Overview of STARSS Handouts

Included in this section, you will find:

**Information for STARSS moms** to hand out to moms to engage them to participate in **STARSS**. The information on the handout includes:

- The purpose of **STARSS**
- Her role
- A session by session description

**How to help your mom be a STAR!**  Tips for children

**Help my mom be a STAR!**  Ideas for family and friends

**How to be a STAR! Secondhand smoke protection**
Effects of secondhand smoke on children
What works!
Ideas to help moms protect their children from secondhand smoke

**How to be a STAR! Quitting smoking**
Ideas to help moms quit smoking when they’re ready to try. There are also four other handouts for moms who want information about quitting smoking. These include:

- Why it’s so hard to quit smoking
- What smoking cost in March 2005
- What happens when you quit smoking
- Smoking cessation aids fact sheet

Each of these **Handouts** can be photocopied. Their purpose is different from the **Worksheets**. The **Handouts** can be used:

- To engage children, family, and friends to support a **STARSS** mom’s efforts to protect her children from secondhand smoke
- As posters in their homes
- For moms who might benefit from tips but aren’t ready to participate in **STARSS**
Information for STARSS Moms

Purpose of STARSS

Do you want to be a STAR? Do you want to Start Thinking About Reducing Secondhand Smoke? Then get involved in the STARSS program. Many single moms have helped us develop the STARSS program. We hope you’re interested, too.

You’ve probably heard lots of ideas about how to protect children from secondhand smoke. But some of these ideas don’t work very well. And some of them aren’t helpful or realistic for single moms. The goal of STARSS is not to quit smoking (although we can help you with that, if you choose). You can protect your children from secondhand smoke without having to quit smoking.

What will you have to do?

There are seven sessions in STARSS. Your STARSS counsellor will explain it to you in detail. Then you can take time to think about it. Take as much time as you need to make up your mind. If you decide to participate, your STARSS counsellor will work through every Session with you.

Session 1: Record Keeping

X Keep a record of your smoking patterns. Think of any activities, feelings, or stress in your life that make you want to smoke. Also, think of things that make it difficult for you to smoke away from your children.

X Look over the I’m a STAR! Journal. See if you can identify any patterns in your smoking. When you understand your smoking patterns, then it’s easier to set goals. And you can discuss these with your STARSS counsellor.

X Think of your long term goals about smoking. Think of any small changes you could take to reach these goals.

Session 2: Goal setting

X Go over your Current Smoking Patterns with your STARSS counsellor. Discuss any patterns you have discovered in your smoking.

X Identify long term goals that are realistic for you. Sign a contract outlining your goals. Your STARSS counsellor will also sign your contract.
X Identify a small change that you can make right now to protect your children from secondhand smoke. This is called a short term goal.
X Think of problems you might have reaching your short term goal. Think of as many solutions as you can. Be prepared. But remember: problems you don’t expect can arise. Make a note of them. Then talk them over with your STARSS counsellor.
X Sign a contract for your short term goal.

Session 3: Update and renegotiate goals

X Go over your goals with your STARSS counsellor.
X If you reached your goal, what things helped make it possible? What challenges did you face? Also decide what your next goal will be. Remember that your new goal includes keeping up with your first goal, too.
X If your short term goal didn’t work for you, why not? What made it hard to reach? Think of things that could make it easier next time. Renegotiate your goals and start with a new one.
• If you were able to maintain your goal part of the time, discuss things that helped as well as things that didn’t. Discuss ways to get around the problems. Perhaps you can go back to your first goal and think of new ways to reach it.

Session 4-7: Keep going....

X The goal setting for the next four sessions continue the same way as the third.
X Each session introduces new Worksheets that help with different aspects of protecting your children from secondhand smoke.
X Remember: if you have questions or concerns, talk to your STARSS counsellor.

Before each session...

X Keep a record of (or remember) how many times you were able to reach your new short term goal. Make a note of anything that helps you reach your goal. Also note anything that makes it hard to reach. Write this down in your I’m a STAR! Journal.
X Keep up with your previous goals and include them in your I’m a STAR! Journal.
X Remember: don’t give up. If you can’t reach your goal one day, it doesn’t mean you should give up on that goal. Try again the next day. Do the best you can to keep going.

