

**ADVOCATES FIGHT FOR A WORLD WITHOUT SMOKE**



Imagine a world where there were no cigarettes, no secondhand smoke. How many fewer heart attacks would there be and how many lives would be saved? These questions have been asked my millions across the country; many of whom are speaking up and working tirelessly to pass smoke-free legislation in their communities. Some of the most passionate are those that have directly been affected by cigarette smoke.

Heart disease survivor and Olathe resident Cathy Porter is one of those passionate advocates that is working diligently to pass statewide smoke free legislation in Kansas.

The day before her 45th birthday, Cathy Porter suffered a heart attack. She later found out her heart attack was directly contributed to her 20 years of smoking. "The day I had the heart attack was the last day I smoked a cigarette. I just didn't realize the severity of it or what it could do to my family." Cathy reflected.

According to American Heart Association statistics an estimated 38,000 Americans die each year from second-hand smoke. In addition, healthcare costs associated with exposure to second-hand smoke average \$10 billion annually.

Data from a 2006 report of the U.S. Surgeon General indicated that nonsmokers who are exposed to secondhand smoke at home or at work

increase their risk of developing heart disease by 25% to 30%.

On the other side of the state line, Harold Phillips was running for City Council in Liberty, Mo. When talking with community residents, he was asked "When is our city going to go smoke free?"

"At that moment I realized I could use my pending influence in a way that would make our city a healthier place to live and work," Harold said.

Harold knew firsthand the negative effects of second-hand smoke. When Harold was a young boy his Aunt Norma passed away from lung cancer. Despite the fact that she never smoked a cigarette in her life, Harold's Uncle Dennis was a chain-smoker for 20 years and died of heart failure a few years after his wife.

"We realized at that point that Aunt Norma had died of second-hand smoke and it just wasn't fair," Harold reflected.

Cathy and Harold's personal encounters motivated them to educate others about the repercussions of smoking and they became American Heart Association You're The Cure Advocates.

In this new role, Cathy began contacting her elected officials to help pass important heart-healthy policies. Harold and Liberty residents spoke up to elected officials, educated their community and because of their efforts, Liberty, Mo. went smoke-free in November 2009.

You too can work towards creating a world without smoke. Join the American Heart Association's You're The Cure network at [www.YoureTheCure.org](http://www.YoureTheCure.org) and help create healthier places to live and work.

**FAMILY GETS A START! WITH SMALL STEPS** *It was these steps that led Mike and his family to lose over 250 LBS!*



We don't think much about the steps we take each day. But each small step can make a difference for our heart, our health, our families and our world. Starting with small steps is exactly what the Stephensons did when they decided to lose weight and lead a heart-healthier lifestyle.

Realizing that Mike Stephenson, weighting 370 LBS and his wife Patti, weighing 225 LBS were at great risk for any number of life-threatening cardiovascular diseases, they were motivated to lose weight.

"Embarrassment was also a huge motivator," Mike said. "When visiting a restaurant, I had to request a table because I couldn't fit into a booth. I did not want to fly on an airplane because I knew, according to airline policy, I would have to purchase two seats. I was completely embarrassed!"

Throughout the next two years, Mike and Patti started slowly by exercising a moderate amount each day. They decided to eat what they wanted but limit the portions and eat healthy food such as fruits and vegetables while counting calories.

The Stephensons knew the key to their success was going to be taking small steps. So it was no surprise that after two years of increased exercise, portion control and choosing healthier foods one small step at a time, Patti lost 80 LBS and Mike lost an amazing 175 LBS.

During this time, the Stephensons also became involved with the American Heart Association and learned of the Start! movement.

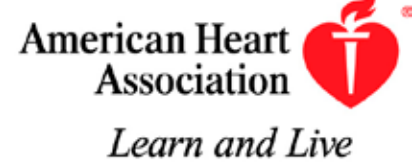
"Start! is not about radical lifestyle changes, or costly health makeovers. We didn't take pills or have surgery to lose our weight," Mike reflects. "It's about taking small steps each day to improve your health. Eat more fruits and vegetables. Park your car further away from your office. Take a walk with a loved one each night to talk through the day's successes and challenges."

To learn some simple steps on how to make physical activity a part of your family's life visit [www.StartWalkingNow.org](http://www.StartWalkingNow.org).

**TIPS TO START WALKING**

- Start slowly and build.
- Set goals—30 minutes or more a day of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity.
- Divide the 30 minutes into chunks of 15 or even 10 minutes throughout each day.
- Get a walking partner—it's more fun and you can encourage each other!
- Avoid the elevator at work or escalator at the mall—take the stairs.
- Take the worst parking place in the back of the lot—the extra steps add up!
- Start! today and visit [www.StartWalkingNow.org](http://www.StartWalkingNow.org) for free tools.

 Read more about our survivors at [KCMag.com](http://KCMag.com)



nationally sponsored by:



locally sponsored by:

