



TPEP Presents Profiles on Quitting

Rose's Story

by Rose Kunkel

I have been smoke-free, tobacco-free, and nicotine-free for five years. I smoked for almost 25 years.

What really is odd is that I had no reason to start smoking. I was 20 years old when I started. There was no peer pressure; there was no one to influence me. My mom and dad didn't smoke. My grandmother didn't smoke, so there was no reason why I should. I only thought it would be cool to try and I didn't stop.

I smoked during the pregnancies of both of my children. At that time, there was no data that it was harmful to unborn children, so I never gave it much thought. Then on March 17, 1990, my husband was diagnosed with lung cancer. He was sick for nine months before he passed away because of his smoking. His death certificate even listed smoking as the cause of his lung cancer. That still did not deter me.

I quit smoking for about six months when I was married to my second husband, but started up again after the annulment of our marriage. My daughter was pregnant with her first child and she quit when she got pregnant. When she was about due, she

told me I wasn't going to get to hold the baby if I continued smoking.

I thought it was an ultimatum and felt hurt by the remark. What she told me after that sank in. She told me, “No, Mom, it's not an ultimatum. Daddy doesn't get to hold the baby because he is dead.” That hit home hard.

I had to have a plan because I knew I couldn't quit on my own. I was due to have complete oral surgery and have all my teeth pulled. You can't smoke after oral surgery. I had the doctor prescribe Nicoderm patches for me, and right after surgery, I put a patch on and haven't had a cigarette since.

That was the beginning of the rest of my life. My lungs cleared and my head didn't hurt anymore. I stopped snoring (yes, that was a big relief for me because I finally got a good night's sleep). My clothes didn't smell any more. I was able to walk around the block without being winded.

I'm very grateful to my daughter for pushing me forward and supporting me all the time I was getting over my habit. Thank you, Jenni, for your support. I love you for it.

Send Your Tobacco Story, Earn a Prize

The Tobacco Prevention and Education Program wants your story!

This year, the TPEP program is looking for elders, kids and teens, and people of all ages, **anyone** who has ever quit smoking or struggled with quitting smoking to share your story. Many of us have gone through the process of quitting smoking. It would be a great benefit to have some of those stories shared with the tribal membership and with our young people.

In your story, talk about **how or why** you started smoking and **what happened** that made you want to quit. Why did you quit? When did you quit? How did you finally quit?

This year, the TPEP program, in exchange for your interview and story, will give away various items, such as T-shirts, sweatshirts, coffee mugs, or fanny packs. The following rules apply:

- You must be over 18, or have a written parental permission slip given to TPEP.
- No vulgar language should be used.
- Keep the story relatively short – 2 or 3 paragraphs (no more than half a page).
- Be willing to have your story and picture published in *Siletz News*.
- Be willing to be interviewed by the TPEP coordinator.
- Be willing to allow your story to be edited.
- Please include your name, address, and phone number on your story.

Tooth Talk

by Linda Kreutzer, RDH

February is Children's Dental Health Month

The American Dental Association (ADA) began this national observance in 1949 to help the American public understand that dental care for children is important. The ADA's goal is to urge parents to take an active role in ensuring the health of their children's teeth by preventing decay. Attitudes and habits established early are critical in maintaining good oral health for a lifetime.

Children should get their first dental checkup before age 2. This usually is a quick “look-see” kind of appointment and is very stress-free for the child. If problems are found, the dentist can offer suggestions to keep the decay from getting worse. The child may be referred to a specialist who sees only children. It's good for parents to know if their children's teeth are off to a healthy start.

Candy and pop should be given to children on a “sometimes” basis. Children's teeth are more easily decayed than those of their parents. The enamel isn't as hard as adult teeth and is weaker to begin with.

It's important that children brush twice daily, beginning when teeth first appear. Fluoride helps developing teeth become harder and more resistant to decay. If fluoride isn't in drinking water, a dentist can prescribe daily fluoride tablets, ensuring strong, healthy permanent teeth.

Sealants can be placed in the child's permanent molars beginning at age 5 or 6. Sealants act as a protectant for the grooves, keeping decay from forming in these tiny crevices.

Thumb sucking can be a problem for children, causing improper growth of the mouth and tooth misalignment. A dentist can tell if this is a problem and can make suggestions to help control it.

There are many good reasons why it's important to help children get an early start at good dental health. February is a **great** month to be reminded of that. If you haven't done so already, pick up the phone and make an appointment for your child at your dental office or clinic. Children's Dental Health Month is a time to celebrate a healthy, decay- and pain-free mouth for every child.



- Please include a picture of yourself if possible.
- All authors must make arrangements with TPEP to pick up prizes.
- Have fun!

Please feel free to call the TPEP program for further information and details regarding this activity, which will take place through June 2003. So please get those stories out there so that we can help teach each other and our young people about the hazards of cigarette smoking and other tobacco products.

Call DeAnna Pearl, Tobacco Prevention and Education coordinator, at 541-444-9661 or 1-800-648-0449, ext. 661, with any questions. Thank you.