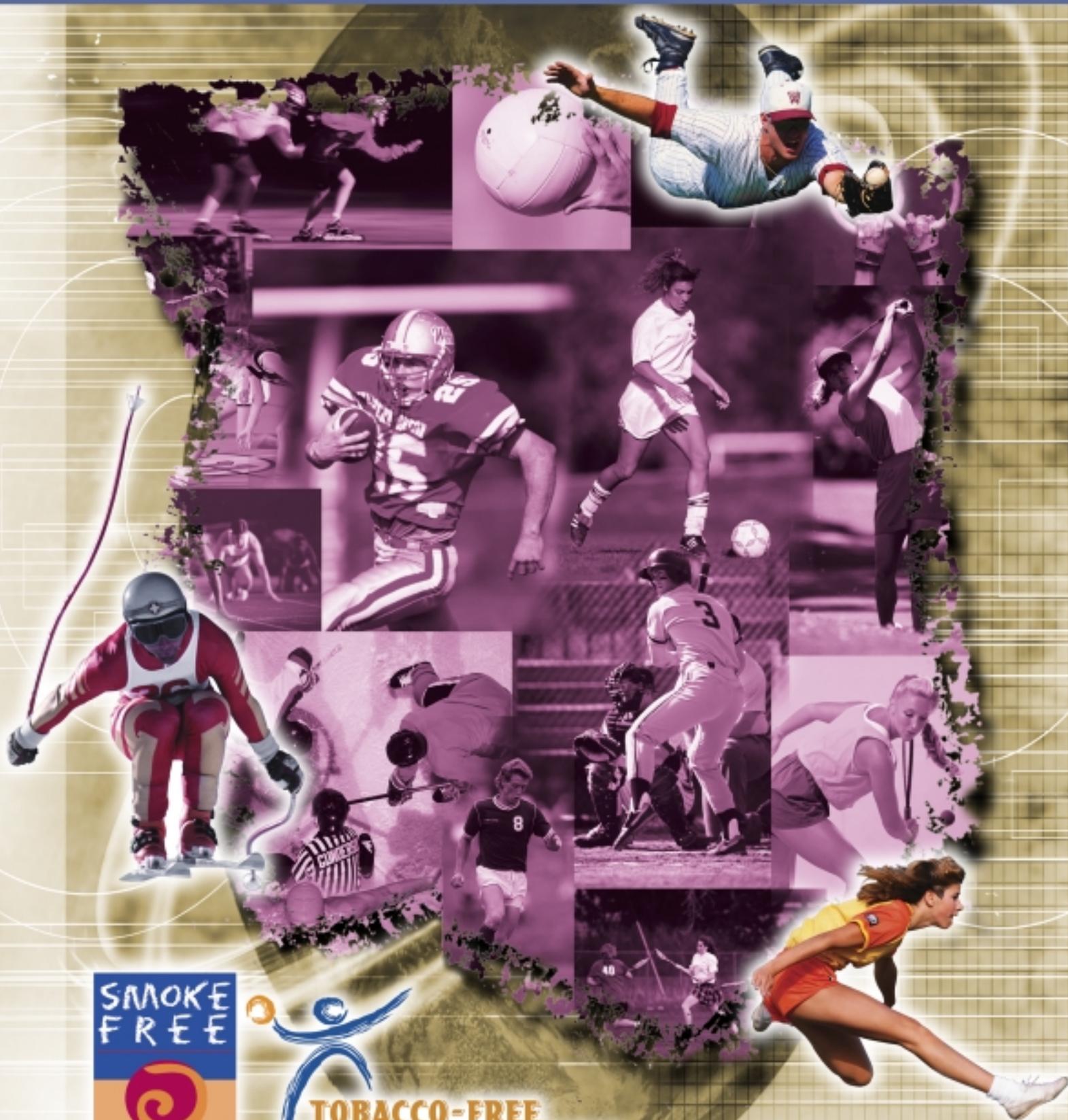


CREATING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Using Recreation as a Tool for Tobacco Prevention



SMOKE
FREE
SOCCER



TOBACCO-FREE
YOUTH RECREATION
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CREATING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

USING RECREATION AS A TOOL FOR TOBACCO PREVENTION



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Dear Community Leader:

Each year 17,000 Minnesota kids under the age of 18 become daily new smokers. More astonishingly, 112,085 youth will prematurely die from their future smoking if the 2000 smoking rate remains constant. Secondhand smoke exposure is also a dangerous health risk to young people. In Minnesota, 58% of middle school students and 76% of high school students report being exposed in the past week.

The decision to remain tobacco free may seem obvious, but it is often a very difficult choice for youth—even for those youth involved in recreational programs. However, due to the unique social environment and the popularity of youth sports in our communities, recreational activities can play an important part in reaching out to our young people with information on how they can live a healthy tobacco-free lifestyle.

We are excited about your interest in this initiative and hope that this guide will inspire you to reach out to the many recreational organizations that are present in your community. By working together, we can promote recreation and physical activity as a healthy alternative to tobacco use and ultimately reduce youth tobacco use across Minnesota.

Sincerely,

Daniel Ehrke
Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation

Christina Thill
SmokeFree Soccer



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INTRODUCTION

The benefits of physical activity are well known. Regular physical activity improves health in many ways. It reduces the risk of heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, and cancer. It also reduces stress and anxiety, helps control weight, and builds healthy bones, muscles, and joints.¹ Clearly, these benefits indicate that physical activity is an important means for reducing preventable disease. Thousands of Minnesota youth who participate in recreation and sports programs receive these benefits from physical activity.

While physical activity aids in preventing disease, tobacco use is by far the leading cause of preventable death among Americans, as well as Minnesotans. Tobacco use causes heart disease, stroke, cancer, and respiratory disease.² In fact, 5,618 Minnesotans die each year as a result of tobacco use.³ Minnesota youth are not immune to the dangers of tobacco use. According to the Minnesota Student Survey of 2001, youth tobacco use in Minnesota is a prominent problem, with 34.7% of Minnesota twelfth grade students and 18.7% of Minnesota ninth grade students currently using tobacco.⁴ Youth are the future of Minnesota, and keeping them healthy is imperative.

Community-based tobacco prevention programs are key components of reducing youth tobacco use in Minnesota. The Surgeon General's Report of 1994 recommends that many community groups and resources be utilized as means for addressing youth tobacco use.⁵ The immense popularity and unique environment of youth recreational programs provides an excellent opportunity to involve many different members of the community in protecting the health and well-being of the young people in the community. Recreational programs already promote healthy lifestyles through physical activity; therefore, they serve as logical partners for promoting tobacco prevention messages as well.

Well-designed prevention programs can help ensure a healthy environment is in place for youth recreational activities. Providing this type of safe environment will help these young people decide to be tobacco free. As role models, recreational leaders influence youth behavior and have an incredible opportunity to positively affect youth's lifestyle decisions about tobacco use. Because the public embraces recreation, young people, coaches, and others involved in recreational activities are also important role models for their peers and the entire community, providing an opportunity to change the community's norm regarding tobacco use. Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation (TFYR) and SmokeFree Soccer (SFS) believe that by partnering with youth recreational organizations, we can reduce youth tobacco use in Minnesota.

“In order to reduce youth tobacco use we must incorporate a community-wide approach to tobacco prevention. The unique social environment that youth recreation provides is an excellent example of how we can partner to create an environment where tobacco use is viewed as undesirable, unacceptable, and inaccessible.”

Jan Malcolm, Minnesota Commissioner of Health

Purpose of this guide:

Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation and SmokeFree Soccer have designed *Creating Healthy Communities: Using Recreation as a Tool for Tobacco Prevention* to give local community leaders the information and tools they need to utilize recreation as a means for tobacco prevention. This guide will explain how you, as a community leader, can reach out to and connect with the young people in your community that are involved in recreational programs. It contains examples of successful recreation-based tobacco prevention strategies, samples of tobacco policies that have been implemented, and ideas for community events that promote the tobacco-free message. This guide also provides current examples of ways health professionals are utilizing recreation as a means to reduce tobacco use in their community. The following descriptions provide suggestions as to how readers can use this guide.

Local public health departments

As a local public health educator, you can use this guide to enhance your existing youth tobacco prevention program or to help you design a new strategy for youth tobacco prevention. Since many local public health departments hold community-based tobacco prevention grants that require the involvement of schools and the community, this guide will help you generate ideas for fulfilling your grant requirements. While this guide was designed to specifically address the prevention of youth tobacco use, departments who have Youth Risk Behavior funding can also apply these strategies for recreation-based tobacco prevention to other specific risk behaviors identified in your community.

Local coalitions

If you are a member of a local coalition dedicated to reducing the harms of tobacco use in your community, *Creating Healthy Communities: Using Recreation as a Tool for Tobacco Prevention* will provide you and your coalition with excellent ideas on how to start changing your community's norms regarding tobacco use. By utilizing youth recreation as a way to introduce a tobacco prevention strategy in your community, your coalition will be able to educate community members on the dangers of tobacco use. By utilizing recreational programming as an opportunity to raise awareness about tobacco in the community, you can set the groundwork for other tobacco control initiatives such as smoke-free restaurants or workplaces.

Local recreation departments/organizations

By creating programming for and working directly with youth, you have an incredible opportunity to make a positive impact on the lives of young people. If you have already taken steps to implement tobacco prevention messages in your programs, use this guide to think about new ways you can communicate and incorporate those messages into your recreational activities. If you have not thought about the benefits of a tobacco-free environment for youth, read this guide to find out what they are and why they are so important. Then apply the suggestions for tobacco prevention to your organization and help establish a tobacco-free standard in your community! The "Resources" section of this guide provides a list of materials to help you promote the tobacco-free message.

School officials

As a teacher, school counselor, school nurse, or administrator, you have daily contact with youth—youth who receive and communicate mixed messages about tobacco use. You can use this guide as a reminder to review and better communicate your school district's tobacco policy for its recreational facilities. You can contact your local public health department to discover ways you can partner to utilize recreation as a means for tobacco prevention. You can also organize tobacco-free youth in your schools and encourage them to be positive role models for other young people or to serve as advocates to encourage and implement tobacco policies at city- or privately-owned recreational facilities throughout the community.

Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation

Association for Nonsmokers—Minnesota

Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation (TFYR) is a statewide program of the Association for Nonsmokers—Minnesota (ANSR-MN). TFYR's mission is to assist recreational groups in their efforts to promote and model tobacco-free lifestyles to young people. This is accomplished by helping local public health professionals partner with recreational organizations to implement tobacco prevention strategies. By implementing these prevention strategies, recreational organizations can help young people make the choice to be tobacco-free and provide the opportunity for coaches, parents, officials, and other teens to serve as positive role models for youth. As part of a recreation-based tobacco prevention strategy, TFYR encourages youth recreational organizations to adopt a tobacco-free policy. TFYR has worked with municipal park and recreation departments throughout Minnesota to help them establish tobacco-free environments for their facilities.

TFYR also works at the statewide level to promote the tobacco-free message. The Minnesota Girl Scout councils, Minnesota Hockey, and the Minnesota Youth Soccer Association have partnered with TFYR to incorporate tobacco prevention messages in their programs. Professional athletic teams such as the Minnesota Wild and the Minnesota Thunder also support youth tobacco prevention and have collaborated with TFYR to create prevention resources. TFYR also attends community events to raise awareness about youth tobacco use and secondhand smoke. These events have included the Minnesota Star of the North Games, Schwan's USA Cup soccer tournament, and Minnesota Hockey state tournaments.

SmokeFree Soccer

Minnesota Department of Health

Smoke-Free Kids and Soccer was launched in 1996 as an innovative collaboration between the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the U.S. Women's National Soccer team, and U.S. Soccer. The program models smoke-free lifestyles and encourages adolescents to participate in soccer to maintain physical fitness and resist pressures to smoke. The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) first promoted Smoke-Free Kids and Soccer in 1999 at the Schwan's USA Cup soccer tournament held at the National Sports Center in Blaine, Minnesota. The high level of interest in Smoke-Free Kids & Soccer from youth and adults at this event led MDH to apply for SmokeFree Soccer funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to promote the program.

In 2000, MDH was awarded funding to promote SmokeFree Soccer in Minnesota and establish partnerships with community-based organizations and public health groups. Minnesota's SmokeFree Soccer program focuses on reaching youth ages 6 to 19 years of age. The program's target audience includes the membership of the Minnesota Youth Soccer Association (MYSA), which is approximately 72,000 players, and 8,500 coaches and administrators. SmokeFree Soccer's partnership with MYSA has been instrumental in promoting the SmokeFree Soccer message at their events to players and coaches. Thousands of youth, parents and coaches have heard and seen the smoke-free soccer message at many soccer events in Minnesota during the last three years. Specific MYSA events include MYSA's tournaments, Soccer Fair, Coaches Symposium, and annual meeting for delegates. Other events include the U.S. Women's Soccer team game versus Canada and the Minnesota Thunder games.



RECREATION AS A PREVENTION TOOL

Youth recreational organizations provide youth with a variety of activities in which they can choose to spend their leisure time. Familiar examples of youth recreational groups are youth athletic associations such as Little League and Minnesota Hockey. While sports organizations are a major part of youth recreation, organizations such as Girls Scouts, 4-H, and the YMCA also provide youth recreational programming (see the “Recreational Contacts” section for a more complete list of organizations).

This section will illustrate why recreation should be used as a prevention tool and describe a model of a successful recreation-based tobacco prevention strategy. Each component of this model serves as an important element for a comprehensive recreation-based tobacco prevention strategy. This section will provide the information you need to work with recreational groups in your community to develop strategies that provide a framework for youth to adopt non-use standards about tobacco and encourage adult leaders to model tobacco-free lifestyles.

A DOZEN REASONS TO FOCUS ON RECREATION AS A TOBACCO PREVENTION TOOL . . .

1. Successful tobacco prevention programs should include an approach that involves community-based youth organizations.

A community-based tobacco prevention strategy is an important complement to school-based programs. In order to produce lasting behavior change in youth, non-school elements of the community must be utilized. In fact, high-risk youth more readily accept tobacco prevention messages if they are embedded in community groups or programs to which they already belong.⁶

2. Youth recreational organizations provide access to the social environments of youth.

The social environment influences youth through four factors: normative expectation, role models, opportunities that allow or do not allow a behavior to happen (such as policies and practices), and social support of parents and other adult leaders.⁷ When youth join recreational groups, they develop important social networks that influence their behavior. Since a strong correlation exists between tobacco use and social group membership among youth, recreational programs that foster positive social environments are excellent opportunities to incorporate tobacco prevention strategies.⁸

Why focus on recreation?

Recreation provides the opportunity to:

- Involve community organizations in tobacco prevention
- Access the social environments of youth
- Reach parents
- Reach the large number of youth involved in recreational activities
- Connect with youth involved in recreational programs, since they are at risk to use tobacco
- Raise awareness on secondhand smoke
- Change community norms
- Encourage leaders to positively influence young people’s behavior
- Utilize members of recreational organizations since they are important community role models
- Promote physical fitness
- Counter the tobacco industry’s targeting of sporting events
- Develop key partnerships that can be utilized for future health initiatives

3. *By focusing on recreation, we not only reach youth, but we may also reach parents.*

Research indicates that parents' actions heavily influence the choices their children make in regard to tobacco use, and exposure to cigarettes at home increases the likelihood that young people will begin smoking.⁹ Parents can exert a positive influence on their children's behavior by disapproving of tobacco use, discussing positive health practices with them, and involving themselves in their children's free-time activities.¹⁰ Since many parents enjoy attending their children's recreational events, these events present an excellent opportunity to reach parents with the tobacco-free message and encourage them to be positive role models for their own children and others in the community.

4. *The large number of youth involved in recreational activities makes recreation a valuable opportunity for tobacco prevention.*

In Minnesota, nearly 50% of high school students participate in school athletic programs, and this percentage increases when the number of youth who are involved in community recreational programs is taken into consideration.¹¹

5. *Youth involved in recreational activities are at risk to start using tobacco.*

Studies have shown that girls may be less likely to begin smoking if they are involved in organized physical activity; however, the rate of smoking for boys in organized physical activity is not affected.¹² Research has also indicated that certain social and recreational environments are more conducive to youth tobacco use than others. In fact, among certain recreational activities, youth are at greater risk to use smokeless tobacco.¹³

6. *Youth are often exposed to secondhand smoke during recreational activities.*

In Minnesota, 34% of middle school students and 49% of high school students are repeatedly exposed to secondhand smoke during the course of a week.¹⁴ Nationally, hundreds of thousands of children suffer more from bronchitis, pneumonia, ear infections, and asthma caused by inhaling secondhand smoke.¹⁵ (See page 44 for more facts on secondhand smoke). All of these conditions cause youth to feel ill and even impair their ability to perform recreational activities to the best of their physical ability. Educating recreational organizations about the dangers of secondhand smoke, encouraging them to patronize smoke-free restaurants, and recommending they declare their vehicles and homes tobacco-free helps reinforce to youth that tobacco use is dangerous and unacceptable.



This ad was developed as part of the Minnesota Partnership for Action Against Tobacco's secondhand smoke campaign (see page 45 for additional MPAAT resources that can be used in your community).

7. *Recreation provides an opportunity to change the community norms that influence youth tobacco use.*

Youth perceive what is acceptable and what they ought to do from what they understand is a normative behavior in a community, regardless of whether that perception is accurate.¹⁶ Unfortunately, young people consistently overestimate the number of youth and adults who use tobacco. Those with the highest overestimates are the most likely to become tobacco users themselves.¹⁷ By changing the community norm so that tobacco use is unacceptable, we can also change youth's perception about tobacco use.

8. Recreation provides unique opportunities where leaders can positively influence young people's behavior and support their healthy lifestyle decisions. Coaches and recreational leaders have a powerful influence on youth, and they can be utilized to promote tobacco-free lifestyles.¹⁸ When these leaders promote and model tobacco-free lifestyles, they set non-use standards for youth. Since recreation provides a setting for youth to bond together as a group, youth feel compelled to follow the standards set forth by their leaders and the group. By supporting young people's choice to refrain from tobacco use, recreational leaders also help youth remain tobacco free.¹⁹

9. Members of youth recreational organizations are important role models for their communities, and their actions can help change community norms. In today's world, recreational activities are embraced by the public. For example, athletes and coaches are viewed as role models within their communities. These role models can promote positive non-use standards about tobacco that can shape or change community norms. Since recreational events receive a large amount of media coverage (both local and state), these events provide the opportunity to reach many community members with the tobacco-free message, including those who do not attend recreational events.²⁰

10. Since tobacco use hinders physical performance during recreational activities, recreation serves as a tool to both educate youth on the effects of tobacco use and promote physical fitness. Smoking decreases lung function, increases heart rate and blood pressure, expedites fatigue, and reduces overall physical performance.²¹ Focusing on recreation and sports as a youth tobacco prevention initiative provides the chance to educate young people about the negative effects tobacco use has on their physical performance in an activity. Since such a close relationship exists between tobacco prevention and physical activity promotion, recreation can be utilized to educate youth and the community on the benefits of physical fitness. Frequent physical activity provides numerous benefits, including reducing the risk for heart disease and diabetes, controlling weight, improving self-image, and managing stress.²² Recent research indicates that, like tobacco prevention, physical activity promotion requires the efforts of many community partners.²³

11. The tobacco industry targets recreational events as prime locations for advertising. In the words of a Marlboro executive, "What we are trying to do is associate Marlboro with activities which are favored by young people. This means sports and music."²⁴ Research indicates that sporting events expose youth to extensive tobacco use by people they view as positive role models.²⁵ Tobacco advertising at recreational events makes a connection between tobacco and recreation and misguides young people's perception of tobacco use. It is imperative that we address tobacco prevention in youth recreational activities to combat the tobacco industry's advertising at these types of events.

12. Partnerships that you develop with recreational organizations will lead to strong relationships in the community for future projects. By working to build relationships with local recreational leaders and organizations, you will build bridges and relationships that foster a willingness to look for opportunities to work together on other health initiatives in the future.



