

THE DAILY ARDMOREITE

Great American Smoke Out

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By Jennifer Lindsey, Education Writer

Dr. Peter DeBenedittus spoke to students across Carter County and to the Turning Point Coalition last week for the Great American Smoke Out.

DeBenedittus studies the techniques advertisers use to influence consumers in often misleading ways.

During his visit to Carter County, he gave presentations on how cigarette advertisements try to convince boys that cigarettes will make them look tough and convince girls that they will look pretty if they smoke.

He told the students, "Advertisers think you're stupid," in reference to the way tobacco commercials are focused on the youth audience.

DeBenedittus also showed video clips that illustrated the negative aspects of cigarette smoking.

"The bottom line is that advertisers want to convince you you're broken and that their product will make you better," DeBenedittus said.

He speaks to more than 50,000 students (kindergarten through college) and trains more than 1,000 teachers and health/prevention activists annually on how to use science-based media education for prevention.

He has also presented on the topics of underage and binge drinking, violence prevention, eating disorders, body image, parents around media and consumerism.

He has consulted for the Centers for Disease Control, the American Medical Association, and the White House Office on Drug Control Policy. He is also the author of *Stranger in Your Living Room* and was recently featured on the CBS news magazine *48 Hours*.

After running an ad agency for 10 years, DeBenedittus said he wanted to make people aware of the morbidities that are sold to us.

DeBenedittus spoke to students at Lone Grove, Plainview, Healdton, Fox, Wilson, Springer and Ardmore as well as a Turning Point meeting at the Carter County Health Department.

Janie Horton from the Carter County Tobacco Use Prevention Center, which sponsored DeBenedittus' visit said that this year she wanted to make the kids aware of the advertising lies tobacco companies use to get kids to start smoking.



Dr. Peter DeBenedittus speaks to students at Ardmore High School.