



## NEWS RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **THE RAPIDES FOUNDATION JOINS CAMPAIGN THAT SHOWS SMOKERS HOW TO 'BECOME AN EX®'**

The Rapides Foundation has joined a new public health initiative called EX® that aims to help those struggling with the difficult process of quitting smoking.

EX works to change the way smokers feel about the overall process of quitting and guide them to valuable resources to build a successful quit attempt. The campaign was created by an alliance of national organizations and state health agencies.

The campaign is part of the Foundation's *Get Healthy Cenla* Tobacco Prevention and Control initiative.

The EX public education effort will encourage the 24.9 percent of Central Louisiana adults who smoke to approach quitting smoking as "re-learning life without cigarettes."

An interactive Web site, [www.BecomeAnEX.org](http://www.BecomeAnEX.org), features tools and information to help smokers prepare for quitting by developing a personalized plan. The site offers a virtual community where smokers share personal stories and successes about their quit attempts to help encourage others to quit.

More than 50 percent of smokers in Central Louisiana want to quit, but statistics show that only about 5 percent are successful in quitting long-term.

"Quitting smoking is one of the single most important lifestyle changes people can make to improve and extend their lives," said Joe Rosier, president and CEO of The Rapides Foundation. "The EX program will give smokers a chance to relearn their life without cigarettes."

In 2006-2007, The American Legacy Foundation, the national public health foundation best known for its truth® youth-smoking prevention campaign, pilot tested EX throughout the country. As a result, Legacy convened several of the nation's leading public health organizations to form the National Alliance for Tobacco Cessation (NATC) to launch EX nationally. The NATC is a growing group of states, nonprofit organizations, foundations and corporations, all dedicated to helping people quit smoking.

All of these organizations agree that while smokers may know why they should quit, many do not know how. Therefore, EX steers away from focusing solely on the reasons for quitting and instead empowers smokers to use free resources and methods that have been proven to increase smokers' chances of quitting successfully.

“Most smokers who want to quit do not understand what it takes to conquer their nicotine addiction, or they underestimate how powerful that addiction can be,” says American Legacy Foundation President and CEO Cheryl Heaton. “The approach provided by EX changes that equation by showing them how they can quit – namely by combining coaching, pharmacotherapy and social support, so that smokers have the support that they need at the times when they're most likely to crave a cigarette and smoke.”

The campaign includes television and radio spots that began airing in Central Louisiana in August.

Gethealthycenla.org includes links to EX and to other state resources that help people quit smoking.