



Julie Foudy
ON SMOKING BUTTS

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When I was in the fifth grade, a friend of mine wanted to try smoking, so she borrowed her dad's pipe. We put some tobacco in it and tried smoking it out of the pipe.

We were experimenting. We thought it would be so cool to smoke. I wanted so much to look cool with my friends. I especially didn't want this friend to think that I was chicken—so I couldn't be afraid when she asked me to smoke.

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It went on for a short while. I never had to deal with my parents finding out because they never knew. I never had to deal with addiction because, fortunately, I stopped before that happened.

But I did have an experience that convinced me that I did not need tobacco in my life. It was pretty awful. I tried playing soccer one afternoon after we had been smoking. I thought that I was

going to die during the game. I couldn't breathe. I couldn't run. It was as if I had a big hole in my heart. It was so painful.

I was pretty disgusted with myself right away. I knew that I did not want to feel like that ever again. Soccer and sports were just too enjoyable to give up for a stupid smoke. It was easy to give it up. Soccer was just too important in my life.

What was hard, though, was telling my friend. I was worried about

her reaction. I decided to be honest and straightforward—to really tell her my feelings. It was the easiest way. I told her that smoking was disgusting, it made it hard to play sports and that it was a mistake if she continued. She tried to tell me that I was just afraid. I told her, no—I was being the smart one, and I was through with smoking. She kept trying to make fun of me! I didn't hang out with her after that. Besides, I had a soccer game to play.

"SHE TRIED TO TELL ME THAT I WAS JUST AFRAID. I TOLD HER, NO—I WAS BEING THE SMART ONE..."

SMOKING BUTTS

There is no way to put it gently—smoking's not only gross but also deadly! It's understandable, if your friends are into it, to impulsively think smoking is kinda cool. Maybe you're thinking a butt hanging between your fingers will make you look tough, sexy or rebellious. You know what? All it takes is two seconds of your brain's time to realize how silly those impulses are and how nuts smoking really is.

Check this out. If you smoke, you will totally and absolutely: have nasty breath, stink, get yellow teeth, annoy people around you and waste money, as well as risk getting asthma, cancer and a lovely array of other deadly diseases. Smoking is dangerous for everyone, but can be especially harmful to girls and women. As if that's not enough, if you're into sports, smoking cigarettes will destroy your lungs, make it tough to breathe and stop you from becoming the great athlete you've always dreamed of being.

WHAT'S UP WITH THIS?

The April report of the Surgeon General states that 30% of high school girls admit having smoked cigarettes the previous month.

Maybe you think you can smoke a few butts when you're hanging out with your buddies and quit whenever the urge hits you, with no problem at all. Whatever! Tobacco is one of the most addictive

Deal With It!

- Think about all the money you save!
- Use sports as your excuse to say no (“No thanks. I have a game tomorrow.”)
- Breathe—like the way it feels? Imagine not being able to!
- Remember that most athletes and girls choose NOT to smoke—you're not alone.

Me? A butt-head? Sister, puh-leeze. Each butt puts more than 200 poisons into your body. Who needs that?



substances you can put into your body. Smoking one or two cigarettes on the weekends turns into one or two a day, which turns into a pack a day. Before you know it, you are the hacking, yellow-toothed smoke bomb who doesn't have the lungs to play sports and always ducks outside to secretly feed their habit. Sounds real cool, huh?

Right now, you have an important choice to make. Are you going to be good to your body and true to your teammates and make the choice not to spark that first butt, or are you willing to risk your health and your sports dreams for a nappy habit? More than five million kids living today will die too young because they made the wrong choice. Don't let yourself be one of them. Choose fresh breath, white teeth and a butt-less life!

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, SURF:

- www.stat.org Stop Teenage Addiction to Smoking
- www.smokefree.gov Smoke free soccer
- www.thetruth.com Destroying the tobacco industry
- www.tobaccofreekids.org Campaign for tobacco free kids

Additional resources are listed in the Resources section of this Guide.

Red Flags

Do YOU ...

- Risk looking and smelling gross
- Have trouble breathing

YOU'RE HEADED FOR ...

- Addiction
- Permanent damage to skin, bones, eyes, throat, heart and lungs
- Deadly illnesses (cancer, emphysema, heart disease, strokes)
- Infertility (can't have kids—ever)