

## Communications Office

Peterborough County-City Health Unit  
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[www.pcchu.ca](http://www.pcchu.ca)



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, November 22, 2011, Peterborough

### Health Unit Invites Local Youth to Help Butt Out Smoking in Movies on November 24

#### *Free Screening of “The Nightmare Before Christmas” Offered at Showplace*

The Peterborough County-City Health Unit’s youth leadership group “Speak Up! Speak Out!” is inviting local youth to attend a free film screening on Thursday, November 24 as part of a local effort to raise awareness about the importance of smoke-free movies.

“When youth see smoking in movies and other forms of cultural entertainment, it normalizes tobacco use which is entirely the wrong message to send to this population,” says Keith Beecroft, Youth Development Worker at the Health Unit who helped organize the free movie event. “Scientific research has proven there is a link between exposure to tobacco imagery and youth smoking initiation, so events like this one are an important way the community can remain vigilant against the tobacco industry and its efforts to push the deadly products they manufacture.”

The Health Unit is offering a free screening of Tim Burton’s classic movie “The Nightmare Before Christmas” at Showplace on Thursday, November 24 from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. as part of this year’s A.C.T.I.O.N (Advocates Challenging the Tobacco Industry in Ontario Now) week events. This year’s A.C.T.I.O.N week theme is critical thinking and smoke-free movies. Movie-goers will enjoy free popcorn, hot chocolate, games and a chance to win great door prizes including a tablet, digital camera, and iPod Touch, as well as gift certificates.

For more information about the November 24 event, contact Keith Beecroft at 705-743-1000, ext. 238 or visit [www.pcchu.ca](http://www.pcchu.ca) .

In April, Peterborough’s Board of Health endorsed five policy recommendations developed by the Ontario Coalition for Smoke-Free Movies that call for the following changes to the provincial movie industry:

1. Rate new movies with smoking 18A in Ontario, with the sole exceptions being when the tobacco presentation clearly and unambiguously reflects the dangers

NEWS RELEASE

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- and consequences of tobacco use or is necessary to represent smoking of a real historical figure.
2. Require producers to certify on-screen that no one involved in the production of the movie received anything of value in consideration for using or displaying tobacco.
  3. Require strong anti-smoking ads to be shown before any movie with tobacco use at the distributor's expense, regardless of rating and distribution channel.
  4. Require producers to stop identifying tobacco brands.
  5. Require that films with tobacco imagery assigned a G, PG or 14A rating be ineligible for federal and provincial film subsidies.

To download the Health Unit's staff report on smoke-free movies, visit [www.pcchu.ca](http://www.pcchu.ca) or click on [www.smokefreemovies.ca](http://www.smokefreemovies.ca) for more information.

### Quick Facts About Tobacco Use and the Film Industry:

- Film ratings directly affect the amount of exposure to tobacco in films that young people receive.
- In Canada, the majority of films released in 2009 were youth-rated, and 1.117 billion tobacco impressions were delivered in G/PG/14A films in theatres. The number of tobacco impressions is calculated by multiplying the number of tobacco incidents per film by the number of paid admissions per film.
- While reports of in-theatre tobacco depictions represent an index of exposure, they underestimate the total tobacco impressions delivered, since films are also viewed on DVD and Blu-ray™, video-on-demand, cable, satellite, and broadcast and broadband media.
- Although most movies viewed in Canada are produced by U.S. companies, the number of youth-rated films with tobacco depictions shown in theatres is higher in Canada than the U.S. because provincial film boards classify more movies as 14A or PG that are rated R in the U.S.
- In 2009, 125 of the 145 movies with tobacco released in Canadian theatres were youth-rated films (G, PG, 14A) delivering more than two-thirds (68%) of all in theatre tobacco impressions.

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### For further information, please contact:

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