



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

501 — 100 Park Royal South
Coast Salish Territory
West Vancouver, BC
Canada V7T 1A2
T 604.693.6500
F 604.913.2081
www.fnha.ca

For Immediate Release

March 20, 2017

First Nations Teens Create Innovative Smoking Prevention Campaign for Youth in BC *Campaign marked by new video contest for youth*

First Nations teens and the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) have announced a new smoking prevention campaign aimed at preventing the use of commercial tobacco among First Nations youth aged 13-16. The campaign was officially launched yesterday at the opening ceremony of the province's Junior All Native Basketball Tournament in Kelowna. The Youth Respecting Tobacco campaign features two 30-second video PSAs created by First Nations teens for their peers, highlighting life with and without commercial tobacco.

"Up to 54 percent of Aboriginal teens use commercial tobacco and many start smoking cigarettes before they start high school," says Dr. Evan Adams, FNHA Chief Medical Officer. "Aboriginal teens smoke at a rate 2-3 times higher than other teens in BC, making this a critical issue for the health and wellness of First Nations youth."

FNHA will use "Respecting Tobacco" as an overall theme for this campaign and for its future commercial tobacco cessation initiatives. The current campaign will integrate the theme on Instagram, using #respectingtobacco, in a three-month youth video contest running March 19 – June 19, 2017. This contest will allow First Nations teens to share what they are doing or plan to do to change the impact of commercial tobacco on their lives. The campaign encourages First Nations teens to become involved in smoking prevention.

The campaign webpage www.fnha.ca/youth features resources for smoking cessation from FNHA and its partners as well as information on the Youth Respecting Tobacco campaign like FAQs and instructions on how to enter the contest.

"I think it's important to share the message of not smoking and build awareness of peer pressure because it happens daily with many youth," says Tyneshia Commodore, a youth from Soowahlie who worked on the videos. "I just want to show everybody that smoking, and the use of other drugs, isn't always the answer. Being in the commercial felt really good and I felt amazing because I got to be a part of that message and maybe be the change for some other youth—maybe one day help them."

Youth Respecting Tobacco is part of the First Nations Health Authority's mission to support the transformation of the health and wellness of First Nations in BC. The FNHA believes every individual is a Champion of Wellness and a role model, through their circles of influence to their family, friends and community.

Media Contact:

Email: media@fnha.ca

Media Phone: 604-831-4898