LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Stopping smoking pays dividends in life

Editor:

As director at the YMCA, I'm always talking about caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. These are our core values as we strive for youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility.

Our smoke-free grounds policy at the Y meets each of those goals. By not allowing smoking on our grounds, we set a good example for the kids. Of course, we talk a lot about the health effects of smoking in our Afternoons R.O.C.K. and other youth development programs, but we all know actions speak louder than words and not allowing smoking around kids is one of the most meaningful things we can do to prevent kids from starting smoking.

Smoke-free policies also promote healthy living, since there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Even a little secondhand smoke can cause a heart attack, stroke, or asthma attack.

On top of that, we feel it is our social responsibility to protect our employees and guests from secondhand smoke exposure. We cannot in good conscience allow them to be exposed to the harmful toxins in secondhand smoke.

We are pleased that many other businesses and organizations in Washington also have smoke-free policies including our schools, hospital, library, government buildings, major employers, and most restaurants. This year as the Great American Smoke-Out is celebrated Nov. 17, we are proud to be part of a community that cares about providing healthy environments for its citizens, but we still have a long way to go to protect everyone, and we hope to see our community continue to make progress in protecting more people from secondhand smoke.

Tom Danehy
Director
Daviess County Family YMCA