

Smoke Out Promotes More Birthdays

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Diana Gish/KMXT

This Thursday, the American Cancer Society is promoting national wellness with "The Great American Smoke Out". It's the 34th anniversary of the event which encourages smokers to lay off the smokes for a day.

Betty MacTavish is the tobacco education coordinator for the Kodiak Area Native Association. She said that the point of the annual event is to help "future non-smokers" take that big step. The Great American Smoke Out encourages all smokers in the country to commit to at least one tobacco-free day.

-- (Smoke Out 1 "One Day a year ... going cold turkey")

According to The American Cancer Society, 70 percent of smokers say that they would like to quit. The organization has a website to help people reach that challenging goal.

There's also help available through the "Alaska Tobacco Quit Line": 1-800-QUIT-NOW:

-- (Smoke Out 2 "When you call ... that type of thing.")

Experts say that focusing on what it is you want to achieve creates a more powerful mindset for change than focusing on what it is you want

to give up. And for those who think they can't get past the desire to light up, MacTavish has some good news: that overwhelming urge is not going to last forever.

-- (Smoke Out 3 "If you have ... that works too,")

MacTavish says that the theme of this year's Smoke Out is "Less smoking leads to more birthdays".

Those who don't like birthdays may need to find some other form of inspiration but the point is that along with increasing life expectancy, non-smokers give themselves a much a better shot at enjoying a healthier future.

-- (Smoke Out 4 "One thing that ... do it now.")

If you're interested in trading in smoke for fresh air and would like some help, you can try the American Cancer Society's Great American Smoke Out web page at cancer-dot-org. There you can find tools such as "The Quit Clock" and the "Craving Stopper" a game to help distract you from you-know-what. For one-on-one support and free nicotine replacement you can call the Alaska Tobacco Quit Line at 1- 800-QUIT NOW.

Again, "The Great American Smoke-Out" is this Thursday, November 19th.

