San Benito County Tobacco Education Program

The San Benito County Tobacco Education Program is a part of the Public Health Branch's prevention team. The program is funded by the California Tobacco Tax Initiative, Prop 99, with program oversight provided by the California Tobacco Control Program. The overall goal of the program is to reduce involuntary exposure to second hand smoke and to educate the public on the dangers of tobacco use.

The program obtains its local objectives from the Tobacco Education Coalition members and then studies and surveys local tobacco trends to assist in local policy development. Current objectives include;

* adopting and implementing a storefront window advertising regulatory policy limiting the coverage of all advertising and signage (including tobacco, alcohol, food, and beverage) to no more than 15% of window space,
* implementing tobacco retailer licensing (TRL) policy to include a prohibition on the sale of flavored other tobacco products (OTP) and/or electronic nicotine delivery device (ENDD) products, and
* establishing a youth coalition to conduct tobacco prevention and education activities in San Benito County.

San Benito County has adopted numerous smoke free/tobacco free policies including, smoke-free parks, the City of Hollister businesses, smoke-free restaurants and bars, smoke-free licensed family child care facilities and smoke-free migrant housing centers. The smoking rate in San Benito County has seen a decline in the number of people smoking and instead choosing to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

If you need help in quitting your tobacco addiction, California has established a free telephone helpline services, in multiple languages and age specific. The Helpline has assisted smokers in quitting since 1992. Every month, thousands of Californians call and receive help. When you call the toll-free number, a friendly staff person will offer a choice of services: self-help materials, a referral list of other programs, and one-on-one counseling over the phone. In a research study, those who received telephone counseling were twice as likely to stay quit than those who tried to quit on their own. The California Smokers' Helpline is committed to serving California's diverse population.

* Teen smokers: 1-800-662-8887
* Adult smokers: 1-800-NO-BUTTS
* Chewers: 1-800-844-CHEW
* Espanol: 1-800-45-NO-FUME (1-800-456-6386)
* TDD/TTY Hearing Impaired:  1-800-933-4TDD (1-800-933-4833)

For further information please contact Ofelia Toledo-Prieto at (831) 637-5367.