

Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe

Youth Tobacco Coalition



**Keep
Sema
Sacred**



Special points of interest:

- New Tribal Ordinance Makes it Illegal for Youth to Smoke on the Rez.
- Origin and Healing Power of Sema
- Former Smoker Speaks Out About Sema and Tobacco.
- Tips for Keeping Youth Smoke Free

It is never too early or too late to talk to your child about the dangers of misusing semaa.

Secondhand Smoke: The Smoking Non-Smoker

What is secondhand smoke?

Secondhand smoke is the mixture of the smoke exhaled by a smoker and the smoke from the lit end of the cigarette. This smoke is inhaled by others around the smoker.

What's the big deal about secondhand smoke?

Adults

We all know that cigarette smoking is dangerous to our health but even if you choose not to smoke, being around secondhand smoke can cause you to develop lung cancer, sinus cancer, and heart disease.

Kids

Children exposed to secondhand smoke by their adult family mem-

bers in the home or car are more likely to develop asthma, ear infections, bronchitis, and babies born to mothers who smoke are more likely to be low birth weight or die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

What can you do to limit exposure to secondhand smoke?

Home

Declare your home to be smoke free. Don't allow anyone to smoke in your home. Put a "No Smoking" sign on your entry door.

By age 5 a child who lives with a smoker, will inhale over 100 packs of cigarettes.

Public

Ask for non smoking sections of restaurants. Don't agree to sit close to the smoking section even if you are in the non smoking section. Smoke doesn't know that it isn't supposed to leave the smoking section.

Car

Don't allow smoking in your car. Even if the kids get in hours after the last cigarette was smoked, the dangerous chemicals are still in the air and will remain in the fabric. Throw out the cigarette lighter in your car.

How to Stop Smoking: The Easy Way

You may be looking for an easy way to stop smoking so here goes... The only sure fire way to quit smoking is to die. Quitting the habit of smoking and overcoming nicotine addiction may very well be the hardest thing you have ever done. It will take will power, support, and possibly nicotine replacement therapy and counseling. You will be ornery. Your body will go

through withdrawal. You will have to learn new ways to relieve stress and relax. You will want to give in and smoke "just one", but since there are only two choices in this battle, quit or die, you must make a commitment to yourself and your family to fight the addiction. You may fail the first few times and have to start over but **never quit quitting.**



Talk to your doctor about the best options for you to take back control of your life .



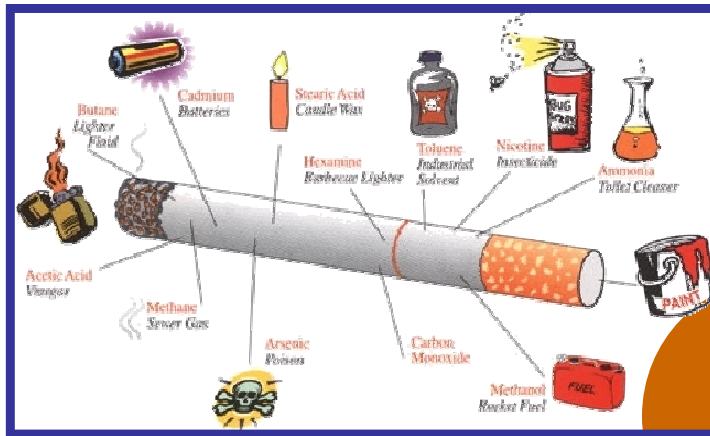
THE STORY of SEMAA (Tobacco)

There are many stories about how semaa came to the Anishnaabek. No story is more right than the other. All the stories agree that Semaa is a healing medicine provided especially for the wellness of the Anishnaabek. If you have your own story share it with the youth in your family to help them understand why semaa is so sacred, or tell them this story...

Long ago young men who approached puberty used to fast for a vision to guide their lives. Some would fast alone and some would go together. On one such occasion, a group of young men went out on their vision quest. Every one received a vision, except for one fellow. So the young man went out again the next year and fasted again. And again no vision. NO vision to guide his life! He went out every year until he was an old man with long white hair. Mystery of Mysteries came and Great One said, "I've been watching you, given up the ways that I have people. For that I am going to take you will leave a gift for the Indian back and tell the spiritual leaders after I have taken you, you are to shallow grave and just the warriors will watch you. No woman on her moon time will come around". And so it was; everything happened just the way the old man described it, and he was soon put into a shallow grave. The young warriors watched the grave and kept it clean. Soon a little plant started to grow on the old man's grave, and it grew and grew until it was as tall as a man with yellow flowers. The Indian people called the plant Nin-sama. The plant is the old man's vision and is very sacred. It is said that the old man gave up his life for the good of all Indian people.



What's In a Cigarette?



