

Lending a helping hand in war against tobacco through social marketing

Mumbai:

Years ago, 15-year-old Sasha Batnagar, a student of Delhi Public School, was annoyed by her pals when they smoked in the school toilet. Later, one day she was picked up while writing graffiti protesting against smoking on the toilet walls. The school authorities could have expelled her, but they didn't do so as she helped others stop smoking habit. She wrote the names of the parents of the children who died after consuming tobacco with a message that prompted others to quit smoking.

Sasha, India's youth ambassador to the 14th World Conference on Tobacco or Health's two-day workshop— Global Youth Meet on Tobacco Control —held in Mumbai on Friday, spoke about her experiences. The conference was attended by young anti-tobacco advocates from across the world.

It is now proved that if sensitised and trained to 'kick the butt', youngsters can stand against the tobacco industry that thrives on young population with fancy advertisements. We can counter attack this habit with 'social marketing', said Nick Schneider of German cancer research center.