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May 29, 2009

Letter to the Editor

SUBJECT: *Protecting Children from Tobacco*

On behalf of the Heart and Stroke Foundation of B.C. & Yukon and the BC Lung Association, which make-up the Clean Air Coalition of BC, we want to congratulate the federal government for making good on their election campaign promise to protect the health of Canadian children through proposed amendments to the *Tobacco Act*. These amendments include eliminating tobacco advertising to children, eliminating flavours and additives from tobacco products that are attractive to children, and establishing a minimum package size of 20 for cigarillos, little cigars, and blunt wraps.

Currently marketed in kid attractive flavours such as cherry and chocolate, cigarillos and other flavoured tobacco items are often a “starter” product for youth. They are as addictive and dangerous to one’s health as cigarettes. And since they can and are sold individually or in “kiddie packs”, they are affordable to price-sensitive youth.

We applaud the efforts of the federal government in protecting the health and welfare of the nation’s young people by closing these tobacco loopholes.

Sincerely,

R.F. Bobbe Wood, MA
President & CEO
Heart and Stroke Foundation
of B.C. & Yukon

Scott McDonald
Executive Director
BC Lung Association

cc. Jack Boomer, Director, Clean Air Coalition of B.C.