

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Run towards a smoke-free life with Run to Quit

Canadian Cancer Society and Running Room launch Canada's first program of its kind to help people quit smoking and learn to run

Ottawa, ON (January 9, 2013) – Tobacco remains the number one preventable killer with 36 Canadians dying every day from tobacco use. The Canadian Cancer Society and Running Room have teamed up to help the 2 million Canadians who are still addicted to tobacco with this morning's launch of **Run to Quit**, an innovative smoking cessation program based on adopting running as a means to quit smoking. Early research shows that physical activity can significantly help those trying to quit. **Run to Quit** could revolutionize the way people quit smoking.

Building upon the successful running programs of the Running Room and the expertise of the Canadian Cancer Society in helping people quit smoking, **Run to Quit** is specifically designed to support participants as they overcome their nicotine addiction while becoming life-long runners. To help ensure success, participants can register with a friend or family member as their "quit buddy", as well as involve their family and friends to pledge their support by donating to the Canadian Cancer Society.

"Despite all of the progress made in tobacco prevention and cessation over the past 20-30 years, 17 per cent of Canadians still smoke. On average, it takes people five to seven attempts at quitting before remaining smoke-free," says John Atkinson, Senior Manager, Canadian Cancer Society, Ontario Division. "I tried to quit smoking eight times before I was successful and running was my key to success. I am confident that Run to Quit will increase a participant's odds of success because unlike other methods, Run to Quit combines physical activity, education and personalized support."

Run to Quit clinics will be held from April until June at a Running Room location in Ottawa and will also be available to all Canadians online at **runtoquit.com**. Participants will receive education, resources and support from Run to Quit coaches; a running program that will teach participants how to run/walk 5K by the end of 10 weeks; plus additional support from the Canadian Cancer Society's Smokers' Helpline. The program culminates in a graduation 5K race June 23, 2013 in Ottawa to celebrate participants' successes.

"For me, running was a way to start thinking like an athlete, and substitute a healthy addiction for a negative addiction. As a smoker, I rewarded myself or consoled myself by smoking," explains John Stanton, Running Room founder and author of 8 best-selling books on running. "Now as an athlete I make my lifestyle choices based on performance, and live life to the fullest."

According to early research studies, exercise can reduce cravings, withdrawal symptoms, negative moods and weight gain. Physical activity, such as running can help about 25% of smokers to successfully quit compared with only 4% who try quitting cold turkey.

MORE

About the Canadian Cancer Society, Ontario Division

The Canadian Cancer Society is a national community-based organization of volunteers whose mission is the eradication of cancer and the enhancement of the quality of life of people living with cancer. The Canadian Cancer Society is marking its 75th Anniversary in 2013. It is an occasion to celebrate our successes over 75 years while recognizing the work that still needs to be done in our fight for life. When you want to know more about cancer, visit our website cancer.ca or call our toll-free, bilingual Cancer Information Service at 1-888-939-3333.

About Running Room Ltd.

The Running Room was founded in 1984 in one room of an old house shared with a hairdressing shop in Edmonton, Alberta. Today, this family-owned company is one of North America's most recognized names in running and walking. The success of the Running Room is reliant on the fact that it doesn't just sell shoes and equipment; it sells a commitment to active living. For more information about the Running Room, please visit: www.runningroom.com or to learn more about registering for the **Run to Quit** program, please visit www.runningroom.com/hm/inside.php?lang=1&id=4913.

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