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**NEW INITIATIVES MARK NATIONAL NON-SMOKING WEEK**

WHITEHORSE –Health and Social Services Minister Brad Cathers today announced three initiatives marking National Non Smoking Week, Jan. 21 to 27, in Yukon.

The first is the release of a new booklet aimed at young people who use smokeless tobacco. Called *Chew on This*, the booklet was written by Yukon’s Health Promotion unit and funded through Health Canada. Although aimed at youth, this booklet will be of interest and use to parents, teachers, and others who want to assist young people in making healthy decisions.

“We know that there are people who believe that as long as they don’t smoke tobacco, there’s is no health risk. Unfortunately, that is not true and there are significant health risks for smokeless tobacco users just as there are for cigarette smokers,” Cathers said. “This was an area that was identified through our work with Yukon youth.”

The bilingual booklet will be available in early February.

The second initiative is the introduction of smoking cessation information sessions, the first of which was held in Whitehorse, on Jan. 23 with 18 participants. It was so successful that the second session has been moved up to two weeks from now.

“The goal of these sessions is to provide information, tools and resources to smokers who are thinking about quitting in the next month or so. Each participant gets a free cessation package filled with tools to help them quit,” Cathers added. “We are exploring ways of providing the smoking cessation information sessions to smokers in rural Yukon as well.”

And finally, for the fourth year in a row Yukon students in Grades four through 12 will participate in ‘Smoke Screen’, a video viewing project where students review the top 12 tobacco education ads from around the world and select the one they feel is the most successful in sending its message. Students from Nunavut and Northwest Territories will also be participating in their jurisdictions.

“This project continues to spark a lot of discussion in the classrooms about the importance of educating our young people about the health effects of tobacco, and the dangers of smoking,” Cathers said.

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