

FOR RELEASE #06-010
January 16, 2006

TWO INITIATIVES MARK NATIONAL NON-SMOKING WEEK

WHITEHORSE –Health and Social Services Minister Brad Cathers today has announced two initiatives to help mark National Non-Smoking Week, Jan. 16 to 22, in the Yukon.

For the third year, Yukon students in Grades four through 12 will join their counterparts in Northwest Territories and Nunavut in watching 12 of the best tobacco education television ads from around the world, and then voting on the one they feel is the most effective.

“Last year, 4000 students across the north viewed the advertisements and selected “Older Than Dead” as the most effective. The program has garnered positive comments from both teachers and students who have participated,” Cathers said. “The Smoke Screening program initiates a great deal of class discussion which is an important part of educating young people about the dangers of tobacco and smoking.”

The ads have been selected to provide youth with an opportunity to look at the subject from a variety of perspectives and encourage them to think seriously about the decision to smoke or chew tobacco. Some ads use humour, some graphic reality and some use real life stories. Watching the video promotes classroom discussion when students debate which ad they feel is the most effective. Teachers will also receive a resource booklet that provides background information on each anti-tobacco ad, tips on how to expand classroom discussions and other resources they can use to help their students make informed choices.

The votes will be tallied and the winning ad will be announced on World No Tobacco Day, May 31. The ad will be aired on local television.

The second initiative is a second-wave promotion of the department’s QuitPack, a quit smoking tool kit that was first introduced last fall as part of the young adult smoking cessation marketing campaign.

“In just over two months, approximately 100 young adults have enrolled in the QuitPack program,” Cathers added. “And Yukoners outside of the demographic are also keen to do so. Because of this interest, the department has also created a second pack aimed at older adults. We are receiving some really positive feedback on the success of the kits. We want to help Yukoners quit smoking.”

QuitPacks are available by calling our toll-free number 1-866-221-8393. Young adult smokers may also enroll in the QuitPack program by visiting our website www.freequitpack.ca.

- 30 -

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