are in this situation?

WEEK 8: A Smoke and Vape-Free Future



- 1. Think about any changes you have noticed in your physical and/or mental health since quitting smoking/vaping. How do you feel now as compared to when you started?
- 2. Have you been rewarding yourself throughout your quit attempt? Identify any major milestones (e.g., one-month smoke-free, six weeks smoke-free, etc.) when you may have rewarded yourself. Write down some reward ideas below that will continue to motivate you through your quit attempt.

1		
2.		

Appendix B: Additional Quit Smoking Resources

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND SMOKING CESSATION PROGRAM

The PEI Smoking Cessation Program supports PEI residents who wish to stop smoking or using other tobacco products by covering 100% of the cost of Nicotine Replacement Therapy products or specific smoking cessation prescription medications.

To find out more information and how to enroll, visit: princeedwardisland.ca/quitsmoking or call your nearest Primary Care Network office to make an appointment.

SMOKERS' HELPLINE

Smokers' Helpline is a free, confidential service operated by the Canadian Cancer Society offering support and information about quitting smoking, vaping and tobacco use.

Online Quit Program: www.smokershelpline.ca

Support by Phone: 1-877-513-5333

Text Message Support: text iQuit to 123456 to register

Facebook.com/SmokersHelpline

APPS (for Android or iOS devices)

QUASH

The Quash app helps you progress through each stage of the quit process. Download the Quash app today and create a custom quit plan for yourself.

www.quashapp.com

STOP VAPING CHALLENGE

The Stop Vaping Challenge app provides a space for youth to reflect on their vaping behaviours and patterns in a fun, social way that encourages quitting with friends.

Download directly from your phone's app store.

CRUSH THE CRAVE - VAPE EDITION

Crush the Crave is a comprehensive app, which tracks your number of days vape-free, amount of money saved since quitting vaping, as well as triggers and cravings. This app also provides supportive messages and inspirational photos, a personalized quit plan, virtual awards for achieving milestones, and more. *Download it directly from your phone's app store*.

Appendix C: Additional Resources for Program Facilitators

#DEAREDUCATORS SUBSTANCE USE VIDEO SERIES (OPHEA CANADA)

Youth share their advice for educators as it relates to vaping and cannabis substance use education.

- Harm Reduction and Substance Use https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GxpcX7lhUAo (YouTube, 2:31 mins)
- Substance Use and Allyship https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f2yqqP3CmOI (YouTube 2:29 mins)
- Substance Use and Mental Health https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WwbruN6wlT0 (YouTube 2:25 mins)

OUASH ADULT FACILITATOR TRAINING

- https://www.quashapp.com/adult-allies
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xk9f29eWleY (YouTube 55:55 mins)

NOT AN EXPERIMENT

A game, educator resources and other materials to help spread the word about youth vaping.

https://www.notanexperiment.ca/

Resources

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PRINCEEDWARDISLAND.CA/QUITSMOKING



Smoking Cessation Program

