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## How Religion Can Help Decrease Smoking Prevalence among Adolescents in Indonesia

With the Muslim religion being an important influence in the daily lives of most Indonesians and smoking being deemed “Mukruh”, local religious leaders can make a difference in tobacco cessation in their local communities.<sup>1</sup> That is because Muslims adults and adolescents are less likely to smoke or more ready to quit if they have strong religious beliefs.<sup>2,3</sup> Religious activities such as praying or gathering at mosques to study creates better self-control and can act as a stress reducer in place of tobacco use. Local leaders can learn how to convey health risks that are associated with tobacco use.

Religious messages can be more effective than non-religious messages in individuals with stronger religious beliefs.<sup>4</sup> Religious leaders can use tobacco cessation messages based on the Islam principle of caring for one’s health and harming others is forbidden.

*“Smoking around others can cause harm and discomfort. Causing harm to other people is haram.”*

*“Smoking harms your body and health over time. Causing harm to yourself is haram.”*

As a religious leader in your local community, your influence can help lower the high tobacco use and its health risks that is seen among adolescents in Indonesia. The current government is working on stricter controls through limiting sales, prohibiting smoking areas, and limiting tobacco advertising. Your role is important in the fight against the tobacco companies that continue to have a strong influence in the country.

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