Attempting to make a connection between sports and tobacco use, Marlboro placed a full-page advertisement on the back cover of the *Sports Illustrated* "Sports Women of the Year" issue. A picture of the "Sports Women of the Year," the World Cup champion U.S. Women's Soccer Team, is featured on the front cover.

FIVE COMPONENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL RECREATION-BASED TOBACCO PREVENTION STRATEGY . . .

1. Establish a Tobacco-Free Policy

Tobacco-free policies are an important part of a tobacco prevention strategy for many reasons.

(1). They send a clear message to youth participants, leaders, parents, and spectators that tobacco use is not a behavior the recreational organization condones. (2). They establish the community norm that tobacco use is not acceptable for young people or adults within the recreational organization or the entire community.²⁶ (3). Communication and enforcement of these policies also limit the opportunity for youth to engage in the negative behavior of tobacco use.²⁷ (4). Since youth tobacco use is generally higher in social situations, adopting and enforcing a tobacco-free policy greatly reduces the social benefits that young people derive from using tobacco products.²⁸ (5). Secondhand smoke levels in outdoor public places can reach levels as high as those found in indoor facilities where smoking is permitted.²⁹ Recreational organizations that enact tobacco-free policies protect everyone involved from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke exposure. (6). Tobacco-free recreation facilities also help break the connection between tobacco and recreation that the tobacco industry has fostered for decades.³⁰



The state of Maine's Tobacco-Free Athletes initiative uses the signage above to encourage tobacco-free playing fields.

Tobacco-free policies provide guidance for youth as they try to make the crucial decision about whether or not they should use tobacco. Young people look to their adult role models to set clear standards; by establishing, obeying, and enforcing a tobacco-free policy we distinctly convey to youth that being tobacco free is very important. By reinforcing the message to young people that tobacco use is unhealthy and unnecessary behavior and by eliminating any exposure to secondhand smoke, these types of policies show that adults care about the health of young people and want them to make healthy lifestyle decisions. Likewise, by implementing a tobacco-free policy, youth recreational organizations encourage adults to promote healthy lifestyles by giving them the support and reassurance they need to model a lifestyle that is tobacco free.

Keys To Effective Policies

- Policies generally prohibit the use and discourage the possession of tobacco products
- Policies should encourage group/team meetings to be held in tobacco-free establishments
- Policies should ensure that all vehicles used to transport youth are tobacco free
- Policies should cover all adult leaders, participants, and spectators
- Policies should be clear and concise
- Policies should include the rationale they are based on
- Policies should be consistently communicated and enforced
- Policies should include consequences that are perceived as fair

For examples of existing policies and tips for the policy development process, see the "Tobacco-Free Policies" section of this guide.

2. Communicate the Policy to Participants, Leaders and Parents

As mentioned above, in order to increase the likelihood that a tobacco-free policy establishes a non-use standard and creates change in community norms, groups must first communicate their policy to everyone involved with their programs. It is very important to explain the various aspects of the policy and communicate the reasons why the policy was created.³¹ Explaining the reasoning behind the policy, such as that it protects the health of everyone involved in the organization, provides a great opportunity to educate youth and adults on the harmful effects of tobacco and the benefits of living a tobacco-free lifestyle. Publicizing tobacco-free policies also limits the opportunity for youth to engage in tobacco use because they are informed that they cannot and should not use tobacco during their recreational group's activities. Promoting the policy also creates an opportunity to remind adults that they can be positive role models.

While effectively communicating the policy will prevent many violations, it may become necessary to take action if a policy violation does occur. Each organization must decide the best method for enforcing their policy. One suggestion is to have staff or volunteers issue a verbal warning for a first offense and request the violator to leave the event if he or she breaks the rule a second time.

Communicating the Policy

- Visible signage and banners are excellent ways to remind participants and spectators of the policy
- Include the tobacco-free policy and the it's rationale in the organizational policy manual
- Send a letter or other creative reminders to parents, school officials, law enforcement officers, policy makers, and other adult leaders reminding them of the policy (see page 46 for examples)
- Include an article in local recreation newsletters and send out an e-mail update
- Have participants, teams, coaches, and parents sign pledges (examples are found on page 47)
- Utilize registration days to educate parents and participants by posting signs and banners and providing other tobacco-related information
- Announce the policy over the public address system during events
- Educate staff and volunteers during meetings and trainings and explain how to enforce the policy



Local youth promote the Schwan's USA Soccer Cup's tobacco-free policy during the event's opening ceremonies.

KICKING TOBACCO OUT OF SOCCER

The Schwan's USA Cup, an annual international youth soccer tournament that is the largest in the Western Hemisphere, banned tobacco use during the weeklong event held at the National Sports Center in Blaine, MN, July 15-21, 2001. The Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation (TFYR) program played an integral part in helping the tournament communicate its tobacco policy to the 22,000 players and spectators.

During the tournament's opening ceremonies, youth volunteers and TFYR staff marched through the stadium holding "No Tobacco" signs to let everyone in attendance know that the grounds for the entire tournament were tobacco free. The same signs were then posted on each of the 52 soccer fields used for tournament games, and they remained on the fields for the length of the tournament. In addition, the Schwan's USA Cup daily newspaper printed an article describing the policy and the rationale behind it.

To incorporate the tobacco-free message into the non-soccer activities held during the Schwan's USA Cup, TFYR printed activities passports that were distributed to all youth participants. The passports listed the names of all the activities available for youth to participate in, along with tobacco-free messages. When the soccer player attended an activity, they received a stamp on their passport. After 10 stamps, they were able to redeem their passport at the TFYR booth for a prize. At the booth, TFYR staff handed out U.S. Women's Soccer and Minnesota Thunder tobacco prevention posters to youth, along with SmokeFree Soccer materials.

TFYR took additional steps to help communicate the tobacco policy by hosting a tobacco-free Prize Cruiser. TFYR staff drove the Cruiser (a decorated golf cart) around the tournament grounds throughout the week, stopping to ask kids questions about tobacco use and handing out prizes.



Youth from the Minneapolis American Indian Center participate in the Smoke-Free Indian Youth Olympics.

TRADITIONAL USE, NOT ABUSE

The Golden Eagles, a program of the Minneapolis American Indian Center, partnered with TFYR to co-sponsor the 2001 Smoke-Free Indian Youth Olympics. The fourth annual event took place on May 5, 2001 at Phillips Park in Minneapolis. Over 200 kids participated in the event, competing in various activities including relay races, the 100-yard dash, and a punt, pass and kick competition. The event was promoted as “Smoke Free,” where the “Traditional Use, not Abuse” tobacco message was actively displayed.

Golden Eagles is an after-school program for Native American youth located in the Minneapolis American Indian Center. The Center holds a Minnesota Youth Tobacco Prevention Initiative local community-based grant. As part of this grant, the Golden Eagles program is developing a culturally-specific youth advocacy group to educate the community and prevent non-traditional tobacco use and addiction. Golden Eagles and TFYR worked to promote these positive messages at the event in order to educate participants about the cultural significance of tobacco, while discouraging them from abusing this sacred plant.

“We were very excited to work with TFYR in making this year’s Indian Youth Olympics smoke free. We also appreciated the fact that TFYR recognized the importance of focusing on the cultural aspects of tobacco in the Native American community,” said Susan Bellecourt, Golden Eagles membership coordinator. The Golden Eagles program hopes that the Smoke-Free Indian Youth Olympics will inspire other community groups to host similar events that promote smoke-free messages.

3. Promote the Tobacco-Free Message

Once an organization has approved a policy and created the non-use standard by communicating the policy, it can begin to utilize its programs and special events as opportunities to promote the tobacco-free message. Research indicates that messages regarding tobacco use are more acceptable to high-risk youth if they are embedded in programs to which these youth already belong.³² Therefore, the activities and special events of recreational organizations provide a unique opportunity to educate a large number of youth on the benefits of living tobacco-free lives as well as the chance to impact parents and the community as a whole. The slogans listed on page 49 are samples of those that have been developed to help make young people’s decision to remain tobacco free an easier one.

When promoting the tobacco-free message, remember to address secondhand smoke. Beyond implementing a tobacco-free policy, groups can continue to educate their leaders and participants on the dangers of secondhand smoke and the benefits of patronizing establishments that are smoke free. Groups can also encourage their leaders to hold all group/team activities at smoke-free establishments. This is important to consider when planning group/team meals and other functions held away from the organization’s facilities. (For a complete list of tobacco-free restaurants in Minnesota, go to www.ansrmn.org). Also, groups should ensure that all vehicles used to transport youth are tobacco free. A simple letter that explains the harmful effects of secondhand smoke and reminds recreational groups to patronize smoke-free environments can effectively convey the secondhand smoke message to your local recreational organizations (see page 48).

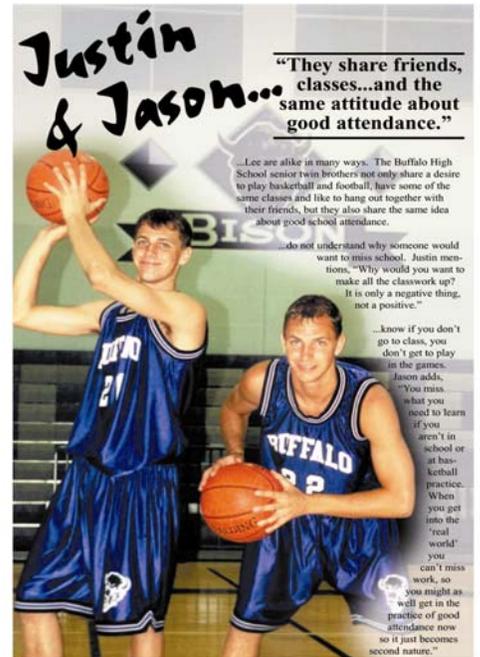
Ways to Promote the Tobacco-Free Message

- Work with youth to develop messages to better involve them in your tobacco prevention efforts
- Print slogans on banners and posters to remind young people to live tobacco free (see pages 49 & 50 for example slogans)
- Incorporate slogans into giveaways such as lanyards, stickers, pins, or patches
- Utilize your slogans for newspaper advertisements or promotional campaigns (see page 51 for example ads)
- Give out t-shirts at recreational and community events to raise awareness about tobacco-free lifestyles (see page 52 for a list of community events ideas)

4. Utilize Adults and Young People as Role Models

As mentioned earlier, one of the key benefits of creating a non-use standard is that it provides the support and environment needed for coaches, referees, athletic trainers, parents, and other adult leaders to be effective tobacco-free role models. Since young people often receive conflicting messages from peers, family members, the media, and other community members, it is important that each recreational organization utilize their adult leaders to positively impact young people's decision to use or refrain from using tobacco. If young people receive the same message from many different messengers, they will be more likely to listen to it.³³ By conveying clear and consistent messages regarding tobacco use from many different role models, youth recreational groups can reiterate that tobacco use is not the perceived norm of their organization or the community they live in and represent.

