

## **IEHP's New Booklet – The ERADICATOR: Big Tobacco's Worst Nightmare – Targets Pre-Teens**

**SAN BERNARDINO, CA . . .** A young man on the verge of death from a lifetime of smoking and inhaling second-hand smoke is given a set of bionic lungs. Grateful for his restored health, he vows to become “The ERADICATOR” and help save the lives of millions more from “Big Tobacco.”

That's only the beginning of Inland Empire Health Plan's (IEHP) exciting new anti-smoking booklet entitled – “Big Tobacco's Worst Nightmare.”

The 77 full-color, illustrations in the 20-page booklet pack a number of powerful “Don't Smoke” messages from IEHP's anti-smoking superhero – The ERADICATOR – aimed at pre-teen boys and girls.

IEHP plans to distribute tens of thousands of The ERADICATOR anti-smoking booklets across the Inland Empire at major community events, health fairs, schools, doctors' offices, hospitals, and to IEHP members.

According to IEHP Medical Director Bradley P. Gilbert, M.D., “The ERADICATOR promotes anti-tobacco awareness to help protect kids from the dangers of tobacco and misleading tobacco advertising. We have two goals – to prevent children from ever starting to smoke cigarettes and to get them to quit smoking if they already have started.” said Dr. Gilbert.

The American Medical Association says more pre-teens are deciding to “light up” their first cigarette at a younger age than ever before:

- ❑ Every day, 6,000 kids puff their first cigarette.
- ❑ More than 3,000 of them will become regular smokers
- ❑ More than 1,000 of those regular smokers will eventually die from a tobacco-related disease.
- ❑ An estimated 5 million children and adolescents smoke cigarettes.

“IEHP has an effective program to help smokers quit,” explained Dr. Gilbert. “But we really need to make a big push to reach pre-teens before they become addicted to cigarettes. And that’s where we hope The ERADICATOR can make a difference.”

“We are trying to communicate to pre-teens in a way they will find relevant,” added IEHP Marketing Director Carl Maier. “The ERADICATOR makes a big impression on children just at the age they are deciding whether or not to try smoking.”

The ERADICATOR is the creation of Inland Empire Health Plan and is co-sponsored by the Riverside County Medical Association (RCMA) and the San Bernardino County Medical Society (SBCMS).

For more information about The ERADICATOR and his new anti-smoking booklet, contact IEHP’s Community Outreach Unit at (909) 890-2761.

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