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## Great American Smokeout November 19

### American Cancer Society Hosts 33rd Great American Smokeout

An estimated 48 million adults in the US smoke, and tobacco use is responsible for nearly one in every five deaths. For this reason, the American Cancer Society's (ACS) volunteers and staff hold the Great American Smokeout every year to help smokers quit cigarettes for at least one day, in hopes they will quit forever. More people quit smoking on this day than any other day of the year.

#### History of the Great American Smokeout

In 1971, Arthur P. Mulvaney created an event in Randolph, Mass., asking people to give up cigarettes for a day and donate the money they would have spent on cigarettes to a high school scholarship fund. In just five years, the event spread across the country, and in California, one million of the state's five million smokers quit for the day on the "Great American Smokeout." In 1977, the first national Great American Smokeout was held on the third Thursday in November, which is when it's held each year.

#### Committing to Quit

Quitline Iowa is a toll-free number to help those who want to quit smoking. They assist callers to set prepare themselves for the psychological hurdles that one can face when quitting tobacco. They provide the extra support one might need to commit to quitting. They also offer a two-week supply of nicotine patches to adults trying to quit. Quitline Iowa is a free service funded through the Iowa Department of Public Health. Call 800-Quit-Now or find them on the web at [www.quitlineiowa.org](http://www.quitlineiowa.org)

As times have changed, the focus of the Great American Smokeout has evolved from simply helping adults quit smoking to helping children and teenagers understand why they should never start smoking in the first place. The Great American Smokeout is also a time for Americans to renew their commitment to a smoke-free environment for themselves and for their children. It's never too late to quit smoking. At Parent-Teacher Conferences in October, parents were asked to sign a Smoke-Free Home and Car Pledge.

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