

KEY TOBACCO CONTROL STRATEGIES IMPLEMENTED BY HEALTH PROMOTION BOARD FOR YOUTHS and YOUNG ADULTS

The National Smoking Control Programme (NSCP), started in 1986, utilises a multi-pronged strategy including taxation, legislation, public education, collaborative partnerships and provision of smoking cessation services to combat smoking. These strategies aim to reduce the supply of and demand for tobacco.

Initiatives targeted at youth and young adults have been part of the NSCP and these will be stepped up and/or enhanced. They seek to:

- Prevent the experimentation and initiation of smoking
- Promote a smoke-free lifestyle as the preferred norm
- Encourage smokers to quit
- Equip non-smokers with skills and strategies to help friends/loved ones kick the habit.

In line with new frontiers in Singapore's tobacco control efforts, the programme will be renamed 'National Tobacco Control Programme' (NTCP). Similarly, all [HPB](#) programmes will include information on other types of tobacco products, not just cigarettes.

1. Educational programmes in schools and workplaces

Information on smoking is included in the school curriculum, in topics such as Health Education, Science, Civics and Moral Education. [HPB](#) complements the school curricula with a variety of other programmes such as the 'Too Tuff To Puff' Sports Programme, interactive mass session programmes, and the 'Hey Butts off' Peer Assisted Tobacco Control Programme that focuses on equipping young people with knowledge, skills and strategies to discourage tobacco use, while promoting a smoke-free lifestyle as the preferred norm.

At the workplace, health talks and exhibitions are conducted to create awareness of the dangers of smoking and environmental tobacco smoke.

2. Peer-led education

An evidence-based strategic thrust for health promotion among youth is peer-led education where youths are engaged to design, organise and implement health promotion initiatives. Through [HPB's Youth Advolution for Health \(YAH\)](#) Programme, youths and youth groups keen to organise smoking control education initiatives that reach out to their peers are supported through funding, consultancy and other resources.

3. Using youth-centric media

Communicating with youths requires the use of innovative channels that appeal to them, and/or through which they can communicate among themselves. Annually, [HPB](#) organises various types of community programmes, ranging from street marches and carnivals to dance competitions and concerts, at venues popular with youth, to promote a smoke-free lifestyle.

Traditional, non-traditional and youth-centric media are used to disseminate smoking control messages and promote a smoke-free lifestyle. These include radio programmes on night-time belts popular with youth, television segments such as on Anugerah Skrin currently and Tab TV in the past, youth magazines, youth websites, internet blogs and social networking sites such as Facebook. Information has been creatively woven into articles on personal grooming, fitness and financial matters to provide different perspectives on the benefits of being smoke-free.

Innovative marketing initiatives have and will continue to be engaged.

4. Targeted programmes

[HPB](#) adopts a targeted approach by collaborating with schools, Family Service Centres (FSCs) and various youth and public organisations to plan and organise activities to help at-risk youth embrace a smoke-free lifestyle. Activities such as social etiquette cum grooming courses and soccer clinics are organised, with smoking control education woven in to present the messages in refreshing ways which appeal to these youth.

[HPB](#) has developed smoking cessation packages and trains youth workers to coordinate these sessions for at-risk youths. [HPB](#) complements smoking cessation efforts with a web-based smoking cessation programme, www.breakfree.sg and QuitLine services.

In keeping up with the trends, [HPB](#) also tailors its programmes, taking into consideration institutional, religious and cultural sensitivities. Efforts are being channelled into developing holistic packages for institutions such as rehabilitative homes and self-help groups.

Youths and young adult smokers can also take advantage of smoking cessation programmes such as those offered at the Polyclinics and at community-based pharmacies. In addition, [HPB](#) will continue to assist workplaces to conduct smoking cessation programmes as well as encourage their employees, including young adults, to attend workplace health promotion programmes.

5. Engaging partners and building capacity

[HPB](#) partners teachers, youth workers, counsellors, parents, workplace health facilitators and in-house counsellors in promoting a smoke-free lifestyle among youths and young adults. Regular workshops are conducted to keep them updated on smoking issues and equip them with skills to discuss such issues, as well as conduct programmes for their target groups to help them lead a smoke-free lifestyle.

Partnership is also in the form of consultative services to provide knowledge and skills pertaining to tobacco control issues and assistance in the organisation of appropriate programmes for various target audiences.

[HPB](#) works with the uniformed groups such as Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) and Singapore Police Force (SPF) to implement smoking control programmes. These include annual health awareness talks, and smoking cessation exhibitions and services. In addition, training sessions are held for cessation programme facilitators and in-house counsellors. For example, [HPB](#) will be working with SPF to develop a customised tobacco awareness programme for their new recruits. Via these programmes, we seek to groom a new generation of tobacco-free officers to serve the nation.

For more information, please visit www.breathe.sg and www.hpb.gov.sg/smokefree.