Asking young people that are involved in recreational activities to be role models impacts not only youth involved in that activity but also the entire community. Research indicates that peer influence is one of the most powerful factors in predicting young adolescent behavior because of the high value youth place on peers.³⁴ Because young people are role models for their peers and younger children, they can provide key avenues for reaching out to other youth with the tobacco-free message. Remember that parental permission is required when individuals under age 18 years are used as models for print material.



This poster was recently created by District #877 Schools and serves as an example of how groups can utilize young people to promote healthy lifestyle messages.

Ways to Involve Role Models

Adult Leaders can:

- Avoid the "do as I say, not as I do" conflict by choosing not to use or possess tobacco
- Support tobacco-free policies for your team and athletic league
- Recognize their influence with young people and remind them of the importance of being tobacco-free
- Talk to young people about the harmful effects of tobacco and its addictive nature
- Remember that when talking to youth, they relate more to messages about the immediate effects of tobacco use (such as poorer athletic performance) than to its long-term health threats
- Discuss policy violations and explain why the tobacco-free policy is in place
- Discuss media reports about athletes who have used tobacco, drugs or alcohol

Youth can:

- Agree to be featured on posters and other resources to help promote the tobacco-free message
- Talk to their peers and younger children about the benefits of being tobacco free
- Conduct advocacy projects relating to tobacco-free youth recreation (see page 53 for youth advocacy ideas)

5. Utilize High-Profile Athletes and Teams as Role Models

Teaming up with high-profile athletes and teams is an excellent way of promoting the tobacco-free message throughout your community.³⁵ Because they are often respected and highly visible members of the community, the presence of local athletes in your tobacco prevention efforts will draw attention to the tobacco-free messages and events you are planning.

Examples of high-profile athletes and teams that you may want to identify as possible role models include professional athletes (current or retired) or teams and their collegiate counterparts. Once you have identified the athletes who are willing to serve as role models, there are numerous ways they can promote your tobacco-free message. A few examples include making media announcements, appearing at community events, attending press conferences, and posing for posters with a tobacco-free message. Contact TFYR if you would like assistance in contacting professional teams or for help in securing a high-profile athlete for your community event.



Minnesota Viking Michael Bennett poses with several youth. This photo was recently featured on a poster promoting smoke-free communities. Photo by David Sherman Photography.

Things to Consider when Working with High-Profile Athletes

- Look for allies and groups that are involved with community outreach
- Contact the team's community relations or marketing department to begin your search
- Provide sufficient background information about your organization and your tobacco prevention efforts (bring samples of newsletters, news clips, etc.)
- Be sure you have a well-defined proposal and make it clear what you want the athlete to do
- Find athletes that your organization has worked with in the past
- Select athletes who will be a positive role model for your community
- Make certain the athlete you want to represent your cause does not use tobacco
- Determine if the athlete is comfortable being a spokesperson for tobacco prevention
- Make sure the organization or individual is not associated with the tobacco industry
- Outline the messages that you would like them to promote



CARRYING OUT YOUR INITIATIVE

A community-wide tobacco prevention approach is essential in reducing youth tobacco use. This type of community-wide approach will allow you to focus on creating change within young people's social environment. As noted by many researchers, this social environment is among the most influential factors in a young person's decision to choose healthy lifestyle behaviors.³⁶ This section will outline how you can reach out to your community to form partnerships to work on tobacco prevention strategies within the important social environment that recreation provides. These steps will be essential in your recreation-based tobacco prevention initiative. It is important to note that each recreational group is different; therefore, you may not need to follow all the steps each time you work with a group. Likewise, these steps may need to be rearranged to fit each specific situation. Use the checklist on page 19 to help you with the steps in this process.

1. Assess Your Community

Before reaching out to the recreation community, you should identify community leaders that may be able to help you. Some natural allies are local coaches, athletic trainers, teachers, parent groups, public health professionals, physicians, dentists, medical support staff and anti-tobacco coalition members. Remember to recruit youth who are interested in tobacco prevention and recreational programs in order to capture their enthusiasm and the talents that they can offer. Check with your local high school and other community youth groups to help you identify youth in your area that might like to work on this effort. These community leaders can be great assets in identifying recreational organizations within your community and helping you network with key staff members, since many are involved with these groups as a participant, leader, or spectator.

Tips for Community Assessment

- Identify parents, teachers, youth and other leaders who are interested in this issue
- Survey the community to determine support for tobacco-free recreational facilities for youth
- Begin to identify what recreational groups and facilities are present
- Determine what organizations could have the largest impact in your community (a recommended starting point is your city park & recreation department)

Next, survey your community to find out the attitudes present about youth tobacco use and to determine the level support for tobacco-free recreational environments. (See page 54 for an example survey and page 21 for the results of a survey administered by the Owatonna Area Smoke Free Coalition).

You can also begin to identify what recreational groups and facilities are present within your community. Remember to utilize the community members mentioned above to help you during this process. There are many recreational groups in your community that would be excellent partners in your initiative, but the key for starting your initiative is finding an organization that can have the largest impact in your community. A recommended starting point is to contact your city park and recreation department or community education office. Working with these organizations to implement prevention strategies can have a far-reaching impact in your community, since they often own and operate the majority of the youth recreational facilities and coordinate a large portion of the youth activities for your community. Other groups to consider may include your local baseball association, 4-H club, YMCA center, and Girl Scout troops. (See the "Recreational Contacts" section for a more complete listing of organizations that may be present in your community).

2. Contact Recreational Groups

The next step is to begin contacting recreational groups within your community that you have identified as potential partners. Key staff members that you may want to discuss your ideas with include club administrators or presidents, recreation directors, coaching directors, and others who may be involved in youth recreational programming. If you are interested in working with a city park & recreation department, begin by contacting the department director or the youth recreation programmer. Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation (TFYR) can help you develop an outreach strategy for your community, which includes identifying important staff members.



Youth recreational groups, such as softball associations, can make excellent partners for tobacco prevention. Photo by Minnesota Sports Federation.

These initial conversations help to develop relationships and determine the organization's initial support of the tobacco-free message. During your conversation, emphasize the mission of your initiative and how it relates to reducing youth tobacco use. Provide specific statistics about youth tobacco use in your community. Use the "Sample Talking Points" sheet on pages 43 and 44 to help guide your conversation. Remember to mention that you believe their organization can play a key role in helping reduce youth tobacco use. Focus on the fact that you are interested in providing them with some resources to promote the tobacco-free message through their existing recreational programs.

During your initial conversations you may need to educate the organization on tobacco use and on the unique opportunity they have to make a difference in reducing youth tobacco use. Providing them with examples of how you could partner to promote the tobacco-free message, such as distributing posters with a tobacco-free message for their youth participants or attending their community events to raise awareness about tobacco use, is another way to help them understand how they can make a difference through their programming.

In addition to discussing the organization's support for the tobacco-free message, find out the number of youth participants and adult leaders they have and type of programs they offer. Identify relevant tobacco-related information, and find out if they receive any funding from the tobacco industry. Use the "Recreational Organization Questionnaire" (p. 55-56) to help guide your discussion and answer important questions. This information will help determine if the organization fits the objectives of your tobacco prevention initiative.

Connecting with Recreational Groups

- Contact key staff members and meet with them to develop relationships
- Complete the "Recreational Organization Questionnaire" for each group
- Be certain to explain that you believe they can play a key role in reducing youth tobacco use
- Provide them with examples of how you can work together on this initiative

3. Discuss Potential Prevention Strategies

Once you have concluded that a group who is interested in partnering with you matches the objectives set forth in your local youth tobacco prevention initiative, begin discussing specific ways you can work together. Be certain to discuss the various components of a recreation-based tobacco prevention strategy by clarifying the important role each of these components plays in the overall effort.

At this stage, you may find that many recreational groups already have a policy and would just like assistance in carrying out a more comprehensive tobacco prevention strategy. If this is the case, begin exploring ways in which you can work together to promote the tobacco-free message (see step #6 of this section). If a policy is not in place, discuss how a policy could benefit their organization and particularly their youth participants.

When meeting with these organizations, elicit potential prevention strategies, remembering to be sensitive to the needs and concerns of the organization. Have everyone present discuss what resources are available that might provide opportunities for your prevention strategies. This can be extremely helpful in finding resources that the recreational group may be interested in using, and in discovering resources you can utilize such as their newsletters, web pages, and community events. Use the “Components of a Recreation-Based Tobacco Prevention Strategy” in Section II as a guide for ideas on how you can work together. Check out the “Resources” section of this guide for a list of materials that are available from Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation, SmokeFree Soccer, and various other agencies.

Finding Ways to Work Together

- Discuss the components of a recreation-based tobacco prevention strategy
- Explain the benefits of having a comprehensive tobacco policy
- Discuss specific ways you can help their organization promote the tobacco-free message

4. Inform and Educate Decision Makers

From our past experience, Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation (TFYR) and SmokeFree Soccer have found that most recreational organizations are very interested and even excited to begin working with us to promote tobacco prevention messages. Generally, this is because the missions of many of these groups are centered on positively affecting a young person’s personal and social development.

Occasionally, the staff you are working with may need to discuss your collective ideas with their local recreation board or other governing body to get final approval. This is especially the case when you are working with an organization to implement a tobacco-free policy. Begin by providing the decision makers with written materials to help them understand the important issues and how they can make a difference through their programming. Distribute TFYR’s *Decision Maker’s Guide to Tobacco-Free Policies for Youth Recreational Facilities* to the decision-making body. You can also use the information listed in the “Tobacco-Free Policies” section of this guide and the “Sample Talking Points” sheet on pages 43 and 44 to help educate decision makers.



