



HEALTH AWARENESS

A Life Less Healthy: Tobacco's Daily Toll

(NAPS)—When people think of the consequences of smoking and tobacco use, often-fatal diseases such as Stage IV lung cancer most commonly come to mind. But there is another side to tobacco use.

About 8.6 million people in the U.S. are currently living with tobacco-related illnesses. Chronic bronchitis, emphysema and oral cancer can be debilitating illnesses—illnesses that can rob people of opportunities and that can affect their daily lives.

For many of these people, tobacco use means no longer being able to enjoy eating, be physically active or spend quality time with family.

Thomas Cook, 51, knows the effects firsthand. Cook started smoking at age 13 and was diagnosed at 38 with Stage IV larynx cancer.

"When you get sick from using tobacco, your whole life changes. Things will never and can never be the same. Not one day goes by that I don't think about cancer. All I have to do is look in the mirror and there it is," said Cook, who appeared in the Emmy-nominated **truth** youth smoking prevention campaign commercial, "Singing Cowboy," in 2006.

Christine Brader smoked for almost 28 years until she was diagnosed with oral cancer. Brader, 48, survived three bouts of oral cancer in three years. She lost 65 pounds from not being able to eat and has had more surgeries than she can count. She



At www.thetruth.com, visitors can see video profiles showing what it's like to live on a daily basis with debilitating tobacco-related disabilities.

lost her pets because she was too sick to care for them. She also lost her house, her job and in her words, "my teeth, my jaw, my looks."

"Unsweetened **truth**" is a commercial from **truth** that illustrates the impact of smoking on health.

In the spot, Cook and Brader are two of six real people suffering from tobacco-related disabilities. With this spot, **truth** seeks to highlight how living with tobacco-related disease is not just about dying; it is also about living with the effects. And anyone who uses tobacco has the potential to develop such diseases.

Legacy, a national public health foundation, directs and funds the **truth** campaign.

For more information, visit www.thetruth.com and www.legacyforhealth.org.