



Saturday May 30 2020

Young people and smoking the focus for World No Tobacco Day

On World No Tobacco Day, the University of Tasmania's Menzies Institute for Medical Research is asking young people to participate in an online survey to gauge their views on smoking.

Every year on May 31, the World Health Organisation recognises World No Tobacco Day to raise awareness of the dangers of smoking and to discourage the use of tobacco in any form. This year the campaign is focusing on tobacco company tactics that lure young people into smoking.

Associate Professor Seana Gall, Leader of the Cardiovascular and Respiratory Health and Disease theme at Menzies, said the online survey would be used to inform policies and programs that may help to protect young people from tobacco harm.

"We don't have any clear evidence about what young people think of smoking. It's important that we talk directly to young people to understand what they think and address any false assumptions. Programs and policies about smoking directly impact young people but they are not often consulted about their opinions.

"To make the survey representative, we are aiming to have young people from all walks of life participate. In addition to getting a chance to have their say, people who complete the survey can go into the draw to win one of fifteen \$50 vouchers."

The Director of the Menzies Institute, Distinguished Professor Alison Venn, said it was important research for the health and wellbeing of the Tasmanian community.

"Tasmania has the second-highest smoking rate in the country, after the Northern Territory. We know that smoking is one of the largest risk factors for preventable disease, and at Menzies our mission is to improve the health of Tasmanians.

"We need to understand young people's relationship with tobacco so we can work towards reducing the harm and cost to the community. This research will enable us to make recommendations for programs that are informed by the views of young Tasmanians."

Young people can share their views by following this link to the online survey
<https://redcap.utas.edu.au/surveys/?s=XHTWLJTPWA>

Participants can go into the draw for a \$50 voucher.

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