Youth recreation program administrators join TFYR staff in explaining the benefits of incorporating tobacco prevention into their programs during a session at the 2001 Minnesota Recreation and Park Association conference. Informative presentations about youth tobacco use help decision makers understand the importance of tobacco prevention strategies.

You may need to make presentations to local recreation boards or attend public hearings to explain the ideas you have. If this is the case, gain support prior to the meeting and prepare appropriate speakers (youth, parents, or other community leaders). Refer to the “Sample Talking Points” sheet (pages 43-44) for important issues to highlight during the presentation. Be sure the key staff members and decision makers that you have been working with voice their support at the meeting. Their opinions and suggestions are very valuable. If you have conducted a community survey about support for tobacco-free environments, present the survey findings to decision makers during the meeting to inform them of how community members feel about this issue. TFYR is available to co-present with you and has developed a powerpoint/overhead presentation that helps decision makers understand the important role they can play in reducing youth tobacco use in your community.

Working with Decision Makers

- Provide written materials to explain the issues
- Present information at board and council meetings (contact TFYR to co-present)
- Be certain to address the important issues relating to tobacco use
- Explain the recreation-based tobacco prevention strategy and the rationale
- Ask community members and key staff to vocalize their support

Letter-writing campaigns are another way to let the decision makers know that a tobacco prevention effort would benefit their membership and the community. Encourage parents, school administrators, health professionals, and other community leaders to send postcards or letters of support to the organization or to submit a letter to the editor of the local newspaper. These types of activities get more community members involved in the tobacco prevention effort. Contact TFYR for a list of Association for Nonsmokers—MN members in your area that may be willing to write a letter of support as well. Check with the American Lung Association, the American Cancer Society, the Minnesota Smoke-Free Coalition, and your local health care agency for volunteers in your area that might support this initiative. An example letter of support, letter to the editor, and advocacy postcard can be found on pages 57-59 of this guide.

5. Help with the adoption of a tobacco-free policy

If a policy is not in place, you will need to begin to work with staff and decision makers to develop a policy that best fits the organization’s needs. The “Tobacco-Free Policies” section of this guide provides tips on the policy development process that will help you guide each organization through this process. Be certain to begin by explaining the rationale behind tobacco-free policies (see page 27). Explaining that a comprehensive tobacco policy gives an organization the written framework and support they need to feel comfortable promoting and modeling tobacco-free lifestyles is a great way to illustrate to them how they can make a difference through their programming. TFYR’s *Decision Maker’s Guide to Tobacco-Free Policies* is a helpful resource to distribute to staff and decision makers when working on policy initiatives.

You should then discuss the important components of a successful tobacco-free policy and explain what role each component plays (see page 28). Next begin to review TFYR’s model policy with them. TFYR has two different model policies available: one for youth recreational organizations and another for city recreation departments (pages 30-31). Also review example policies that other organizations

have adopted (pages 32-35). These can also serve as excellent resources when you are working with a group to develop a policy that best fits their needs.

Once an organization feels comfortable with the language of a policy, begin discussing how the policy will be communicated. Raising community awareness is critical, so it is important that you work with the organization to develop a plan to communicate the policy. This plan should include notifying participants, parents, spectators, school officials, and other community leaders. Other methods may include submitting articles about the new policy to the local paper and recreational newsletters, and publicizing it at registration events.

Creating a plan for enforcing the tobacco-free policy is also a key step in making the policy successful. Discuss enforcement options and include the methods of enforcement in the written policy. Utilizing signage, having staff and/or volunteers ask people to refrain from tobacco use during recreational activities or announcing the policy at each event are all examples of enforcement. Remember that signage and other visual reminders are key enforcement tools.

Determine consequences for violating the policy, such as a verbal warning for the first offense and removal from the event for repeated violations. Include these consequences in the written policy.

After you have helped the organization develop a plan for communicating and enforcing the policy and the policy has been adopted, publicly recognize the group. For example, conduct a tailgating event at a local park to celebrate your city's recent adoption of a tobacco-free policy for its outdoor youth recreational facilities. TFYR also has recognition certificates that you can present to the organization (see page 46). Presentation of a recognition certificate provides a photo opportunity for local media.

Tips for Policy Adoption

- Explain the important components of a successful tobacco-free policy
- Review example and model policies
- Provide them with examples of other organizations who have passed policies
- Develop a plan for communicating the policy that includes notifying participants, parents, spectators, school officials, and other community leaders
- Develop an enforcement plan (visual reminders are a key enforcement tool)
- Publicly recognize groups that have passed policies

6. Implement prevention tools that support the policy

Once a policy is in place, begin to assist each individual group in promoting and modeling the tobacco-free message. Revisit the ideas you and the staff members you worked with came up with and begin to implement them. TFYR's *Playing Tobacco Free: A Guide for Recreational Organizations* also provides tips and resources that can help groups accomplish their goals. Check out the "Resources" section of this guide for a list of materials that are available from Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation, SmokeFree Soccer, and various other agencies.

Be certain to take advantage of key recreational events where you can work together to promote the tobacco-free message. Examples include player registrations, tournaments, county fairs, parades, and other youth and family events. These events also provide great opportunities to hand out educational materials to youth and parents on tobacco and secondhand smoke. Contact TFYR for suggestions and resources that can help you raise awareness through these fun events.

Other opportunities to consider are coaches' trainings, newsletter articles and advertisements, posters featuring local athletes, and player and team pledges (pledges can be found on page 47). TFYR's *Recreational Leader's Guide* and the *SmokeFree Soccer Coach's Manual* are also available to distribute to organizations so they can give their staff members and volunteers the background information and tools they need to promote the tobacco-free message.

Once a Strategy is Implemented...

- Revisit ideas generated from your initial conversations
- To expand your prevention ideas, refer back to the components of a recreation-based prevention strategy
- Remember to include youth when generating your prevention ideas
- Utilize resources available through Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation and others

7. Support existing partners and explore new opportunities

It is critical that you continue to support organizations after they have implemented their tobacco prevention strategies. Take advantage of TFYR's newsletter to recognize groups for their achievements and publicize your successes. TFYR's newsletter is sent to recreational groups, health professionals, local tobacco grantees, and policy makers throughout the state. Remember to utilize local recreational newsletters to promote your successes and continue to educate your community (see page 60 for an example educational article). Providing signs to the groups you are working with that communicate the policy is an additional way of supporting these organizations. Contact TFYR for signage to post on fields or in buildings.

Keep the groups you are working with aware of new resources that can help them promote the tobacco-free message. Conduct follow-up meetings to gain a better understanding of how to effectively assist the group in the future and begin planning your involvement in their future community events.

Utilize the local media to promote either the tobacco-free message or a specific event you are attending. You can purchase ads and send out press releases to raise awareness. The media may even want to air/write a human interest story about the partnership, the messages, or to recognize the organizations involved. Recruiting volunteers to write informational articles or letters to the editor is another way to get the tobacco-free message out via the local media.

Continuing your initiative

- Publicize your partnership and the overall initiative
- Invite local media to press conferences and community events
- Update partners on the resources available through TFYR and SmokeFree Soccer
- Conduct follow-up meetings to determine how you can continue your partnership
- Begin contacting other recreational organizations to begin partnering with them

Once you have successfully implemented your prevention strategy with your original organizations, begin exploring partnership opportunities with other recreational organizations in your community. Remember, there are many recreational groups in your community that would be excellent partners in your initiative. When beginning your discussions with these groups, mention how you already have helped other recreational organizations implement similar prevention strategies. Contact TFYR if you would like to further discuss ways you can expand your initiative.



Checklist for Carrying out your Initiative

Assess your community

- Identify parents, teachers, youth and other leaders who are interested in this issue
- Survey community to determine support for tobacco-free recreational facilities for youth
- Begin to identify what recreational groups and facilities are present
- Determine what organizations could have the largest impact (a recommended starting point is your city park & recreation department)

Contact recreational groups

- Contact key staff members and meet with them to develop relationships
- Complete the “Recreational Organization Questionnaire” for each group
- Be certain to explain that you believe they can play a key role in reducing youth tobacco use
- Provide them with examples of how you can work together on this initiative

Discuss potential prevention strategies

- Discuss the components of a recreation-based tobacco prevention strategy
- Explain the benefits of having a comprehensive tobacco policy
- Discuss specific ways you can help their organization promote the tobacco-free message

Inform and educate decision makers

- Provide written materials to help decision makers understand the issues
- If necessary, present information at public hearings (contact TFYR to co-present)
- Be certain to address the important issues relating to tobacco use
- Explain how the group can help reduce youth tobacco use
- Ask community members and key staff to vocalize their support

Help with the adoption of a tobacco-free policy

- Explain the important components of a successful tobacco-free policy
- Review example and model policies with decision makers
- Provide them with examples of other organizations who have passed policies
- Develop a plan for communicating the policy
- Develop an enforcement plan (visual reminders are a key enforcement tool)
- Publicly recognize groups that have passed policies

Implement prevention tools that support the policy

- Revisit ideas generated from your initial conversations
- To expand your prevention ideas, refer back to the components of a recreation-based prevention strategy
- Remember to include youth when generating your prevention ideas
- Utilize resources available through Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation and others

Support existing partners and explore new opportunities

- Publicize your partnership and the overall initiative
- Update partners on the resources available through TFYR and SmokeFree Soccer
- Conduct follow-up meetings to determine how you can continue your partnership
- Begin contacting other recreational organizations to begin partnering with them



EXAMPLE INITIATIVES

Creating Tobacco-Free Communities

Healthy Air, Healthy People, Healthy Dakota County

Creating Tobacco-Free Communities Dakota County, Minnesota

Creating Tobacco-Free Communities (CTFC) is a collaborative effort of local law enforcement, school districts, and local public health in Dakota County, Minnesota, and a recipient of a Minnesota Youth Tobacco Prevention Initiative community-based grant. As a recipient of this grant, CTFC must work to reduce youth tobacco use. In order to do so, CTFC has identified reducing youth exposure to secondhand smoke as a priority strategy. CTFC recognizes that secondhand smoke physically damages young people and exposes them to tobacco usage behavior, which reinforces the notion that tobacco use is a socially acceptable behavior. Reducing the exposure of youth to secondhand smoke in public places can counter both of these concerns. CTFC feels that one important source of youth exposure is through the various recreational activities in which they participate or in which they attend as spectators.