Your Child: A New Consumer of Cigarettes

If you think that you have done enough to teach your kids about the dangers of smoking, think again. Every year the Big Tobacco Companies spend billions of dollars to get and keep kids hooked. Why? Because older smokers die and they have to be replaced by young smokers to keep them in business. Remember Joe Camel and all his

rebellious charm? Do you think that he was created for advertising to adults? No way! Some studies show that he was more recognizable to little kids than Mickey Mouse. The Tobacco Companies are constantly coming up with new flavors, packaging, and ads that glamorize smoking. Your kids are

so surrounded by the advertising they don't even notice that they are being influenced every time they watch a movie or read a magazine. The Tobacco Companies are banking on you to not talk to your kids about smoking and its dangers...stop them in their tracks. Use their ads to turn the message around and tell your kids the truth about why the tobacco companies lie to them.

The Big Tobacco Companies Do Not Want You to Tell Your Kids the Truth About Smoking.

The Big Tobacco Companies Spend Billions of Dollars to Find New Ways to Get and Keep Kids Hooked on Cigarettes.

Try These Tips to Keep Your Kids From Smoking
Start early. Most Kids Who Smoke Have Their First Puff Between 7 and 9 years old.

- Don't think that one talk with your teen is going to work. This is a topic that needs to come up in conversations between you and your teen often to reinforce the *don't smoke* message. Have mini-talks about the different reasons for not smoking.
- Start early – even before middle school. Tailor the conversation to your child's age and maturity level. Keep talking until you have grandchildren to talk to.
- Use the media, newspapers or television, to help you bring up the subject. When you see a smoking advertisement, show your teen how it targets him/her. Ask your teen how he/she would fight against this kind of advertising.
- Talk about smoking addiction. Ask your teen how he/she likes making his/her own choices. Tell him/her that while the first cigarette is their choice, smoking becomes addictive very quickly. Therefore, it will soon be the cigarettes making the choice for them.
- Talk to your teen about the financial cost of smoking. Smoking is an expensive habit and it will only get more expensive as time goes on. Does your teen really want to spend all of their money on cigarettes? Smoking



Joe Camel Then



Joe Chemo Now

Continued Next Page

Because we care and owe our youth the opportunity for a long, health, and fulfilling future.

- Bring up when someone you know is suffering from them. This sounds harsh, but it is life. Don't shield your teen from it. When Aunt Millie calls and her voice is raspy due to cigarette smoking, you should make it clear to your teen that smoking is the reason her voice sounds like that.
- Make the consequences of smoking personal for your teen. Bring

up what smoking can do to your teen's ability to play sports, be in band or *insert your teen's activity here*.

- Discuss the fact that the majority of teens, and adults, do not smoke. It may seem to your teen that smoking is common if their friends smoke, but it isn't.
- Talk about the im-

mediate side effects of smoking with your teen. Bad breath, yellow teeth and the stink on a smoker's clothes are side effects that teens can relate to. These things are 'gross' and do not make them 'look cool'.

- Tell your teen that it is okay to say no to a friend who is offering him/her a cigarette. Role-play how this is done and go through a few scenarios.

New Tribal Ordinance Makes Smoking By Youth Illegal

With the passing of the Saginaw Chippewa Juvenile Code by Tribal Council on December 13, 2006, it has now become illegal for youth on reservation to both purchase and possess tobacco for smoking or chewing.

In direct response to the passing of the Code and concern for the health of our youth, a group comprised of representatives from K-12 Education Services, Parks and Rec., Behavioral Health, Tribal Police, Nimkee Public Health, Tribal Court, and Seventh Generation has been meeting to discuss the best way to implement the new ordinance and create an environment where misuse of semmaa is not acceptable and that

semmaa is respected for its healing qualities.

So many adults today are struggling with their own personal addiction to nicotine or have watched as the devastating effects of nicotine addiction and tobacco smoke have taken their toll on someone close to them. And this struggle has continued as we have watched our youth begin to misuse tobacco and become addicted to something that is designed to kill them slowly. The message from the community is clear: we no longer will be part of this slow death.

Issued by concerned community members,

family members, and employees these citations will not have legal consequences, such as probation, at this time. The intent is to encourage the youth to seek assistance in dealing with their addiction and to send a message that youth smoking on the reservation is not acceptable.

Please take these warning tickets seriously as they are not meant to punish but rather to help guide youth in making better choices.

Feel free to cut out the ticket shown and issue it to a youth who you care about and make

sure that they follow through with the requirements.

You may also send a copy to the court to help with supporting the child and making sure that parents are provided with more information. We do ask, however, that all tickets given to a child be handed to them followed by the words "Because we as a community care about you, I owe you the opportunity to have a long, healthy and fulfilling life. I no longer choose to watch as you use misuse semmaa and destroy your health."

