

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY, MAY 31, 2023**

Tobacco Use Continues to be a Major Public Health Threat

On World No Tobacco Day 2023, the Newfoundland and Labrador Alliance for the Control of Tobacco (ACT) wants to make it very clear that tobacco is still the number one cause of preventable death in our Province. 17% of deaths in Newfoundland and Labrador are related to tobacco use which translates to 14-16 people every week – two people dying from tobacco use every day.

Over 15 percent of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians continue to smoke. The reality is that tobacco is highly addictive and that most adults who currently smoke started before the age of 18 - many even before the age of 15. In addition to smoking, vaping is becoming increasingly popular among our young people. The most recent Canadian Student Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs survey found that 57% of students in Grades 10-12 in Newfoundland and Labrador reported having ever tried an e-cigarette while almost 40% report using an e-cigarette in the past 30 days. Kevin Coady, ACT Executive Director states that “The concern here is that young people who vape often don’t realize how addictive nicotine is until it is too late. Any use of nicotine whether through smoking or vaping can lead to a lifetime of addiction and health problems.”

Scott Antle, Chair of ACT’s Board of Directors states that “Some would have us believe that tobacco is done and further work on tobacco control issues is unnecessary. The tobacco industry welcomes this kind of thinking as it invests millions of dollars in the vaping industry and continues to recruit new smokers to replace the smokers who have quit or died because of tobacco use.”

To further educate and inform young people about the dangers of smoking, vaping and nicotine addiction, ACT is developing a variety of school resources (to be released Fall 2023) to empower teachers and school administrators to talk to their students about this important issue. In addition, a social media campaign designed to highlight the dangers associated with vaping will be on several youth-oriented websites including TikTok, YouTube and various mobile sites. ACT and its partners around the province reiterate that products such as e-cigarettes continue to pose a challenge and a threat to important public health policies and legislation currently in place. If we are to be successful in decreasing the number of people who use nicotine products and die prematurely as a result of their addiction, then we MUST work together to reduce the number of young people who are vaping in our Province.

Media Contact:

Kevin Coady

Executive Director ACT

Tel: (709) 753-0079

Cell: (709) 689-6005

Email: kevincoady@actnf.com