

## Tobacco Prevention BB Activity

([www.StepUpNC.com](http://www.StepUpNC.com))

**Time:** About 5 minutes

**Materials:** 1,541 metal BB's (these can be bought at a sporting goods store or in the sporting goods department of a department store such as Walmart or Kmart) and a glass, ceramic, or metal pot or bowl.

**How it works:** Read the following script aloud to the group, following the *italicized instructions* as you go. Rehearse this several times before you put it into action, so you're not relying heavily on the script for the words, and so the exercise goes smoothly.

### Script

The first thing I'd like to do is ask you to close your eyes and listen. This exercise demonstrates how deadly tobacco use is.

We all know tobacco use is harmful to our health, but few of us really understand just how harmful it is. To give you a new perspective on the problem of tobacco use, I am going to ask you to think about death.

I have a metal BB here. Listen to the sound it makes when I toss it into this metal pot. *[Now toss a single BB into the pot.]* Let the sound of one BB *[toss another BB into the pot]* Let the sound of one BB *[toss another BB into the pot]* represent one death. Think about someone you know who has died.

Now, think for a moment about hard drugs like cocaine, heroine, LSD. You think they are bad? They are. They will kill you. This is how many people die from a drug overdose every day in this country. *[Slowly pour in 16 BBs]* That represents 16 people who die every day from these drugs. That is about 5,700 people every year.

Now, what about alcohol? Do you think that alcohol can be bad for you? It can be. It can kill you. This is how many people die from alcohol-related deaths every day. *[Pour in 342 BBs slowly].* That is 342 people every day. 125,000 people every year.

Now, think about tobacco. Listen to how many people tobacco will kill today, and every day, in this country. *Pour 1200 BBs very slowly].* That is 1,200 people who die every day and are dying right now 440,000 people every year.

Three out of four people who are dying from tobacco today, and every day, started to use tobacco before age 18. Tobacco kills. It won't kill today or tomorrow like hard drugs or drunk driving can. But, remember tobacco is the only legal consumer product in the United States today that, used as intended by its manufacturer, can kill you. Don't be a BB.

Oh. Now you can open your eyes.