If you decide you’re ready to quit smoking...

Some single moms say that quitting smoking is the best strategy for them to protect their children from secondhand smoke. You might reach the same conclusion. If you decide to make a quit attempt, there is information in your I’m a STAR! Journal about quitting. Also, there are other STARSS Handouts that might help. And talk to your STARSS counsellor about any other supports available to you in your area.
How to Help Your Mom Be a STAR!

Tips for children

It can be difficult for moms when they are trying to protect children from secondhand smoke. Here are some ideas to help children help their moms be a STAR:

- **Set up a Shoe Box Surprise.** Prepare a shoe box full of special things. Children can use these *only* when mom takes a smoke break outside or in front of an open window. Then mom has her time and children have their time, too. Fill the shoe box with special toys, crafts, or games that are age appropriate. Or get a special book, an etchasketch, glue sticks, or a sticker book. Think of any special activity that will keep children busy for 10 minutes or so.

- **Negotiate a reward.** What do you do with children that argue with each other when mom leaves the room or goes outside to smoke? Make a deal. If the children don’t argue while mom is outside, they will get a pre-selected reward. It could be one-on-one time with mom. Or it could be something else children like, such as 10 minutes with a favourite video game.

- **Pick a special dessert.** This can be another reward for children when mom takes a smoke break outside or leaves the room to smoke in front of an open window.

Pick rewards that are specific to helping mom be a STAR. These rewards are different from other rewards children might get for good behaviour. Ask children to sit down with mom. Think of a list of special 10 minute activities children can do only when mom takes a smoke break (either outside or sitting in another room in front of an open window).

**Write down your list here:**

| X | __________________________________________ |
| X | __________________________________________ |
| X | __________________________________________ |
Help My Mom Be a STAR!

Don’t smoke around me

My mom is trying to protect me from secondhand smoke. She loves and protects me in many different ways. Whenever she can, she smokes outside and away from me.

Here are some ways you can help my mom be a STAR:

- It’s **good** to take a smoke break in front of an open window with a fan behind you, blowing the smoke out the window.
- It’s **better** to take a smoke break on the balcony, if you have one.
- It’s **best** to take a smoke break outside.

Here are the names of all the people who want to help my mom be a STAR:

X __________________________
X __________________________
X __________________________
X __________________________
X __________________________

Children: Post this list somewhere in your house to remind your mom of all the people who want to help her be a STAR!
Children experience more of the effects of secondhand smoke. That’s because they breathe faster than adults do, so they inhale more air. If the air is polluted by secondhand smoke, then children breathe in more of the poisons and chemicals, too. This is also true during pregnancy. This means smoking and secondhand smoke can affect babies before they’re born, too.

**Health effects**

There are several health effects that can happen to children who breathe secondhand smoke. Some of them are:

- they have twice as many ear infections
- they are twice as likely to have asthma
- they have more breathing (or “respiratory”) problems, such as coughs or phlegm, and they are twice as likely to wheeze
- they are three times as likely to get either bronchitis or pneumonia
- they are twice as likely to have allergies
- they might spit up more often
- they are more likely to be hospitalized for an illness before they are a year old

**Other effects**

Children who breathe secondhand smoke can have other problems, too. Some of them are:

- they are more likely to be cranky, restless, and hyperactive
- they can be 3 to 5 months behind other children in school, especially in math or reading

adapted from www.pregnets.org
The STARSS Program
Start Thinking About Reducing Secondhand Smoke
Handouts
What Works!

Many moms have tried many different ways to protect their children from secondhand smoke. You’re a STAR! You’ve started thinking about reducing secondhand smoke. Make the most of your efforts.

Here’s what works:

- **Go outside to smoke.** This is always the best choice. But sometimes single moms can’t leave children alone. Or your living arrangements make it difficult to go outside. For example, you might live in an apartment with no balcony. Remember to be careful when you smoke outside. If your children are close by, make sure the smoke isn’t blowing towards them.

