

Crete, Andrea

From: Ken Elstein <kenelstein@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2024 6:12 PM
To: Crete, Andrea; khoag@belchertownps.org
Subject: Economic Impacts of Tobacco Free Generation

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Though it is our responsibility to help reduce the diseases caused by tobacco use, there are also very important economic implications.

Unfortunately, the initial emphasis has been on the small negative impact on local nicotine dealers. However, a very strong case can be made that the positive impact on Belchertown residents is much more significant.

- Academic researchers suggest that a (modal) average for smokers is about 15 cigarettes per day. Obviously, some smokers smoke a couple of daily cigarettes, whereas others smoke several packs. Nevertheless, 15 is a good, defensible approximation.
- In round numbers, that means that the average smoker spends about ten dollars a day, or \$3650 annually on cigarettes.
- If there are over 1000 smokers in Belchertown (a decent estimate), then they are spending over \$3.6 million per year. Most of that money is leaving Belchertown, leaving Massachusetts, and is going to Big Tobacco. That \$3.6 million could be spent here in Belchertown restaurants and other retailers.
- Regarding Tobacco Free Generation (TFG), for every 100 young people who do not each start spending \$3650 annually on cigarettes, they will collectively have \$365,000 more annual disposable cash in their pockets. That is money they can spend on recreation, education, and other positive uses.
- There is evidence that many people successfully quit smoking when they are educated about the financial benefits of quitting.

Though you -- Andrea and Kris -- should continue to stress the medical benefits of TFG, others can speak about the economic impacts.

Thanks!