

Teens Against Tobacco Use (TATU)

E-Newsletter

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Tobacco Prevention & Control Program

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Top Stories

Teens Make a Difference

Last school year, Adna High School (AHS) freshman DJ Hammer was discouraged by the drinking, smoking and drug use he saw his classmates and peers doing. Armed with an equal mix of courage and determination, DJ took a stand against the destructive behavior within his school by organizing the first-ever AHS Prevention Club. DJ, along with several other students who wanted to make a difference, set out to educate AHS students and younger kids about the consequences of tobacco, drug and alcohol use. The club organized lunchroom information activities, gave tobacco education presentations to local elementary school students, designed an educational prevention website, and recruited other students to join their efforts.

Last spring DJ attended the Washington State Youth Prevention Forum with a prevention club from his Chehalis Tribe, where he gained new information and prevention activity ideas that he shared with his Adna team. Shortly following the Youth Forum, the Adna club took part in its first formal TATU training. The training empowered the Adna team to focus solely on tobacco prevention and resulted in a club name change to Adna TATU. The team worked diligently throughout the remainder of the school year and into the summer months providing TATU presentations to their local elementary schools and organizing park clean-up events throughout Lewis County. DJ became a member of his tribe's prevention team, Soaring Eagles: Above the Influence, where he hopes to coordinate a TATU training utilizing the Native American curriculum.

Because of his exemplary work and efforts in tobacco prevention, DJ was recognized as a nominee for the Youth Leadership Prevention Award given each year at the Washington State Prevention Summit. The Chehalis Tribe also honored him with a Pendleton blanket in recognition of his volunteer time and prevention efforts.

One teen really can make a difference.

Gear Up for TATU

Its late fall and students have settled back into their school year routines. Now is the ideal time to get the word out about TATU in your school. Here are some ideas to help you recruit new team members and get your experienced TATU team back into the tobacco education game.

Teen Recruitment

- Host a TATU information booth during lunchtime
- Post recruitment flyers (available from your TATU coordinator) in counseling offices and other areas in the school
- Post daily announcements on the in-school media system, school newspaper and in sports programs
- Present TATU program information to health & fitness classes
- Ask your local ALA in WA TATU Coordinator to help you host a before or after school TATU information meeting

Once you have your group put together, it's time to start planning your activities. Here are some ideas to help get you started:

TATU Group Activities

- Submit an original anti-tobacco slogan for the 2010 Prevention Summit slogan/t-shirt contest
- Host "1,200 People Die Every Day" activities illustrating the deadly consequences of tobacco use
- Apply for a TATU Project Award to fund new presentation supplies or a tobacco-free school or community event
- Share tobacco prevention facts during half-time of school sporting events
- Host a TATU booth during Parent Conference Week to educate parents and community members about the program
- Write letters to state legislators to educate them about the great work being done in tobacco prevention through the TATU program

Your local TATU coordinator has many other ideas for mobilizing your troops and helping your TATU group achieve success. Give [your coordinator](#) a call today!

TATU Welcomes New Western Washington Coordinator

Monica Nelson has joined the American Lung Association in Washington as the new TATU coordinator for Western Washington. Monica comes to the organization with several years experience working directly with youth and adults in tobacco prevention and cessation.

In addition to being a former high school TATU member, Monica worked as a tobacco quit coach for Free & Clear prior to assuming her new role with ALA in Washington. Working with kids of all ages is a passion of Monica's. She has engaged her talents and enthusiasm for working with kids in many capacities including serving as a YMCA summer camp counselor, working at a teen homeless shelter and volunteering time with neglected elementary-age kids.

"Youth smoking prevention is important because tobacco companies continue to hook kids daily," says Monica. "TATU breaks down every aspect of tobacco use and really helps put things into perspective for kids."

Monica already has begun putting her past experience to work. During her first TATU training at Arlington High School, kids were very responsive to the stories she shared from her experience working with adults as a quit coach.

"The Quitline was a great way for me to gain more knowledge about tobacco use. TATU is the next step to really digging at the root of the issue: teaching kids that never starting to smoke is the best way to go."

To schedule a TATU training in Western Washington, call Monica at (206) 441-5100 or email monelson@alaw.org.

TATU Project Awards

TATU Project Award Applications for 2009-2010 are now available. TATU groups throughout Washington may apply for an award up to \$350.00 to fund:

- Training needs (transportation or food)
- Presentation needs (display items or transportation to/from the presentation site)
- Large scale events (local prevention summit or tobacco-free activity)

Project Award applications are reviewed monthly and will be accepted until April 30, 2010. All TATU groups receiving funding are required to complete a minimum of one TATU presentation during this school year. TATU facilitators must sign the Certification of Presentation Form when submitting any approved receipts for payment.

For a Project Award Application packet, please contact your local ALA in Washington TATU Coordinator, or [download](#) an application from our website at www.alaw.org

Eastern Region TATU: Full steam ahead

The new school year is just underway and TATU teens in the Eastern Region are already “fall”-ing back into the TATU program. The TATU group at Garry Middle School in Spokane completed its first presentation of the year on September 9, reaching 125 youth. In addition to recruiting new teens to TATU, the group already [has](#) scheduled presentations for next spring.

Fifty-five new eighth grade teens from Dayton School District (Columbia Co.) and Waitsburg School District (Walla Walla Co.) were trained as teen teachers on October 2. This is the first-ever TATU group from Waitsburg. Medical Lake High School also is forming its first TATU group this school year with 22 teens trained earlier this month. Welcome Waitsburg and Medical Lake to the TATU team.

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