- **Choose** a smoking place. Keep ashtrays and lighters there. Keep the door closed, keep the window open, and use a fan to blow smoke out the open window. Only smoke in this room. *This is the best choice if you can’t go outside to smoke.*

- **Delay** smoking a cigarette until your child has left the house. Or delay until it is convenient to go outside and smoke.

- **Don’t smoke inside** within three hours of your children returning home from school. For example, if your child gets home at 3PM, don’t smoke inside after 12 noon.

- **Ask** family and friends to smoke outside your house. Or ask them to smoke in your smoking place. Stick to your rules. It’s your house.

Here’s what doesn’t work:

- lighting a candle
- air fresheners, smoke eaters, and air purifiers
- lots of plants
- washing your walls and windows

You might not be able to smell the smoke but the poisons are still in the air and your walls. The poisons in the cigarette smoke can stay in your walls for up to two years.
How To Be a STAR! Secondhand Smoke Protection

Ideas to help protect your children from secondhand smoke

Here are some ideas other single moms have tried and found helpful.

Smoke outside if your children are old enough to be left alone. But sometimes you can’t get outside to smoke. So try this:

- **Pick** one room (that your children don’t go in) to be a smoking room. *Make sure it has a window to the outside.* Smoke only in that room, when you can’t get outside.
- **Blow** cigarette smoke out the window of your smoking room. Put a fan behind you to make sure the smoke goes out the window.
- **Make** your smoking room not quite so comfy. Then you won’t want to spend a lot of time there.

Delay when, where, and how you smoke. Try these ideas:

- **Delay** your first cigarette of the day.
- **Increase**, by 10 minutes at a time, the normal amount of time in between the cigarettes you smoke.
- **Wait** for 10 minutes and see if you still want a cigarette every time you have a craving.

Talk to yourself. Tell yourself: “This urge will pass.” Or “Yes, I want a cigarette but I don’t need this one.” Delay for 10 minutes and see if you still want to smoke.

Plan ahead. Here are some ideas:

- **Keep** your favourite hard candy in the house (and make sure it’s your special treat, not for the children!) – then chew or suck on it when you crave a smoke.
- **Wet** your hands when you have a craving – it’s hard to hang on to a cigarette with wet hands!
- **Do** something you like to keep your hands busy (knit, crochet, hammer nails).
• **Keep** your cigarettes and ashtrays out of sight. Then you won’t crave a cigarette just because you have a visual reminder.

• **Chew** nicotine gum if the craving still persists.

**Allow** your children to remind you to take your smoke breaks outside or to smoke in your smoking room. Let them remind you never to smoke in the car.

**Ask** your family and friends who smoke to smoke outside. Set up an ashtray and chair so there are no excuses. It can be hard to talk to your friends and family about not smoking in your house. Get ideas and support from a **STARSS** counsellor or another service provider you trust.

**Reward** yourself for reaching your goals about protecting your children from secondhand smoke. It's hard work - you deserve it!

**Remember:** Every small step counts to protect your children from secondhand smoke. Start with small changes and build on them. Soon, you’ll be smoking outside all the time.
How To Be a STAR! Quitting Smoking

Ideas to help you quit smoking when you’re ready

If you’re ready to quit smoking, here are some ways to get started:

- **Make a list.** Write down what you like and what you don't like about smoking. Then write down reasons why you want to quit and reasons why you don't want to quit. This is called a “decisional balance.” It can really help you see benefits and drawbacks of both smoking and quitting smoking. And it helps you think of ways to make changes. Show your decisional balance to a STARSS counsellor or another service provider you trust. Maybe they can come up with more ideas to help you make changes.

- **Change your smoking triggers.** A trigger is something that makes you want to smoke. Smoking can be triggered by how you feel or by situations. It’s probably easier to change some situations (such as not smoking when you’re talking on the phone) than it is to change your feelings (such as smoking when you’re upset or depressed). But try to think of things in your life that might be triggers for your smoking. Then think of ways to change or respond to your triggers. Start with the small things that are easiest to change. Even this will make a big difference. And it will give you practice for when you try to change the bigger, more difficult triggers.

