

Academy for Tobacco Prevention/Shadows of the Academy: Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Academy for Tobacco Prevention/Shadows of the Academy?

This school-based tobacco prevention resource was developed by Alberta Health Services (AHS) and the University of Lethbridge, in consultation with Alberta teachers and other stakeholders, to support the delivery of current tobacco prevention content in grades 4 to 6 classrooms. This resource is innovative, evidence-based, and follows best practice in prevention education.

The Academy for Tobacco Prevention resource uses a creative theme to give the resource context. Four interactive online lessons per grade will help students to

- *understand the risks associated with tobacco use*
- *recognize negative social influences*
- *develop strategies to learn how to resist pressure to use tobacco products*
- *establish a sense of purpose as they work together towards a common goal*

Shadows of the Academy (5th lesson) is a fun, interactive game that helps students build the social competence and social influence they need to recognize and avoid risky situations. The game delivers messages about the dangers of tobacco use and tactics for avoiding it, but also encourages teamwork and collaboration. Because all players win or lose as a team, gameplay helps students feel more comfortable and confident among their peers, particularly those outside their social circle.

The overlord, HER VILENESS represents the tobacco industry, and The Bosses or the TOXIC 12 represent tobacco industry tactics targeting youth. The HARMS signify the consequences and health risks associated with tobacco use. The HEALS symbolize ways to disarm peer pressure and avoid tobacco.

How do I access the lessons and order the games?

Academy lessons are available at <http://academy.albertaquits.ca>. On the website, there are additional teaching materials, including lesson overviews and downloadable activity sheets. There is also a video section with a game trailer, game instructional video, and a video discussing Indigenous tobacco. Basic information is required to be filled out to access the lessons. These questions are for evaluation and ongoing utilization and tracking purposes.

Card games can be ordered and shipped directly to the school by clicking the [Get the Game](#) link on academy.albertaquits.ca. The link will also provide access to the AHS Tobacco Reduction Program online resource catalogue.

How many games should a teacher order?

Two to six students can play with one deck at a time. Teachers should order the number of games required for the number of students in their classroom. It is encouraged that teachers within the same school share the decks between them.



What if I don't have a SMART board?

The online academy lessons are developed on Articulate software with a high level of interactivity that works well on a SMART board. If a SMART board is unavailable, it can be shown with a projector using PowerPoint. If there is no computer access, the content can be delivered using the downloadable lesson overviews and activity sheets.

Is the resource curriculum linked?

This resource addresses the four pillars of comprehensive school health and aligns with the cross-curricular competencies to produce Engaged Thinkers and Ethical Citizens with an Entrepreneurial Spirit as outlined in the Alberta Education Framework for Student Learning. The resource also supports challenge-based learning, with the lesson theme providing a challenge scenario on the lesson web page.

Are there specialty items?

On the AHS Tobacco Reduction Program online resource catalogue, accessed via the academy website, there will be a separate Academy section with card games, quizzer pads and temporary tattoos. There will also be other youth-related items like the Butts are Gross bookmarks and the youth tobacco brochure.

How is the new teacher resource being promoted to Alberta teachers?

The Academy for Tobacco Prevention resource will be available to Alberta teachers in September 2016. AHS will be hosting a launch/media event to officially share its availability (September 14, 2016).

The resource will be listed in the AHS Comprehensive School Health Teacher Resource document on the external AHS website, as well as through direct contact with teachers and schools from AHS staff.

What is planned for evaluation?

The University of Lethbridge (Faculty of Education and Faculty of Health Sciences) has been contracted to develop and initiate an outcome evaluation for this resource. On the academy website, there will be additional information regarding evaluation recruitment for teachers and schools. For more detailed information about this evaluation plan, please visit academy.albertaquits.ca.

Was the resource pilot tested?

Pilot testing for the resource took place in six Southern Alberta schools with 23 teachers and 552 grades 4 to 6 students receiving the program in September and October 2015. Results demonstrated that outcomes were consistently met. The following observations were made:

- *Teachers felt comfortable and confident implementing the lessons in the classroom.*
- *Students gained knowledge about tobacco prevention.*
- *Students felt confident in their refusal strategies.*
- *Students were able to identify harms associated with tobacco use.*
- *Students were also able to demonstrate co-operation and supportive social skills through playing the card game.*



How do you play the game?

Each game box comes complete with an instruction manual. The manual can also be downloaded from the academy website if needed. There is a six-minute video on the website that can be shown to the class prior to playing the game. The video explains game setup, game play, how to win and troubleshooting. The rules are a general overview for game play, but the outcomes of the game are achieved even if the rules are not followed exactly.

What is done with the information collected to access the lessons?

To access the online lessons, users need to provide their name, email address, school name, postal code, and the number of students receiving the intervention. This information is collected for evaluation and ongoing utilization tracking by AHS and the University of Lethbridge. If a teacher or school is involved in the evaluation study, they will be aware of that and would have already had contact with the University of Lethbridge. If a teacher or school is interested in being involved in the evaluation, they can contact the University of Lethbridge through the academy website.

Where do teachers find out more about the hero and boss characters?

Under Characters on the academy website there is additional background information on the TOXIC 12 and the tobacco industry tactics targeting youth that each represents. There is also hero information, including their special ability/protective factor.

Is there a place that students can find more information on the heroes and bosses?

There is a [student website](#) with enhanced character stories and academy origin stories where students can learn more about the characters either on their own time or with additional class time. This additional content can be excellent discussion starters and can provide more context to the creative academy theme.

Can AHS staff deliver the lessons in the classroom?

To maximize capacity and reach, the Academy for Tobacco Prevention/Shadows of the Academy resource was developed so that teachers could use the resource without any additional information.

AHS staff is welcome to deliver the lessons in classrooms depending on their capacity. If AHS staff is delivering the lessons, we ask that the teacher who received the program to enter their information into the website to access the lessons.

