



Through with Chew & Great American Spit Out Youth Resource Guide

Through with Chew Week is a national, week-long tobacco-free health campaign held every February during the third full week. It focuses on helping people quit smokeless tobacco, including chew, dip, snuff, snus, dissolvable tobacco, and oral nicotine pouches, while raising awareness about the dangers of all smokeless and emerging nicotine products. In 2026, Through with Chew Week will take place **February 15–21**.

A highlight of the week is the **Great American Spit Out** on **Thursday, February 19, 2026**, a call-to-action encouraging individuals who use smokeless tobacco to quit for the day and take the first step toward quitting for good. With access to support and resources—and the motivation of participating alongside others—this is an ideal time to begin a quit attempt. The South Dakota Tobacco Control Program has developed a youth guide for schools and community organizations interested in participating in Through with Chew Week and/or the Great American Spit Out. Here are some ideas for participation:

- Incorporate anti-tobacco and smokeless tobacco messages into daily announcements, newsletters, school newspapers, sporting events, and other activities.
- Contact local radio stations and newspapers to run Public Service Announcements (PSAs) featuring students. Write your own or use available resources from the [QuitSD's Media Library](#).
- Have middle and high school students present to younger students about the dangers of tobacco use.
- Integrate anti-tobacco education into classroom instruction, such as:
 - **Science:** Experiments (e.g., “Mr. Gross Mouth,” ingredients in chewing tobacco)
 - **English/Language Arts:** Essays on chewing tobacco, snuff, snus, dip, dissolvable tobacco, and tobacco use
 - **Math:** Word problems and equations focused on the cost of chewing tobacco
 - **Health:** Effects of smokeless tobacco on the body
 - **Social Sciences:** Review smokeless tobacco advertisements to identify marketing and targeting strategies
 - **Current Events/Government/Law:** Tobacco-related issues, policies, and laws (e.g., smoke-free laws, [Master Settlement Agreement](#))
 - **Speech:** Persuasive speeches or debates
 - **Art:** Anti-tobacco or anti-chew poster contests

The following pages include additional activities to help kick off your planning.

Pledge Wall

Summary: Create a long paper banner and cover it with anti-tobacco pledges. A variation on this is to make the wall an opportunity for students to show support for a tobacco-free campus policy.

Audience: All ages

Estimated Cost (if known): \$10-60

Materials: Long poster paper roll or banner paper, markers, tape (check to make sure your building doesn't have restrictions on the type of tape you use)

Description:

Do you have a parent, grandparent, friend or other loved one who smokes or chews tobacco? You can organize a pledge wall at your school or community center for people to pledge to help their loved ones quit or to encourage those who use tobacco to quit.

Day of Event:

- Set up materials such as markers or other art supplies, pledge cards.
- On the Pledge Wall write a large phrase such as, "Hello, Big Tobacco from the Youth of (insert your town/group here)!"
- Provide instructions on what you want people to write on the wall. For the Pledge Wall instruct participants to fill out the pledge cards you provide and attach them to the wall. Encourage everyone at your school or community center to sign the Pledge Wall if they know someone who uses tobacco and are ready to help him or her quit. You can also use the Pledge Wall to have youth pledge that they will not use tobacco.
- During your event, have people hand out flyers and other information about resources for those looking to quit.
- Take lots of pictures and pass them on to your local paper to let others know about your efforts. You can also post them on your social media!

Follow-Up Ideas:

- Don't throw away your wall. Instead, carefully take the papers off of the wall, and arrange to present it to your elected officials. If you can't present the actual wall, take a lot of photos and send the photos and a description of your event to them. You may also be able to keep the wall up in your school or community center for the whole month or bring it back in the month of March/April for Taking Down Tobacco Day. Let it serve as a constant reminder of the dangers of tobacco use.

Smokeless Tobacco & Sports

Summary: Connect deceptive marketing tools with sporting events and relevant influencers for your students through an interactive presentation and activity.

Audience: 7th-12th grade

Product(s) Related: Smokeless tobacco

Estimated Cost (if known): Varies

Materials: Varies on event set up/activities

Description:

This interactive activity explores the use of smokeless tobacco in sports, emphasizing its harmful effects on athletes' health and performance. Students will engage in discussions and activities that debunk myths about smokeless tobacco, highlight its risks, and challenge the perception that it enhances athletic performance. Designed with engaging visuals and real-world examples, this lesson empowers students to make informed choices and promotes a tobacco-free lifestyle. Find the activity and lesson plan, here: https://med.stanford.edu/tobaccopreventiontoolkit/ppt-pages/Smokeless_Tobacco_and_Sports.html

Know Your Warning Labels

Summary: Encourage your students to think creatively about the dangers of smokeless tobacco after learning of deceptive marketing tools and the health consequences of oral nicotine pouches by expanding their definition of warning labels.