As part of CTFC's effort to raise awareness in the community about youth exposure to secondhand smoke (which has included a television, newspaper, and on-screen movie advertising campaign and booths at the Dakota County fair and other community health fairs), CTFC has made initial contact with several local recreational programs, particularly soccer clubs, to educate them about the importance of tobacco-free environments. Their primary strategy in locating these organizations has been to network with local community members who have connections to the directors of recreational programs. After obtaining contact information and doing an initial introduction, a member of CTFC arranges a face-to-face meeting. CTFC uses TFYR and SmokeFree Soccer messages, materials, and suggested approaches to explain the importance of tobacco-free recreation.



CTFC distributes tobacco-free signage to local soccer clubs to promote healthy lifestyles.

In their work with local soccer clubs, CTFC has compiled a list of questions that help them determine as much information as possible about the group's interest in tobacco prevention:

- Is there an organizational policy that covers tobacco use? If so, could the policy be improved?
- Is policy compliance a problem? What is the cause? When and where is the policy violated?
- If the recreational program does not own the facilities it uses, what type of tobacco policy does the property owner have? The facilities may be on school, city park or other public or private property.
- If the property owner has a tobacco policy, is it stronger or weaker than the recreation program's policy? Does one policy complement or undermine the other policy? This exploration of the policy of the property owner could lead to a visit with the property owner about changing their policy.

After their initial survey of the recreational organization's situation, CTFC develops a strategy for working with them. If the group has not considered tobacco prevention, CTFC explains why it is important and helps them begin implementing aspects of a prevention strategy. If the recreational organization already has a tobacco policy and it is working well, CTFC explains other ways in which they can help promote tobacco-free messages. They usually offer groups TFYR and SmokeFree Soccer's available resources, such as posters and signage.

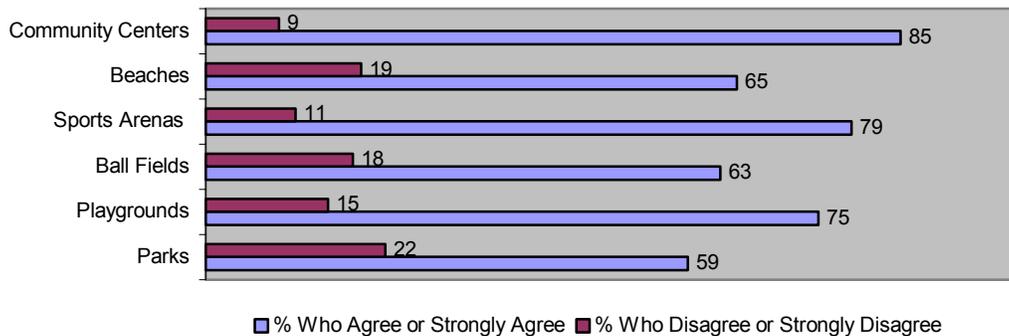


Owatonna Area Smoke Free Coalition Owatonna, Minnesota

The Owatonna Area Smoke Free Coalition has been working actively in the Owatonna community since 1998, focusing on issues such as youth access to tobacco and smoke-free restaurants. In the fall of 1999, they partnered with Students Helping Others Choose (SHOC), an anti-substance abuse group, to conduct surveys at several public events in the community. In a non-scientific survey, they asked over 900 people in the community at what types of places they would support a “no smoking” policy. They included five questions related to recreational facilities. Overall, the majority of people supported bans in all five areas: 59% of people surveyed supported bans in parks, 75% supported bans on playgrounds, 63% supported bans on ball fields, 79% supported bans in sports arenas, and 65% supported bans on beaches.³⁷

Owatonna Tobacco Survey - Fall 1999

I support no smoking in the following places:



Jane Nyquist, coalition facilitator and Steele County Public Health educator, realizes the importance of tobacco-free youth. “In order for youth to excel in recreational events, they need to be healthy. Their parents are present at these events, too. They are a captive audience and can be presented with a healthy message during their children’s recreational activities.”

The Owatonna Area Smoke Free Coalition began working with TFYR after realizing the positive impact they could have on the health of youth by assisting youth recreational groups in implementing tobacco prevention programs. They invited local community leaders to one of their coalition meetings and asked TFYR to give a short presentation about the benefits of a recreation-based tobacco prevention program. As a result, the Owatonna Park and Recreation Department became interested in adopting a tobacco policy for their city-owned recreational facilities during youth athletic events. To help the Owatonna Park and Recreation Board, which makes policy decisions for the community’s parks and recreational facilities, understand the benefits of a tobacco policy, Nyquist and TFYR gave a short presentation to them at one of their board meetings. Nyquist supplied statistics about youth tobacco use in Owatonna, while TFYR covered the technical aspects of tobacco prevention strategies and how they relate to recreational programs.

The board responded positively to the idea of having a tobacco-free policy for parks and playgrounds. On December 11, 2001, they voted unanimously to pass a policy banning all tobacco products during youth events at all recreational facilities owned by the City of Owatonna. In addition to covering youth athletic facilities, the policy prohibits tobacco use at the outdoor skating facility, Lake Kohlmier beach, and city playgrounds.

As a first step in implementing the policy, TFYR and the Owatonna Area Smoke Free Coalition developed a packet of resource materials for youth recreational organizations and athletic associations in the area that included a copy of the new tobacco-free policy and information on how the policy will help promote the tobacco-free message. This packet also included information on positive role modeling, tobacco-free players' and team pledges, fact sheets on secondhand smoke, and a list of smoke-free restaurants in the Owatonna area that groups can patronize during their recreational activities.

To help notify the public about the policy and raise awareness about youth tobacco use, articles will be featured in the city of Owatonna's Park & Recreation weekly column in the local paper. TFYR and the Owatonna Area Smoke Free Coalition also plan to attend the park and recreation department's general registration day for summer youth recreational programs. This half day event will be filled with fun activities for parents and participants and will provide a great opportunity to educate the community about the dangers of tobacco use.

Owatonna Area Smoke Free Coalition members have also been working with local youth in the community. Just as they partnered with the SHOC student group to survey local citizens in 1999, they are again teaming up to get the tobacco-free message out. The SHOC students are currently conducting peer education sessions on chemical abuse. With the help of Nyquist, some of these students have chosen to form a group focused specifically on tobacco use, which will plan school and community activities related to tobacco prevention. Nyquist believes that reaching out to recreational groups in the community and involving youth in educational efforts is another great way to raise community awareness about the benefits of living a tobacco-free lifestyle.



TFYR and the Owatonna Area Smoke Free Coalition present a certificate to the Owatonna Park & Recreation Board, recognizing them for their efforts to protect the health of their community by adopting a tobacco-free policy.

Several local agencies in Bloomington and Richfield collaborated to pass policies in both cities that ban tobacco use at any city-owned athletic facility during a youth athletic event. Due to the hard work of many health professionals and community leaders, both cities have now adopted policies that will ensure that young people in both communities have environments to play in that are free of the harmful effects of tobacco.

The policy effort began in Bloomington. Rosalind Johnson, Health Promotion Specialist for Bloomington Public Health, described several reasons why it was important for the City of Bloomington to pass a tobacco-free policy for city-owned athletic fields and aquatic areas (public beaches and pools):

- Bloomington Public Schools and the Bloomington Athletic Association, a large youth sports organization, had already passed tobacco-free policies that prohibited use on school athletic fields and during youth games. However, the City of Bloomington had no similar policy or ordinance. If the city passed a similar policy, signage could be placed on city athletic fields, reinforcing existing tobacco policies. Also, the city would be able to help with enforcement.
- Strong parent, community and organizational support for a tobacco ban on youth athletic fields and aquatic areas existed.
- Litter, burning cigarette butts, fires, and secondhand smoke exposure posed health and safety concerns for these areas.
- Community members supported the community norm that underage youth should not use tobacco and expressed a desire to change the misconception by youth that most adults and teens smoke.
- Most coaches and parents felt that it was important for youth to connect with positive adult role models that do not use tobacco products on the athletic fields.

Because Bloomington Public Health is a department of the City of Bloomington, public health staff were more easily able to identify decision makers and the processes needed to pass a new policy or ordinance. Initially, staff met with the Bloomington Parks and Recreation Director to discuss the possibility of the city restricting tobacco use on city-owned athletic fields. The initiative received a big boost when a community organizer from the University of Minnesota Tobacco Free Futures project was hired. Together public health staff and the community organizer worked with several local organizations to gather input and support for the policy. These groups included the Bloomington Park and Recreation Commission, the Bloomington Advisory Board of Health, the Tri-City Partners for Healthy Youth and Communities, the Tobacco Free Futures group, and the Bloomington Athletic Association. Tobacco Free Futures project staff met with the mayor and city council members, and they encouraged community members to write letters of support. Johnson emphasized the importance of knowing what the mayor and city council members think about a proposal before publicly proposing a policy or ordinance. Youth joined the effort by becoming involved in public awareness and community organizing activities.

After hearing the proposal to ban tobacco use on city-owned athletic fields, aquatic areas and building entrances, the Bloomington city manager and city council appointed a special study group—the Administrative Group on Non-Smoking Issues—to review proposals and develop specific recommendations for consideration. The 12-member study group consisted of city staff representing public health, police, parks and recreation, legal, and community services. Community volunteers from the Parks, Arts and Recreation Commission, the Advisory Board of Health, and Tobacco Free Futures also joined the group. Public health staff facilitated the group and presented final recommendations to the city council.

In June 2001, the Bloomington City Council held a public hearing on the proposed changes to the city code and officially approved the tobacco ordinance (see “Tobacco-Free Policies” for specific provisions). Currently, Bloomington Public Health is coordinating implementation of the new ordinance. The Administrative Study Group on Non-Smoking Issues will reconvene to review other park and recreational areas (such as playlots and playgrounds) and determine if the tobacco ban should be expanded.

