



School Boards and Lambton Public Health Launch Partnership to Help Reduce Tobacco Use Among Students

Lambton Public Health, in collaboration with the St. Clair Catholic District School Board and the Lambton Kent District School Board, has launched the Alternate Choices Program, an education initiative designed to reduce tobacco consumption among secondary school students within all high schools in Lambton County.

Alternate Choices addresses a variety of tobacco-use issues, such as financial and social consequences, role modelling and the social supply of tobacco. The program will also provide increased support to help students quit smoking, while working to decrease early initiation and smoking on school property.

"Tobacco use is the single, greatest preventable cause of death in Ontario," said Dr. Sudit Ranade, Lambton Medical Officer of Health. "This program gives youth the tools and the help they need to prevent tobacco addiction and lead longer, healthier lives."

According to Statistics Canada (2011-2012), Lambton County had a noticeably higher rate of young adult smokers (20-34 years old) compared to the provincial average (40% vs. 26%). Research also indicates that the uptake of smoking is more than two times higher during transition years.

"Smoking rates remain alarmingly high in Lambton County," says Dan Parr, Director of Education for St. Clair Catholic. "We are pleased to partner with Lambton Public Health on this important initiative to help reduce smoking rates in our community."

Jim Costello, Director of Education for the Lambton Kent District School Board, is excited about this new approach to an old problem. "Teen smoking is a problem in every community and the Lambton Kent District School Board is ready to work together to tackle this problem in a progressive manner."

In the photo above are (L-R) Dan Parr, Director of Education, St. Clair Catholic District School Board; Dr. Sudit Ranade, Medical Officer of Health, Lambton Public Health; and Jim Costello, Director of Education, Lambton Kent District School Board, following the signing of the Alternate Choices Partnership.