Audience: 7th-12th grade

Materials: Printed activity sheets and presentation found in lesson plan

Description: This activity focuses on the role of warning labels on tobacco products. Participants engage in discussions and hands-on exercises to evaluate the effectiveness, design, and messaging of warning labels. By analyzing real-world examples and creating their own designs, participants gain insight into how warning labels influence public perceptions and discourage tobacco use. This activity promotes critical thinking, creativity, and an understanding of effective health communication strategies. Find the activity and lesson plan here: https://med.stanford.edu/tobaccopreventiontoolkit/activity-pages/Warning_Labels.html

Anti-Tobacco Messages:

The following are sample announcements you can use at your school and at events. These messages can be modified to fit your school district.

- **(Name of school district) is proud to have a 100% tobacco-free school policy.** For the safety of our students, we would like to remind our home fans and visitors that the use of any tobacco products, including oral nicotine pouches, during tonight's sporting event is strictly prohibited. We appreciate your support and would like to thank you for keeping our school (stadium, grounds, etc.) tobacco-free. Enjoy the game!
- **South Dakota high school chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip usage rates are almost double the national rates.** This includes newer products like oral nicotine pouches, which many students mistakenly think are safer than traditional smokeless tobacco. This is one of the reasons why all (name of school district) schools are 100% tobacco-free.
- **15.4% of high school students in South Dakota have ever tried spit tobacco, snuff, snus, dip, or dissolvable tobacco in 2019.** The 2023 Youth Tobacco Survey shows that many young people are also trying newer products like oral nicotine pouches, which contain nicotine and are just as addictive. This is why the (insert school district) is proud to be 100% tobacco-free.
- **Research studies have found that kids are three times as sensitive to tobacco advertising than adults and are more likely to be influenced to use tobacco by marketing than by peer pressure;** and a third of underage experimentation is attributed to tobacco company advertising and promotion. Newer products are heavily marketed to youth. The (insert school district) wants to do all we can to combat tobacco advertising by maintaining a tobacco-free policy for everyone on campus.
- **Did you know that the nicotine in chewing tobacco, including products like oral nicotine pouches, is just as addicting as the nicotine in cigarettes?** And smokeless tobacco can cause cancer of the mouth, esophagus, and pancreas as well as gum disease, tooth decay, and tooth loss. This is why the (insert school district) has a 100% tobacco-free policy. No tobacco, including smokeless tobacco and nicotine pouches, is allowed anywhere on campus. The (insert school district) wants to promote the healthiest environment we can.
- **Spit tobacco users, including those who use nicotine pouches are at a much higher risk of developing mouth cancer, cancer of the esophagus, throat cancer, and cancer of the tongue, cheek, and lips.** This is why the (insert school district) has made sure that smokeless tobacco, including newer products are included in our 100% tobacco-free policy to keep our students safe.

Anti-Tobacco Trivia

TRUE OR FALSE: Smokeless tobacco products like dip and snuff are safer than cigarettes because they don't involve inhaling smoke.

Answer: False (CDC 2024)

About ___% of U.S. high school students who use smokeless tobacco products use flavored varieties.

Answer: 70% (CDC 2021)

TRUE OR FALSE: Oral nicotine pouches do not contain tobacco and are therefore harmless.

Answer: False (Oral nicotine pouches contain nicotine, which is addictive and harmful to health)

Which of the following health issues can smokeless tobacco cause?

- a) Gum disease
- b) Tooth loss
- c) Mouth cancer
- d) All of the above

Answer: d) All of the above (CDC 2024)

The nicotine in smokeless tobacco and oral nicotine pouches is just as addictive as the nicotine in cigarettes. TRUE or FALSE?

Answer: True (CDC 2025)

Which age group is most likely to try smokeless tobacco for the first time?

- a) 12-14 year-olds
- b) 15-17 year-olds
- c) 18-20 year-olds

Answer: a) 12-14 year-olds (CDC 2024)

TRUE OR FALSE: Using smokeless tobacco products, like snuff and oral nicotine pouches, can increase the risk of oral cancer.

Answer: True (American Cancer Society 2024)

What percentage of South Dakota middle school students have ever tried smokeless tobacco?

Answer: 1.8% (Youth Tobacco Survey, 2023)

Nicotine use from smokeless tobacco can lead to dependence within a short amount of time. TRUE or FALSE?

Answer: True (CDC 2024)

TRUE OR FALSE: Nicotine pouches are marketed as a "safe" alternative to smoking, but they still carry risks, including nicotine addiction.

Answer: True (CDC 2025)