Juvenile Warning Citation
Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan

Improper Use of Semaa

Violation of section 12.216 under the
Saginaw Chippewa Juvenile Code
This citation is provided to you because we care about your health
and well-being and owe you the chance to make better choices
regarding your health and semaa.

Name of Juvenile: _____
Date of Birth of Juvenile: _____
Parent or Legal Guardian Name: _____
Juvenile's Address: _____
Date of Incident: _____ Time of Incident: _____
Location of Incident: _____
Issuing Party Name: _____ Signature

Because we as a community care and owe you the opportunity to have a long, healthy and fulfilling life you are hereby required to do the following:

First Warning:

Educational Opportunity

Signature of Provider

Contact Kent Jackson or Wilma Henry at Seventh Generation to receive a teaching on semaa and the beauty of this healing medicine. You can reach them by calling 775-4780 or stopping by at 7th Gen.

Volunteer Opportunity

Signature of Provider

Contact 7th Generation to arrange to complete 2 hours of service.

Second Warning:

Educational Opportunity

Signature of Provider

Contact Gwen Alwood in the Behavioral Health Prevention Department to receive 3 hours of classes regarding the effects of tobacco and other drugs on your health and well being. She can be reached by calling 775-4894.

Volunteer Opportunity

Signature of Provider

Contact Eliza Owl at Behavioral Health to arrange to complete 4 hours of service and receive additional information about having a healthy respect for semaa. She can be reached at 775-4879.

Third Warning:

Educational Opportunity

Signature of Provider

Contact Leah Markel at Nimkee Public Health to arrange for Tobacco Cessation Classes. She can be reached at 775-4639.

Volunteer Opportunity

Signature of Provider

Contact Stephanie Peters at the Tribal Court by calling 775-4804 to arrange to complete 8 hours of service to the Tribal Community.

- You may also choose to attend Tobacco Cessation Classes on your 1st or 2nd warning instead of completing the other requirements. Contact Leah at 775-4639 for more information.
- Contact the appropriate person to receive education and complete service hours within 5-7 days and return this entire form with signatures to the court within 14 days. Failure to do so may result in the Judge or Magistrate requesting you to appear in Court and explain why you have not completed the requirements.

New warning citation with information and requirements. Feel free to issue a ticket to a youth you care about. Make sure that they know you will no longer stand by and watch as they smoke ciga-

One Anishinaabe Kwe's Relationship with Sema

I was brought up knowing that Sema (tobacco) was a very powerful medicine for the people. But when you're a child those things really don't mean much when all the rest of your friends are smoking too. If you think about tobacco it is so powerful that it can cure you or kill you (Tobacco can kill you and Sema can cure you). But still as a young person I abused it; I didn't view it as Sema that sacred medicine, a gift from the creator. I looked at it as tobacco and didn't give it the respect it deserved. I became addicted to smoking cigarettes and had smoked cigarettes for approximately 40 years. I don't even want to think about how much money I wasted or how much my life revolved around smoking cigarettes.

I always thought that I had a very good relationship with my Sema and carried it and used it in a traditional way. I had tried a couple of times though the years to quit abusing tobacco only to start back smoking within days or weeks. May 6th 2006 I stopped smoking with the help of many people.

One day a few years ago I was at Sagamok buying cigarettes and two young ladies who attended West Intermediate Middle School ran up just as the clerk was pushing the cigarettes towards me across the counter. They yelled at the clerk "Don't sell her those! She's killing herself!" and pushed them back at the clerk. That moment will always be with me because those young ladies cared enough to stand up and speak out. They are the true leaders of our community; the way it use to be back in the day when every one cared about each others well being.

Once I decided that I had to quit smoking, I would lay my Sema at dawn to give thanks to the creator for giving me the strength to overcome my addiction, and when I felt weakness and the urge to smoke I would lay my Sema and thank the creator for giving me strength to use Sema in the traditional way. During this time I had noticed that my relationship with Sema had changed. It became stronger and I could feel the difference in myself and in my prayers.

I even had a hard time with the wording that the Tobacco Coalition is trying to encourage the community to use; "tobacco for things like cigarettes and Sema for traditional use". To me Sema was the Indian word for tobacco which I now realize while writing this article that there is a big difference, and Sema can never be mistaken for tobacco. This isn't to say that there aren't different ways to respect and use Sema but I believe that using the Ojibwe language gives Sema even more power and I choose to not give power to my addiction to tobacco and nicotine. Sema talks to the spirit of the medicine, one of the greatest gifts given to us by the Creator. The word tobacco doesn't have that same positive power.

MiiGwetch for your gift of time, and I hope that you choose to respect Sema in a way that will bring you as many gifts as it has me. Eliza Neyome Owl