



NEWS RELEASE

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THE RAPIDES FOUNDATION LAUNCHES NEW TOBACCO ADS

A series of powerful ads designed to drive smokers to services that help them quit begin airing today on Central Louisiana radio and television stations.

The Rapides Foundation acquired these ads after joining the National Alliance for Tobacco Cessation, which created the "We Know It's Hard" campaign. The campaign is part of the Foundation's **Get Healthy Cenla** Tobacco Prevention and Control initiative.

Each ad in the "We Know It's Hard" campaign presents a situation where a smoker who is struggling to quit is experiencing frustration, depression or anger with the quitting process.

By showing empathy for smokers, smokers can feel more comfortable reaching out for help, since they know they'll be dealing with someone who speaks their language, according to the National Alliance for Tobacco Cessation.

The ads drive smokers to the interactive Web site, www.BecomeAnEX.org, which 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.

"Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of premature death in Central Louisiana," said Joe Rosier, president and CEO of The Rapides Foundation. "We invite all smokers to go to the 'Become an Ex' Web site and take advantage of the free quit-smoking plan."

The ads follow a campaign called "Re-Learn" which aired on location stations in August and September. "Re-Learn" was intended to encourage the 24.9 percent of Central Louisiana adults who smoke to approach quitting smoking as "re-learning life without cigarettes."

The Rapides Foundation also is targeting youth in a series of ads called "Sunny Side of truth®" that began airing in August. Acquired from the American Legacy Foundation, this campaign exposes the tactics of the tobacco industry, the truth about addiction and the health effects and social consequences of smoking. It allows teens to make informed choices about tobacco use by giving them the facts about the industry and its products.

Both advertising campaigns will run through the end of the year.