Bloomington Public Health serves Bloomington, Edina and Richfield. These communities compose the Tri-City Partners for Healthy Youth and Communities, a partnership that allows the cities to share information about tobacco prevention initiatives. During discussion at a meeting, the tobacco policy campaign in Bloomington piqued the interest of the Richfield Park and Recreation staff. In September 2001, the Richfield Parks and Recreation Commission approved a park policy that prohibits all tobacco use during organized youth athletic events on city-owned property.

The organizations involved in the passage of tobacco-free policies for Bloomington and Richfield have continued to promote the tobacco-free message following the policy initiatives. One example is the youth sports coaches’ forum entitled, “Improving the Youth Sports Environment.” Bloomington Public Health, Richfield Park and Recreation, and Hennepin County Community Health co-sponsored this event. The half-day forum, held in Bloomington, featured panel discussions on sportsmanship, nutrition, alcohol, and tobacco use, and encouraged youth coaches to utilize sports to teach young people to develop both positive character traits and healthy lifestyles. These organizations have also assisted the cities of Richfield and Bloomington in creating, partially funding, and posting signage that promotes the policies. During the summer, they will also be distributing tobacco-free posters to youth in the summer playground programs.



CardioVision 2020 Olmsted County, Minnesota

CardioVision 2020 is a grassroots community health initiative developed through the work of many community partners and committed to preventing cardiovascular disease through personal commitment and community action. It is open to all residents of Olmsted County, Minnesota. One of CardioVision's goals is to create a tobacco-free community.

CardioVision 2020 was instrumental in the passage of the Rochester Park Board rule that prohibits smoking within 100 feet of playgrounds and youth athletic fields. Over the course of four months prior to the adoption of the tobacco rule, CardioVision 2020 worked to organize the community in support of the rule. Besides identifying community members who were interested in a tobacco rule, CardioVision 2020 also worked closely with the Rochester Park & Recreation Department and the Rochester Park Board.



John Withers and Roy Sutherland, Rochester Park & Recreation, receive congratulations from Dr. Thomas Kottke of CardioVision 2020 for passing their tobacco-free rule.

The board unanimously supported the tobacco rule, citing the two major concerns related to smoking at youth facilities: the health impact of secondhand smoke and the message that smoking sends to youth. Denny Stotz, assistant superintendent of Rochester Park and Recreation, stated, "If kids see adults smoking in areas that are intended for kids, it sends a subliminal message that smoking is all right." By passing the tobacco rule, the Rochester Park Board hopes that it will help change the widely-held assumption by youth that tobacco use is an acceptable and normal behavior in our society.

After the tobacco rule was passed, CardioVision 2020 and the Rochester Park & Recreation staff worked to promptly post signs stating the tobacco rule. Posting signs soon after the rule was passed helped to alert

the public of the new rule. Since the media covered the passage of the rule, staff put up the signage as soon as possible to capitalize on the publicity.

Rebecca Hoffman, health education outreach coordinator for CardioVision 2020, offers suggestions for how to work with a city park board to pass a tobacco policy:

- Community organizing is the first priority. Grassroots-based movements are much more successful than top-down approaches to passing a tobacco rule.
- Find visible community leaders willing to support a tobacco rule for playgrounds and youth athletic fields.
- The city park and recreation director and staff are key people to build relationships with and secure as supporters of the tobacco rule. Once they are convinced a tobacco rule for playgrounds and youth athletic fields would benefit the city, they can persuade other citizens, and ultimately park board members, to support a tobacco rule.

CardioVision 2020 chose to pursue a park rule that prohibits tobacco use instead of a city ordinance. They felt this worked best for them for several reasons:

- Park board rules reduce much of the politics that encompass city ordinances.

- Generally, park board rules can be passed more quickly than city ordinances.
- Park board rules are policed by citizens, giving them ownership in the rule and authority to ask violators to stop using tobacco.

One year after the creation of the Rochester park rule prohibiting tobacco use, the Olmsted County Commissioners passed a policy prohibiting smoking in all restaurants in the county. Hoffman explained that the park rule creating tobacco-free playgrounds and athletic fields helped this effort because of the awareness that was raised in the community around secondhand smoke and the importance of tobacco-free environments. Prior to the restaurant policy, Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation also helped promote smoke-free restaurants by sending letters to youth recreational organizations in the area that explained the harmful effects of secondhand smoke and encouraged them to patronize smoke-free establishments during team events (for an example letter you can send to recreational organizations to educate them on secondhand smoke, see page 48).



Olmsted County Public Health

Olmsted County, Minnesota

The Olmsted County Public Health Department is also a recipient of a Minnesota Youth Tobacco Prevention Initiative community-based grant. As part of this grant, Public Health Educator Jean Stoll has focused on reviewing and strengthening school tobacco policies. After conducting a needs assessment of the middle and high schools in Olmsted County, Stoll has focused specifically on six school districts: Byron, Chatfield, Rochester, Rochester Lourdes, Stewartville, and Dover-Eyota. After discussing tobacco policies with school officials in these districts, Stoll determined that they were having a difficult time enforcing their tobacco policies at sporting events and other recreational activities. One specific problem that these school districts identified was parents smoking on school-owned athletic facilities during their children’s games and matches. The problem was especially apparent at football games in several school districts.

To help inform the public about each school’s tobacco policy for sporting events and recreational activities, Stoll obtained TFYR outdoor and indoor signage. She distributed signs to each school district for posting at sporting venues. She is also working with the school districts to create more permanent indoor signage. Besides using the visual education that the signs provide, the school tobacco policies will be communicated to parents via school newsletters.

Stoll offers advice to other public health educators who are interested in working with school districts to improve tobacco policies at their recreational facilities:

- Conduct a needs assessment of the policies currently in use in each school district.
- Summarize “identified needs” and present the summary to school administrators.
- Offer to help them with the needs that have been identified.



TOBACCO-FREE POLICIES

A closer look at tobacco-free policies...

Why are policies effective?

- Policies reinforce to youth the message that tobacco use is unhealthy and unnecessary behavior.
- Policies ensure that participants and spectators are not exposed to secondhand smoke.
- Policies create an environment where leaders can model and promote healthy lifestyle choices.

Examples of youth recreational organizations who have adopted policies:

- Arrowhead Youth Soccer Association (NE Minnesota)
- Glen Lake Mighty Mites Baseball Association (Minnetonka/Hopkins)
- Greater Minneapolis Girl Scout Council
- Mankato Athletic Association

Taking a look at city-wide tobacco-free policies...

Why are city-wide policies so important?

- City recreation departments own and operate most of the facilities used by youth recreation groups.
- City-wide policies support groups who have existing policies when they are using city facilities.
- Since most school districts prohibit tobacco use in all their facilities, city-wide policies create consistency for all youth recreational facilities in the community.
- Cigarette butts cause litter, maintenance expenses, and can be ingested by toddlers.
- Creating smoke-free environments protects the health, safety, and welfare of the community.

Cities who have implemented tobacco-free policies

City of Bloomington, MN (City Ordinance)

- Prohibits use of tobacco on city-owned athletic fields during youth athletic events.

City of Rochester, MN (Park Policy)

- Bans smoking within 100 feet of playgrounds and youth athletic fields.

Other Examples:

- Baxter, MN (City Ordinance)
- Cohasset, MN (City Ordinance)
- Owatonna, MN (Park Policy)
- Richfield, MN (Park Policy)
- Roseville, MN (Park Policy)

How are these policies enforced?

City park and recreation departments enforce tobacco policies for outdoor youth recreational facilities similarly to other park policies, such as alcohol and litter policies. Park policies are typically enforced by using signage, staff compliance checks, and community education to ensure voluntary compliance. Depending on each department's regulations, a fine may need to be included in the policy.

Example Enforcement Plan – Roseville Park & Recreation Department

1. All youth activity spaces will have signs.
2. All youth organizations will be given regulations for distributing the policy to leaders, coaches and parents.
3. Staff will make periodic observations of youth activity sites to monitor for compliance.
4. Although the emphasis is on voluntary compliance, failure to comply with park regulations is a misdemeanor and carries a \$25 fine.

Components of a Successful Policy

1. Include the rationale for developing and implementing the policy

Include the reasons for having a policy: health effects of tobacco (firsthand and secondhand smoke), concerns about a safe and healthy environment to play in, reinforcement of tobacco educational efforts and support for appropriate role-modeling for young people.

2. Consider who the policy will cover

Identify participants, staff, officials, visitors, and all parties the policy will affect.

3. Locations and/or facilities where the policy applies

Identify all grounds and facilities and include organization-sponsored events, even if held off-site.

4. Definition of terms

Describe clearly which tobacco products are being banned and what determines use and/or possession.

5. Enforcement of the policy

Describe how the policy will be enforced: for example, utilizing signage or having staff and/or volunteers ask people to refrain from tobacco use during recreational activities.

6. Consequences of violation

Consider what the consequences will be for violating the policy. This could include verbal warnings, or, if the problem persists, an escort off the grounds.

7. Activities that support the policy

Identify opportunities that complement the tobacco-free policy, such as communicating the policy, promoting the tobacco-free message at events, providing educational materials, trainings, and utilizing adult and peer role models as spokespeople.

8. Dissemination of the policy

Make plans to notify participants, parents, and spectators of the policy. This can include updates to the policy manual, team & participant pledges, trainings, newsletter articles and signage.

Adapted from Creating Tobacco-Free Schools, Connie Alcott, author.

Defeating Policy Myths: The Truth Behind Tobacco-Free Recreation

Myth #1

Kids seeing adults using tobacco products decide tobacco use is no big deal.

Reality: Thousands of teenagers start smoking every day, in part because they see their adult role models use tobacco or allow its use in public places. How do children learn to walk? To talk? To play sports? From adults! Adult habits *DO* affect our children and youth.

Myth #2

Cigarette butts discarded on the ground do not really hurt anything.

Reality: Cigarette butts are not biodegradable, meaning they do not decay and cannot be absorbed by the environment. In fact, cigarette butts remain intact for about 10 years before breaking apart, which amounts to tons of litter. Also, toddlers and pets may ingest the butts that are discarded on the ground.

Myth #3

Policies that prohibit tobacco use at youth recreational facilities or during youth recreational events will restrict tobacco users from these facilities and events.