- **Change some of your smoking habits.** Try anything that will make it harder for you to smoke. For example, keep your cigarettes and matches in different places.

- **Delay.** Try to cut down on the number of cigarettes you smoke each day by making the time between each cigarette longer.

- **Quitting takes practice.** Remember: many women make many attempts to quit before they quit for good - on average, 7 serious attempts! So if you start smoking again, it doesn't mean you will never be able to quit.
The STARSS Program
Start Thinking About Reducing Secondhand Smoke
Handouts

Why It’s So Hard to Quit Smoking

Many people think that smoking is a choice. They blame smokers for not being able to quit smoking. These people don’t understand how hard it is to quit. And they don’t understand that the tobacco industry - the people who make and sell cigarettes - spends billions of dollars every year to make sure women smoke.

Here are some facts about women, cigarettes, and smoking:

- Nicotine is a drug that is more addictive than cocaine or heroin.
- There are 4,000 substances in tobacco smoke and several of them are addictive.
- More women die from lung cancer than from breast cancer.
- Every three hours, a woman in Canada dies of lung cancer.

Nicotine is an addictive drug. It’s more addictive than heroin or cocaine. If you smoke every day, you quickly become addicted to nicotine.

Cigarette companies add many substances to cigarettes. They want to make cigarettes as addictive as possible. Then smokers will have to smoke more.

Your body gets used to the effects of nicotine. Think back to your first cigarette. It probably made you feel dizzy or a little sick to your stomach. It probably didn’t taste good, either. But your body soon got used to these effects. The more you smoke, the more your body gets used to the effects of nicotine.

You become dependent on nicotine. Your body adjusts to having nicotine in your system all the time. When you stop smoking, your body tries to get back to normal. It takes time to adjust to living without nicotine. So you might experience withdrawal symptoms.

You have withdrawal symptoms when you quit smoking. Withdrawal symptoms can include physical effects. Some of these are headache, sleep problems, increased appetite, constipation, and wooziness. Other withdrawal symptoms affect your mood. Some of these effects are mood swings, difficulty concentrating, forgetfulness, depression, irritability, and anxiety. Cravings for cigarettes are also a withdrawal symptom. Most withdrawal symptoms go away after a week or two of not smoking. Your body is getting used to living without nicotine. Sometimes, the
withdrawal symptoms that affect your mood can last much longer. That’s why it’s so important to have an action plan to cope with cravings and triggers.

**Nicotine Replacement Therapies** (such as the Patch, nicotine gum, or the nicotine inhaler) can help reduce withdrawal symptoms. They work best the first two weeks after you quit smoking. That’s when withdrawal symptoms are the strongest.

**Smoking is also a habit.** You might have strong cravings when you drink a cup of coffee, get in the car, talk on the phone, or do anything else that you associate with smoking. These are often called smoking “triggers”. After you quit smoking, you can learn new ways to cope with your triggers. After a while, you will be able to be in these situations without smoking. And your cravings won’t be as strong.

**You probably smoke for a number of different reasons.** There are many reasons why women smoke. You might smoke if you’re bored, anxious, depressed or angry. Or you might smoke to relax. Women often smoke a cigarette to feel better or to calm down. It takes time to practice new ways to deal with stress, sadness, anger, and boredom without smoking.

**Quitting smoking is hard for all these reasons - but it can be done!** Try Nicotine Replacement Therapies to help with the physical withdrawal. Look over the **Worksheets** in your I'm a STAR! Journal package for many ideas about how to quit. Call the Smokers Help Line at 1-877-513-5333. Or try the Health Canada web site at www.gosmokefree.ca. Their phone number is 1-866-318-1116.

**Add other numbers you can call here:**

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## What Smoking Cost in March 2005

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The STARSS Program
Start Thinking About Reducing Secondhand Smoke
Handouts
What Happens When You Quit Smoking

The first few days (or even weeks) are the hardest. Withdrawal symptoms are strongest when you first quit. You might experience some or several symptoms. Or you might have none at all. Try to remember that withdrawal symptoms are temporary. They’re a signal your body is returning to normal. Talk to yourself. Remember why you’re trying to quit smoking. Write down your reasons on a card. Keep the card with you. Then look at it when you have one of the symptoms.

