ROLES OF SCHOOL FOR A TOBACCO-FREE COMMUNITY

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Tobacco is the common name for several plants in the Nicotiana genus and the Solanaceae (nightshade) family that originated from South America and has spread globally throughout the years. Many believed that tobacco is a “cash crop” because of its growing industry for almost over fifty years. The leaves of the tobacco plant is cured to produce tobacco which is used for smoking in pipe tobacco, cigarettes and cigars. This contains nicotine which could lead to many diseases, such as coronary heart disease, emphysema and stroke that affects the respiratory and circulatory systems of the human body. These non-communicable diseases are the aftermath that a person might suffer upon using or just merely exposing oneself to cigarette smoking.

Despite of the adverse effects of tobacco on the body and surroundings, the number of smokers is increasing in an alarming state. The government addresses this problem through campaigns that increase people’s awareness of the risky and dangerous effects of cigarette smoking on one’s health.

Being one of the government institutions, schools have a big role to help address tobacco issues and smoking problems. It is the educators’ responsibility to explain to the students on the risks of smoking tobacco. It was shown in the study conducted by Nwobi, et al. (2018) that cigarette smoking has become “contagious” among college students rapidly spreading and influencing them to smoke tobacco. Hence, it is the school’s accountability, together with the local government unit, to ensure that stores within five kilometres radius from the school do not sell tobacco products as stipulated in the DepEd

Reist (2007) emphasized in his article which was published online that the students stay longer in schools and therefore it is a good venue to direct the path away from using tobacco. In addition to that, educators may use different strategies that may inculcate the disadvantages of cigarette smoking. Educate them about the risks and health problems that they can get from tobacco smoke. Moreover, schools may create programs addressing tobacco problems and be linked to the rules and programs that are existing in the community. Teachers may conduct a symposium and invite the parents to tackle the problems about smoking.

To sum up, teachers and administrators together with the parents, must work dedicatedly to lead the students to stay away from using tobacco for it does not only pose danger to their health, but also, the health of everyone else who will inhale the smoke from their tobacco.

References:

