



Charlie Crist
Governor

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NEWS RELEASE

Free Program to Quit Smoking

Port Charlotte (FL) – Do you need another reason to quit smoking? If you are a parent and your children are exposed to second-hand smoke they are at an increased risk for bronchitis, pneumonia, ear infections, more severe asthma, respiratory symptoms, slowed lung growth, and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). There are an estimated 150,000 to 300,000 cases every year of infections, such as bronchitis and pneumonia in infants and children under 18 months of age who breathe second-hand smoke.

Parents can help protect their children from second-hand smoke by taking the following preventative measures:

- Do not smoke or allow others to smoke in your car or home. Opening a window does not protect your children from second-hand smoke.
- Do not take your children to a daycare where they can be exposed to second-hand smoke.
- Do not let anyone smoke near your children and teach them to stay away from second-hand smoke.

Charlotte County Health Department and Gulfcoast South Area Health Education Center (AHEC) have partnered to offer free classes to help you quit smoking.

The Tools to Quit program is a one-time, intense 90-minute seminar in which participants receive information on how to select and prepare for their own quit date. A trained Tobacco Cessation Specialist guides participants as they identify triggers and withdrawal symptoms, and brain storm ways to cope with them. Topics covered are addiction, withdrawal, medications, planning for a quit date, dealing with triggers, overcoming cravings and relapse prevention. Participants receive written materials, a bag of goodies for their quit day, and follow-up support. This class is offered the second Tuesday of the month from 5:00pm - 7:00pm at the Charlotte County Healthy Start Coalition in Port Charlotte. This class is also being offered at the Health Department clinic in Punta Gorda on Friday, January 21, February 18 or March 11 from 1:00pm - 3:00pm at 514 E Grace Street.

This class is free, but you must call to register in advance and receive room location information: 941-552-1280 ext 25 or 1-87-Quit-Now-6.



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Visit the Charlotte County Health Department Website for additional tobacco information and resources: www.CharlotteCHD.com

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