**Symptom: ANGER**

Anger is a normal withdrawal symptom. Sometimes, you’re angry without an obvious reason. Vent your anger safely when you’re away from your children. Try to recognize your feelings rather than suppressing them. This can cause tension, which is a trigger for smoking. Discuss your anger with someone who understands how hard it is to quit. If your children are old enough to understand, explain to them it’s not their fault you’re upset, it’s just really hard to quit. Distract yourself. Do something you enjoy, if possible. Or try deep breathing exercises.

**Symptom: BOREDOM, FEELING COOPED UP, or RESTLESSNESS**

Try new things to keep your hands and mind busy. Look over Worksheet #9 about coping with stress. Try to get outside more often, if you can. But it’s hard to leave the house when you’re a single mom. So always keep close by an activities book (such as Find a Word or crossword puzzles) or a deck of cards.

**Symptoms: COUGH, DRY THROAT/MOUTH, NASAL DRIP**

Your body is trying to get rid of mucus that has blocked airways and restricted breathing. These symptoms can last a few days. Sip ice water, drink lots of liquids (such as water, juice, or herbal tea). Try cough drops, chewing gum, or hard sugarless candy.

**Symptom: DEPRESSION**

Think of other ways to cope with your feelings besides smoking. Call a support person. Use positive self talk (such as, I am a great person and a great mom, I can do this, I will do this). Don’t put yourself down. Think of success and not failure. It’s normal to feel sad, angry, or confused when you quit smoking. These feelings will pass after a few weeks.

**Symptom: DIZZINESS**

After you quit smoking, your body gets extra oxygen, which could cause dizziness. It can last a couple of days. Get some fresh air, change positions slowly, and don’t stand up too quickly.
Symptom: FATIGUE
Fatigue can last 2 to 4 weeks. Get extra sleep if possible and try to exercise more. Take naps if you can and don’t push yourself. If you feel tired when you first wake up, try to do one type of exercise for one minute intervals for 10 minutes (such as jumping jacks or running in place). Or take a cool shower. Drink lots of water every day. It speeds up the healing process.

Symptom: FRUSTRATION
Do some stretching exercises. Try to be aware of your body. Take deep breaths. Talk to a support person. Think of the positive reasons for quitting smoking. Take some time to yourself.

Symptom: HEADACHES
Take a warm shower. Try relaxation or meditation techniques. Cut down on coffee and cola drinks. Try herbal teas instead. Place a cool washcloth on your forehead.

Symptoms: HUNGER, CRAVINGS
Sometimes when you quit smoking, you can confuse craving for a cigarette with hunger pangs or oral stimulation. This can last up to several weeks. Drink water and low calorie liquids. Keep low calorie and low fat foods nearby (such as celery, carrots, pretzels, and unbuttered popcorn). Chew a toothpick, gum, ice, or fennel seeds. Try low calorie hard candy.

Symptom: INSOMNIA
Restless sleep and dreams about smoking are common and can last about one week. Take a hot shower, avoid caffeine after 6:00 PM, drink warm milk, or try deep breathing before bed. Or drink a cup of chamomile tea before bed.

Symptoms: IRRITABLE, GROUCHY, TENSE
When your body is craving nicotine, you are in a chronic state of nervous stimulation, which means you might be irritable, grouchy, and tense. This can last 1 to 2 weeks. Breathe deeply, stretch, exercise, chew nicotine gum, or cut out caffeine.

Symptom: LACK OF CONCENTRATION
Nicotine is a stimulant. So, when you quit, give your body a few weeks to adjust. Change activities, get some fresh air, listen to music or watch TV, do more physical activity, and avoid caffeine. Also, avoid tasks that need your concentration for long periods of time.

Symptom: LONELINESS
Cigarettes can often take the place of a close friend. When you quit smoking, it can seem like you’ve lost that friend. When you feel lonely, call your support person. Distract yourself. Knit, sew, or sing along to loud music.

