



Leave the Pack Behind (Humber Lakeshore Chapter)  
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### **NEWS RELEASE**

Attention: Newsdesk, Assignment Editor, Lifestyle Editor

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### **STUDENTS URGED TO LEAVE THE PACK BEHIND WHEN PURSUING CAREERS**

TORONTO – The kinds of careers students train for may affect how likely they are to smoke and how likely they are to quit.

According to Statistics Canada’s 1994/1995 National Population Health Survey, people working in male-dominated, outdoor environments like mining, transportation and construction were more likely to smoke and less likely to quit. A similar study released by the American Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) this past September counts workers in the food preparation industry amongst those most likely to light up on the job.

“When the class of 2010 graduates next spring, some students will be entering jobs where they are surrounded by smokers,” said Michelle Pineau, a coordinator for Leave the Pack Behind at Humber College’s Lakeshore Campus. “You’re more likely to pick up smoking or continue smoking if you’re surrounded by people who are lighting up with you on your coffee breaks.”

Amongst blue-collar workers, those in the transportation, construction and food preparation surveyed by the SAMHSA study were smokers were heaviest smokers, with over 40 per cent of respondents reporting tobacco use. They were followed by workers in production, repair, installation and maintenance roles (36 per cent).

Amongst white-collar workers, 30.3 per cent of respondents in sales were smokers, followed by office workers and personal care and service workers (28 per cent). Of all respondents, those in the education sector and the life, physical and social sciences were the least likely to light up.

One study done by the University of Melbourne suggests those who enter high-stress jobs requiring them to work over 50 hours a week have a harder time butting out than others with more relaxed work schedules.

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“Many students on campus say they smoke because they’re stressed out, even though smoking actually increases stress and anxiety,” said Pineau. “Students are particularly at risk if they’re training for jobs where they feel like they’re always under tight deadlines and have little control over their immediate environments.”

However, students do have access to on-campus resources which can help them quit before they enter workplaces where smoking is prevalent.

Pineau and other LTPB members are currently running information booths at Humber’s northern and Lakeshore campuses, and are conducting walkabouts encouraging smokers to break the habit. In November, LTPB’s “Pick Up The Right Stick” campaign encouraged smokers to use exercise as a stress-relieving alternative to smoking.

“Our program takes a unique approach to helping smokers quit, in that we help smokers address the underlying reasons – like stress, social anxiety or loneliness – which caused smoking in the first place,” said Pineau. “We do raise awareness of the health risks associated with smoking, but by addressing the root causes that make smokers light up in the first place, we make the quitting process much easier.”

Leave the Pack Behind is a publicly-funded campus program for young adults which raise awareness about the health risks associated with smoking. LTPB was founded in 2000 by the Ontario Ministry of Health as a stop-smoking program which brings students, researchers, health professionals and administrators together. LTPB currently has 47 chapters in college and university campuses across Ontario. Its newest chapter is at Humber College’s Lakeshore Campus, which started in September 2009.