

## Smoking target of teenagers' workbook

By Pam Ferris-Olson, Contributing Writer

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CENTERVILLE — Hanbum Kim, 18, plans on majoring in chemistry at Ohio State University. The Centerville High senior, however, doesn't need a college degree to know that smoking is unhealthy.

Peer pressure is what got Anshika Khare, 15, a sophomore at the high school to join the Asian American Youth Council of Dayton. Khare and Kim are two of 19 teenagers from Centerville and Beavercreek area schools who contributed to Say No to Tobacco: An anti-tobacco puzzle workbook, the latest anti-smoking activity for their group previously known as Asian American Youth Against Tobacco.

According to AAYCD adviser Betty Lacey, the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Pacific Islanders reported that Asian teens in grades seven through 12 have the greatest increase in smoking rates compared to other groups.

"Asian's have solid reasons for reaching out to their community but tobacco education is an issue for everyone, especially teens, since it is well known that tobacco companies are targeting them to be future customers," Lacey said.

Kim said many of her friends are already in college and have begun to smoke. She tries to tell them that smoking is addictive. She knows. Her father has tried many times to quit, and has health problems as a result of his long-term use of tobacco.

The kid-friendly workbook took more than a year to create. Khare contributed cartoons. In one of them, a boy with a cigarette in his hand asks a girl on a date. The girl replies: "No way! You stink!"


The Asian youth group was originally funded through the Ohio Tobacco Control Foundation. Those funds and supplemental funds from the United Way and the Physicians' Charitable Foundation are no longer available.

"Anti tobacco messaging targeting Ohio teens has all but stopped. Sadly, Ohio is ranked 50th when it comes to curbing sales to teens," Lacey said.

Her group, which is open to all teens in the Miami Valley, plans to continue with the distribution of their book and with other anti-smoking activities. Anyone interested in AAYCD or the book can contact Lacey at [aaycd.52@gmail.com](mailto:aaycd.52@gmail.com) or visit [www.aaycd.org](http://www.aaycd.org).

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