

This book is part of the Inuutsiarniq Reading Series, developed by the Department of Health in Nunavut. The Inuutsiarniq Reading Series is a unique, Nunavut-developed literacy initiative that infuses Northern values of healthy living and self-care into a culturally appropriate reading program.

The Inuutsiarniq Reading Series was developed to support the reading level guidelines outlined in the Department of Education's Inuktut guided reading program, Uqalimaariuqsaniq. Uqalimaariuqsaniq is a sequential and progressive Inuktut reading program that supports students in their development from emergent to fluent readers.

Healthy students are better learners and become healthy adults. For more information, visit www.gov.nu.ca/health and your local Health Centre.

Book details

- Level:** 11
- Text Type:** Fiction
- Subject/themes:** Negative health affects of smoking, relationships with friends, getting into an argument, saying sorry
- Key features:** Dialogue, third-person point of view, past tense

Smoke Free



Written by
Geela Jaw

Illustrated by
Nicolas Giacondino

Sakku and Tapisa were walking to the store when they saw a group of adults crowded outside. Sakku could hear them talking about the supplies that they had just bought for their upcoming hunt.

“Hey, that’s my uncle,” Sakku said to Tapisa. He pointed to one of the adults in the group.

“Which one?” asked Tapisa.

“He’s the one smoking a cigarette,” said Sakku.





As the group of adults began to walk to their cars, Sakku's uncle flicked his cigarette onto the ground and followed them.

Sakku waited until his uncle was in his car, and then he ran and picked up the cigarette. It was almost a whole cigarette, and it was still lit. Sakku put it in between his lips and breathed in.

As soon as Sakku inhaled,
he started coughing and coughing.

“What are you doing?” asked Tapisa. “Smoking is gross!”

“It’s not gross!” Sakku shouted.
He put the cigarette in his mouth. “My uncle is a hunter.
He’s not gross! Don’t say that about him!”
Sakku kept smoking the cigarette until it was done,
even though it was making him cough.

Tapisa was very upset at what her best friend was doing.
“Why are you doing that?” Tapisa asked.
“That is so nasty!” she said. She started to walk away.





Sakku ran to catch up with her.
“I’m sorry I yelled at you,” Sakku said.

“It’s okay,” Tapisa said. “I know that you admire your uncle. It’s the smoking that is gross, not your uncle.”

She didn’t really feel okay. She was still hurt and confused by Sakku’s actions. She thought about telling her mom what had happened. She didn’t want to get Sakku in trouble, but she also knew that smoking would make Sakku sick because of his asthma.

Tapisa's mom had given her some money to buy milk.
"Do you still want to come to the store to buy milk
with me?" Tapisa asked.
Sakku said he did, so they walked into
the store together. Tapisa was nervous.
She was worried about Sakku's new behaviour.





Outside the store, Sakku picked up more cigarette butts from the ground.

“Why are you picking up more cigarette butts?” Tapisa asked. “Smoking is gross and it’s not good for you! Especially because you have asthma!” Now she was really upset.

“So you do think that I’m gross!” Sakku said. “And you think that about my uncle too! You lied! Just leave me alone.” He stuffed the cigarette butts in his jacket pocket.

Tapisa was upset with Sakku and didn't know what to do. She knew smoking cigarette butts would make Sakku sick. He already had trouble breathing sometimes because of his asthma.

After buying the milk, they began to walk back to Tapisa's house. Sakku was still coughing. Tapisa was disgusted and wouldn't speak to him.





When they got back to Tapisa's home, Tapisa didn't know what to do. Sakku and Tapisa had never argued before. She still didn't want to tell her mom because she didn't want Sakku to get into trouble.

As they got ready for their ice hockey game, Tapisa worried about what to do.

After they had some milk and a snack,
they went to their ice hockey game.
As they played, Tapisa saw that Sakku was slower
than normal. He was coughing a lot, so the coach
kept him on the bench for most of the game.
“I wish I wasn’t missing out on the game so much!”
Sakku said.





After the hockey game, Sakku and Tapisa waited outside for Tapisa's mom to pick them up. They didn't talk to each other. The mother of one of their teammates flicked her lit cigarette to the ground as she got in her car.

Sakku ran over and picked up the cigarette.

"Sakku, why are you still smoking?" Tapisa asked, shocked.

"Don't tell me what to do!" Sakku said. He inhaled the cigarette again and spat off to the side. Tapisa was worried that her friend was getting sick. Sakku was coughing a lot.

Tapisa didn't see Sakku the next day at school.
She was very worried about him.
After school, she went to see him,
but he was sleeping. His mother was going to
take him to the health centre. He was very sick.
Tapisa knew he was sick from smoking
cigarette butts.





After visiting Sakku, Tapisa started crying and finally told her mom.

“Sakku has been smoking cigarette butts off the ground!” Tapisa said.

“Thank you for letting me know, Tapisa,” her mom said.

Tapisa felt better after talking to her mom, but she was still very worried about Sakku’s health.

Tapisa and her mom visited Sakku the next day.
This time, Tapisa told Sakku how she felt.
“Smoking cigarette butts made you sick!
And you were mean to me,” Tapisa said.

Sakku felt bad. “I’m sorry, Tapisa,” he said.

“Will you promise me you will stop smoking?”
Tapisa asked.

“Yes. You’re my best friend and I don’t want
to hurt you or my family,” Sakku agreed.



Tapisa was happy she had spoken up about how she felt. Sakku got better and stopped smoking cigarette butts. He told Tapisa he didn't want to make his asthma worse. Now that he didn't smoke, Sakku could play hockey without coughing again!



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