Symptom: TIGHTNESS IN THE CHEST
Tightness in the chest could be from tension or from sore muscles due to coughing. Your lungs are removing mucus and tar which causes coughing. Your lungs aren’t used to getting extra oxygen. So the tightness in your chest can last a few days. It can feel like a sharp, burning sensation similar to when you’re running really hard. Don’t panic. The discomfort will pass.
Nicotine Replacement Therapies (NRTs) are medications that provide your body with nicotine without the harmful effects of smoking. This means NRTs can help with physical withdrawal symptoms. If you use an NRT, you double your chances of quitting smoking successfully. If you use them properly, all NRTs are effective. But the side effects of each are different. Use the following information to help you decide which NRT is best for you.

**Nicotine Gum:** It releases nicotine into your bloodstream through the lining of your mouth. There is a special way to chew and “park” the gum. Ask your doctor or pharmacist about the right way to chew the gum. You can safely use from 9 to 12 pieces of gum each day. You can also get nicotine lozenges that you suck on.

**Benefits:** The nicotine in the gum stops many physical withdrawal symptoms and cravings. It’s easy to use. Whenever you get a craving, you chew a piece of the gum. Also, it keeps your mouth busy.

**Drawbacks:** Nicotine gum is not recommended if you have dentures or recent dental work. You need to learn how to chew the gum properly in order for it to work. You can become dependent on the gum if you use it too often or for too long.

**Side Effects:** Some side effects from nicotine gum are sore mouth or throat, dental problems, belching, and mouth watering.

**Nicotine Patch:** This is the most commonly used NRT. The Patch releases nicotine into your bloodstream through your skin. You should not use it if you are still smoking. If you do, you can overdose on nicotine.

**Benefits:** It’s easy to use. After you put the Patch on in the morning, you don’t have to remember to do anything else. It keeps a steady supply of nicotine in your bloodstream. This means you don’t have as many cravings for a cigarette.

**Drawbacks:** The Patch is not recommended if you have skin problems or allergies to adhesive tape. Also, it doesn’t help keep your mouth busy. You can become dependent on the Patch if you use it for too long.
**Side Effects:** Some side effects from the nicotine patch are itching, redness, burning, or skin rash at the site of the Patch.

**The Nicotine Inhaler:** This is a new NRT, only recently made available in Canada. It has a mouthpiece and a cartridge that contains a little plug full of nicotine. You inhale nicotine through the mouthpiece by taking puffs, just like a cigarette. (But you don’t light it up!)

**Benefits:** The inhaler keeps your hands busy. It gives you the same feeling as a cigarette does when you move your hand to your mouth. The inhaler releases less nicotine per puff than a cigarette does. So the withdrawal effects are less severe. It looks like a cigarette so you can pretend you’re still smoking (if that’s important to you!) You don’t need a prescription to get a nicotine inhaler.

**Drawbacks:** The inhaler is not recommended if you have a breathing problem, such as asthma, allergies, or a sinus condition. You can become dependent on the inhaler if you use it for too long.

**Side Effects:** Some side effects from the nicotine inhaler are cough, throat irritation, or an upset stomach.

**Non-Nicotine Cessation Aids** are prescription drugs that can help you quit smoking. The only prescription drug that is effective is Zyban (or Wellbutrin, which is a different name for the same drug). Zyban is an anti-depressant. Other forms of anti-depressants don’t seem to work for people who are trying to quit smoking.

**Zyban:** This is a prescription drug that you can take every day on its own. Or you can use it with an NRT (such as the nicotine patch or gum).

**Benefits:** Zyban reduces withdrawal symptoms and cravings. You don’t get dependent on it. It works well for people who have been smoking for a long time.

**Drawbacks:** Zyban is not as effective for young smokers. You have to remember to take it every day. It takes a while (up to 4 weeks) before you feel its effects in your system.

**Side Effects:** Some side effects from Zyban are excitement, anxiety, insomnia, restlessness, constipation, loss of appetite, dry mouth, dizziness, nausea, and unusual weight loss. Some more serious side effects are confusion, irregular heart beat, and severe headache. If you have any of these, you should quit using the Zyban and call your doctor right away.