

Carrick Academy pupils are top class

For the second year, pupils from Carrick Academy in Maybole have taken part in a national training programme to help reduce the numbers of young people taking up or trying smoking.

The ASSIST programme aims to reduce smoking among young people aged 12 to 13 by training influential students to spread the word on new norms of behaviour through their established social networks.

There are several stages to the ASSIST programme:

- Identifying, through a peer questionnaire, the most influential students in the year group.
- Training selected students as 'peer supporters' to have informal conversations with other students in their year about the risks of smoking and the benefits of being smoke-free.
- Providing support for the peer supporters at four school-based follow-up sessions.

Seventeen first year pupils took part in the ASSIST training over 14 weeks of the last school term. NHS Ayrshire & Arran's smoking cessation service, Fresh Air-shire, organised the programme to run in the school.

Councillor William Grant, Lifelong Learning Portfolio Holder for South Ayrshire Council said: "Bringing down rates of teenage smoking is vitally important to the health and wellbeing of young people. ASSIST gives them the facts about tobacco, and highlights the potential side effects of taking up the habit. Once they are furnished with these facts, young people are then empowered to make their own decisions and we hope they come to a sensible conclusion."

Media information

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Dr Joy Tomlinson, Interim Joint Director of Public Health, commented: “We are delighted that Carrick Academy has taken part in our ASSIST programme for the second year running. During the last academic year, more than 20,000 students throughout the UK have taken part in ASSIST. The feedback from the schools which have been involved so far has been very positive.

“NHS Ayrshire & Arran is committed to achieving the Scottish Government’s aim of having a tobacco-free generation by 2034. The ASSIST programme is just one of the ways through which we are working with young people to provide the facts about smoking.”

Ends

Date of release: Wednesday 5 July 2017



The S1 pupils proudly show off their certificates following their successful completion of the programme

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