



Press release

The Quit to Win! Challenge “Cigarettes will be taking it on the chin!” promises José Gaudet

Montreal, December 15, 2009 – Being presented for an 11th year, the *Quit to Win! Challenge* is returning in force and inviting all Quebecers who want to put an end to cigarettes to take part from March 1 to April 11, 2010. Faithful to its tradition, the *Challenge* favours a motivating and positive tone, all the more so this year in that the humorist **José Gaudet**, half of the popular duo *Les Grande Gueules*, has agreed to be the new spokesman – and even to take up the challenge to quit smoking himself!

A proven approach

Not only is the *Quit to Win! Challenge* an ideal opportunity to quit smoking, but smokers who participate benefit from a proven approach: close to 2 participants out of 3 succeed in not smoking for the 6 weeks that the *Challenge* lasts, an excellent success rate.

The Challenge’s winning formula rests on two key elements:

- **Registration in pairs**, which gives smokers the choice of making the commitment with either a non-smoking sponsor or a teammate who also wants to quit;
- **Free support**, offered in different forms, *before* the *Challenge* begins to help participants properly prepare themselves, *during* the *Challenge* so that they take concrete action to stop smoking, and after the six weeks are up to help them stay on course.

José’s Challenge

After several attempts, José Gaudet now wants to give up smoking for good. In other words: cigarettes and him – it’s all over! His strategy? Formalize his resolution to quit by signing up for the *Challenge* and taking advantage of the participation in pairs and of the exceptional support that participants receive. “Mario Tessier and I have been a duo for 17 years,” he explains. “I’m more than a little familiar with the advantages of working as a team. Mutual assistance, support, solidarity... I’m confident that the same approach applied to the *Challenge* – in addition to the help offered to participants – will finally let me succeed in giving up smoking.”

Smokers who share José Gaudet’s commitment to quitting and who register for the *Challenge* can choose the date to quit that best suits them between December 15, 2009, and March 1, 2010. They will then pledge to **not smoke during the six weeks of the Challenge, which runs from March 1 to April 11, 2010.**

More support...for more success!

In signing up for the *Quit to Win! Challenge*, participants get to benefit from different forms of free support, an invaluable asset in increasing their chances of winning the fight against cigarettes:

- A **support kit available at PJC Jean Coutu pharmacies** on presentation of proof of registration in the *Challenge*. The kit contains useful information, resources and objects for quitting;
- The **QuitChallenge.ca website**, a source of top-notch information to help prepare for and live through the quitting process as well as a link to a dynamic virtual community where thoughts and experiences can be exchanged and mutual support is provided;
- The ***I'm Butting Out series of e-mails***, sent exclusively to participants for a one-year period;
- The **1 866 jarrête (527-7383) line** and the **Centres d'abandon du tabagisme** (quit smoking centres) for personalized support provided by advisors trained in helping people quit smoking.

Something new for 2010: 500 TELUS subscribers registered in the *Challenge* will have the opportunity of taking part in a pilot project, the **STOMP program**, which consists of **text messages** of encouragement and information but also of motivation to help those participants resist the cravings to smoke. The texts will be sent out continually and completely free of charge to participants' mobile phones for over 6 months.

Time to sign up!

Whether we're occasional or habitual smokers, whether it's our first or our seventh attempt at stopping, the *Quit to Win! Challenge* is for all of us who want to take concrete action to free ourselves from tobacco. **Registration is before March 1, 2010, at QuitChallenge.ca.** Participants who honour their commitment are eligible to win wonderful prizes with a total value of over \$10,000.

About the *Quit to Win! Challenge*

The *Quit to Win! Challenge*, now in its 11th year, is an initiative of ACTI-MENU, a company associated with the Prevention Division of the Montreal Heart Institute. It is carried out in partnership with a number of public and private organizations, including the Québec Ministry of Health and Social Services (Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec), the Québec Public Health Departments (Directions de santé publique du Québec), the Canadian Cancer Society, Jean Coutu, Pfizer, Novartis and TELUS Health Solutions.

The Québec initiative was inspired by the World Health Organization's big international Quit & Win challenge, which originated in Finland. Since 2000, more than 276,000 smokers have taken part in the *Quit to Win! Challenge*.

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SOURCE:

Sébastien C. Fassier
Communication Manager, ACTI-MENU
514 985-2466, ext. 273
sfassier@actimenu.ca

INFORMATION/INTERVIEWS:

Katia Robillard
Senior Consultant, Casacom
514 286-2145, ext. 227
krobillard@casacom.ca