

English 111, cause effect

Health & Medicine, Addiction



English 111, Cause/Effect February 12, 2013 Why people continue to smoke despite the known health risks In 2010 the CDC stated they replied to around fifteen thousand people's questions, all concerning tobacco and its use (Tobacco). That is not even including the around six million people who simply viewed their " Smoking and Tobacco Use Web site" (Tobacco). With the amount of information that is readily available, and the large number of people viewing the information about known health risks, it seems people would not continue smoking. Yet they do and it seems there are new smokers every day. Even an on and off smoker such as myself is left wondering why people continue or begin smoking after having access to this knowledge. It seems only a drastic measure will be able to curb smoking, something that people can't just change the channel, or look away from. People will continue smoking until tobacco companies either stop selling tobacco products or a campaign is started that is extremely direct in showing the long term effects of smoking. Lectures could even be given in elementary schools, to reach people with this information as young as possible. The fact that children and teens don't often worry about their future health is one of the main reasons they start smoking. Not realizing up to ninety percent of them will continue smoking through adulthood (Child). Research has even shown that almost all smokers first tried some sort of tobacco product before they had even graduated from high school (Child). It is common knowledge that tobacco companies have tried to market their products to children and teenagers. Tobacco companies would even use cartoons as mascots, to try and make smoking look fun, or cool. Wanting to be perceived as cool is one of the most common reasons younger people say

they begin smoking (Smith). Since you have to legally be at least eighteen years of age to buy and possess tobacco products, younger people may view smoking as a mature, or adult thing to do. This idea is only reinforced if and when the adults and authority figures in younger people's lives are smokers (Smith). Why would anyone want to continue smoking and show an example of something that can cause such major health issues? There is the obvious reason of being addicted. Most smokers will tell you that tobacco use is not an easy thing to quit. Some doctors even have said nicotine is more addictive, and so harder to quit, than cocaine and heroin (Six). As I stated earlier I have smoked on and off myself for some time. I would quit for a while, and then at some point, most commonly at a social event, I would start smoking again. People who smoke in social situations are considered 'social smokers' (Six). Then the issue of nicotine addiction comes into play and not long after, many social smokers eventually become just smokers (Smith). Similar to when teenagers are around adults who smoke, when adults are around other people who smoke it is much more likely they will also end up or continue smoking. Adults can also be influenced by seeing smoking glamorized by people they may look up to. For instance, smoking is portrayed in some movies and television shows. People then see actors and actresses, with great skin and pearly white teeth, smoking while still seeming to 'have it all'. What people may not realize is that the long term effects of continuing smoking are the exact opposite. Most people have heard a smoker coughing before, or seen that smoking can age the skin and yellow the teeth. . Since tobacco companies are not likely to start advertising explicitly what may happen to someone's health if they continue smoking, it

is important for tobacco products of any kind to not be glamorized in the media. If the media wishes to have an actor or actress smoking in a scene, they should perhaps portray a smoker that looks and acts like someone who has continued smoking their entire life. This might be hard to accomplish though, since many movies and shows are fictional. A message in the opening credits could be listed, stating that the tobacco use in the film is not an accurate depiction. The message could then go on to briefly describe, even show a picture, of someone whose health reflects continual smoking. By doing this there would no longer be any confusion in thinking smoking looks cool. If no one thought smoking looked cool, maybe there would be less smoking at social functions, perhaps fewer smokers, and then fewer reasons to continue smoking. Works Cited " Child and Teen Tobacco Use" American Cancer Society. American Cancer Society, 28 September 2009. Web. 12 February 2013. " Six Reasons Why People Smoke" Why People Smoke. HaveToQuitSmoking. com, 24 May 2008. Web. 20 February 2013. < <http://www.havetoquitsmoking.com/why-people-smoke/six-reasons-why-people-smoke>> Smith, Neil. " Five Reasons People Start and Continue to Smoke" Health. am. American Medical Network, 15 January 2010. Web. 12 February 2013. " Tobacco Use" Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 16 November 2012. Web. 12 February 2013. <http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/aag/osh.htm#> Word count- 743