Sample Dialogue of Brief Smoking Cessation Intervention and Referral

Background: You are taking care of a 4 yo girl admitted for the second time for an asthma exacerbation. She is on a controller and her mother has gone through asthma education. She has a primary care doctor and an asthma action plan. You note from the chart that both parents smoke. This conversation takes place at the bedside during the day of discharge.

**Resident**: Mrs. Smith, It looks like Janie is ready for hospital discharge today. I know you have been through asthma education and have probably spoken with Janie’s doctor about asthma quite a bit, but there is one more thing I would like to bring up before you go home. I noticed in the chart that both you and Janie’s dad smoke.

**Mrs. Smith**: Yes, but we always smoke outside......... and I know her asthma is related to her allergies anyway. I guess we better get rid of our cat.

**Resident**: I’m very impressed that you have already taken action and only smoke outside. I know that can be hard and it shows a lot of commitment on your part to do that. But honestly, I am wondering if you have considered quitting? As a pediatrician, I can tell you that Janie’s chances of growing up to be a smoker are very high if you continue to smoke. I would really like to help you quit?

**Mrs. Smith**: Well, I would like to quit, but my husband smokes two packs a day and he’ll never quit.

**Resident**: That’s really a tough position to be in. Its very hard to quit if your spouse is still smoking. Can you tell me about the times you’ve tried to quit in the past?

**Mrs. Smith**: I always quit for about a week, but then my husband and I get in a fight about something and I just end up smoking again because I am so stressed out.

**Resident**: I understand stress is a big cause of relapse in people who have successfully quit smoking. Would you like to get some advice from a professional smoking cessation counselor on how to handle some of these issues you’ve brought up?

**Mrs. Smith**: Sure, but I don’t have any health insurance.

**Resident**: Well, there is a telephone hotline in the state of Texas where you can talk to a trained counselor at no cost. The number is 1-877-YES-QUIT. Don’t worry, you talk to a real human being and its confidential. Sometimes they even have free nicotine replacement patches for patients without health insurance.

**Mrs. Smith**: Well, maybe I will give them a call.

**Resident**: That would be great. Most people have to try several times before they quit, just keep trying and you’ll succeed.

**KEY PHRASES TO REMEMBER**: “I would really like to help you quit” ; “I’m very impressed that you have already ...........” ; “Tell me about trying to quit in the past”