Reality: Tobacco-free policies for youth recreational facilities and events do not restrict people from using these facilities or attending these events; rather, they only ensure that tobacco users refrain from using tobacco for a short period of time while at facilities where children and youth are playing.

Myth #4

Recreation-based tobacco-free policies are needless regulations and a governmental interference.

Reality: Tobacco-free policies are public park policies similar to those banning alcohol or littering in public park and recreation facilities. It is the duty of policy makers to enact policies that protect the health and well being of the citizens of their community.

Myth #5

Tobacco-free policies for recreational facilities will be impossible to enforce.

Reality: 80% of all Minnesota adults do not smoke (1999). Therefore, tobacco-free policies are largely self-enforcing and can be properly enforced with a combination of adequate signage and community education about the policy. Any infraction can be reported and handled in the same manner as an alcohol or litter complaint that may occur at these facilities.

Youth Recreational Organization Model Tobacco-Free Policy

Commitment

We recognize that there is ample research demonstrating the health hazards of the use of tobacco products, including smoking, the breathing of secondhand smoke, and the use of smokeless tobacco, and understand our responsibility to the participants of our program to model and promote tobacco-free lifestyles.

We stress to leaders, teachers, coaches, officials, administrators, parents, spectators, and all others involved the importance of maintaining a tobacco-free environment while working with young people. We will provide an environment that is free of tobacco at all events.

Policy

The use or possession of any form of tobacco during all activities sanctioned by or in which our organization participates is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, all league games, tournaments, competitions, sponsored events and all other performances. This policy applies to all participants: players, leaders, teachers, coaches, managers, club officials, administrators, and spectators.

Definition

Tobacco use is the possession or ingestion of tobacco in any form, regardless of the quantity.

Penalty

Violation of this rule will result in a verbal and written warning. A second violation may cause the individual to be removed from the activity or game.

Authorized signature: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____



City Park & Recreation Department

Model Tobacco-Free Policy

WHEREAS, the City believes that tobacco use in the proximity of children and adults engaging in or watching youth sports at city-owned or operated facilities is detrimental to their health and can be offensive to those using such facilities; and

WHEREAS, our youth athletic organizations have a unique opportunity to create and sustain an environment that supports a non-tobacco norm through a tobacco-free policy, rule enforcement, and adult-peer role modeling on City youth athletic fields; and

WHEREAS, the City believes parents, leaders, and officials are role models for youth and can have a positive effect on the lifestyle choices they make; and

WHEREAS, cigarettes once consumed in public spaces, are often discarded on the ground requiring additional maintenance expenses, diminish the beauty of the city's recreational facilities, and pose a risk to toddlers due to ingestion; and

WHEREAS, the City Park & Recreation Board determines that the prohibition of tobacco use at the City's recreational facilities serves to protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens and residents of our City.

Section 1: Tobacco use prohibited in outdoor youth recreation facilities

No person shall use tobacco products at any of the City's designated beach areas, or other designated pools, aquatic areas, and playgrounds. Appropriate signs as directed by the Recreation & Park Director shall be posted in these areas.

No person shall use any tobacco products on City-owned athletic fields when used by youth, including their spectator areas, restrooms, and concession areas. Appropriate signs as directed by the Recreation & Park Director shall be posted in these areas.

Section 2: Violations and penalties (optional)

Any person found violating this policy may be subject to immediate ejection from the recreation facility for the remainder of the event.

Section 3: Effective Date

This policy statement is effective immediately upon the date of adoption.

Department of Parks & Recreation

Date



CITY OF BLOOMINGTON, MINNESOTA

ORDINANCE NO. 2001-19

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 5 OF THE CITY CODE AS IT RELATES TO TOBACCO USE IN CITY PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS

Section 1. That Chapter 5 of the City Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

CHAPTER 5 ARTICLE III. PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS

SEC. 5.20 DEFINITIONS

The following words or terms when used in this Article, shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

Parks – A park, conservation area, playground, beach, recreation center or other area in the City, owned, leased or used, wholly or in part by the City of such purposes or which is designated by the City Council as a park.

Tobacco Product – Cigarettes, cigars, cheroots, stogies, perique, granulated, plug cut, crimpl cut, ready, rugged and other smoking tobacco; snuff, snuff flowed, Cavendish, clippings, cuttings, and sweepings of tobacco; and other kinds and forms of tobacco, prepared in such a manner as to be suitable for chewing, sniffing, or smoking in a pipe; rolling paper or other tobacco-related devices.

Tobacco Use – Smoking, chewing, snuffing or otherwise inhaling or ingesting any tobacco products.

SEC. 5.21 REGULATIONS

The following regulations shall apply to all City parks:

(7). Beaches and public waters – No person shall use tobacco products at any of the City's designated beach areas, or other designated pool and play areas at City-owned swimming pools and aquatic facilities. These areas shall be posted by appropriate signs and markers as directed by the Park Director.

(16). Athletic play fields – No person shall use tobacco products on City-owned athletic play fields, including their spectator areas, while the fields are being used for organized youth athletic events. These areas shall be posted by appropriate signs and markers as directed by the Park Director.

SEC. 5.22 PENALTY

Any person violating these subsections shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, all other violations of this Article shall be punishable as a petty misdemeanor.

CITY OF OWATONNA, MINNESOTA
Park & Recreation Department
540 West Hills Circle
Owatonna, MN 55060

PARK & RECREATION DEPARTMENT POLICY STATEMENT

Subject: Use of tobacco products at Owatonna Park and Recreation Department and Owatonna Youth Athletic Association youth events using Owatonna Park and Recreation Department outdoor facilities.

Background: The Owatonna Park and Recreation Department believes that tobacco use in the proximity of children and adults engaging in or watching youth sports at City of Owatonna owned or operated facilities is detrimental to their health and can be offensive to those using such facilities. Furthermore the Owatonna Park and Recreation Department believes that parents, leaders, coaches, and officials are role models for youth and can have a positive effect on the lifestyle choices they make. Also, cigarettes once consumed in public spaces are often discarded on the ground, thus posing a risk to toddlers due to ingestion.

Section 1: Tobacco use is prohibited at outdoor youth recreation facilities owned by the City of Owatonna to include Warsinski Outdoor skating facility, soccer fields, football fields, baseball/softball fields, Lake Kohlmier beach, and playgrounds. Tobacco products shall also be prohibited at the spectator areas, restrooms, and concession areas of these facilities. Appropriate signage will be posted in all these areas by the Owatonna Park and Recreation Department.

Section 2: Effective Date

This policy statement is effective upon the date of adoption.

Effective Date: December 11, 2001

CARROL COUNTY, MARYLAND
Department of Enterprise & Recreation Services
225 N. Center Street, Room 100
Westminster, Maryland 21157-5194
410-386-2103; 1-888-302-8978

RECREATION & PARK POLICY STATEMENT

To: RECREATION AND PARKS POLICY STATEMENT #01-1

Subject: USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS AT RECREATION ACTIVITIES

1. Purpose

To establish guidelines with respect to the use of tobacco products during recreation council youth activities.

2. Background

The recreation council sponsors a wide variety of activities for the County's youth and has direct access to these youth through their many volunteers. Studies have shown that exposure to secondhand smoke can have an adverse effect on an individual's health. Furthermore, there is concern that exposure to adults in positions of authority (such as coaches, program leaders, umpires, etc.) who use tobacco products is setting a bad example for the County's youth.

3. Action

In order to establish a uniform approach to addressing the issue of the use of tobacco products at recreation council-sponsored youth activities, the following procedures are established:

- A. The use of tobacco products immediately before, during, or immediately after recreation council-sponsored youth activities is prohibited within 50 yards of the playing field or program site.
- B. This policy will be in effect at all recreation council-sponsored youth programs regardless of location and includes (but is not limited to) school, county park, municipal park and private locations.

It is not in any way the intention of the Department of Enterprise and Recreation Services to deter any potential volunteer from offering their services due to this policy. Further, we remain hopeful that all will cooperate and abide by this policy without confrontation or hardship displayed towards recreation council program leaders. Questions or concerns regarding this policy should be directed to the Department of Enterprise and Recreation Services at 410-386-2103.

Minnesota Youth Soccer Association Tobacco-Free Policy

8.2 Prohibited Behavior

8.2.1 Policy Statement

- a. MYSA is committed to promoting an environment that is free from: harassment and violence in any form; verbal or physical intimidation; vandalism; drug, alcohol or tobacco use; gambling; and inappropriate language.
- b. These rules apply to all players, coaches, referees, club officials or administrators registered with MYSA; MYSA officials and administrators; and spectators.
- c. These rules shall be enforced at all MYSA and USYSA sponsored or sanctioned activities including, but not limited to, league games, State Cup games, invitational tournaments, district and state tournaments, and SS/ODP competition. These rules shall also apply to activities outside Minnesota.

8.2.2 Definitions

8.2.2.10 Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Use

Drug use is the possession or ingestion, consumption, inhalation, or other use of a controlled substance. **Alcohol use** is the possession or ingestion of alcohol in any form. **Tobacco use** is the possession or ingestion of tobacco in any form.





RECREATIONAL CONTACTS

Several sources are available to help you find recreational organizations within your community. This list is not comprehensive; rather, it serves as a means to begin your research. Many of these sources require access to the Internet. If you do not have web access, please contact the TFYR staff for assistance.

Local Park and Recreation Departments

Your local city or county park and recreation department not only can provide you with a list of local youth recreational organizations within your community, but they also coordinate many of the recreational programs in the community themselves. Park and recreation departments also own or operate the majority of the facilities within most communities, making them a logical choice for policy implementation. Park and recreation department tobacco policies have a far-reaching impact, since they affect all groups that use their facilities.

Local School Districts/Community Education Departments

Contacting your local school district is another great way to begin using recreation as a prevention tool. School districts offer numerous sports-related programs, and many also provide recreational programs through their community education departments. These programs give you the opportunity to reach out to a large number of young people and leaders with the tobacco-free message. They can also serve as a source for young athletes who can be role models for your community.

Minnesota Youth Soccer Association

The Minnesota Youth Soccer Association (MYSA) is the statewide governing body for youth soccer. MYSA promotes fair, safe, and enjoyable soccer for youth players ages 6-19. Approximately 72,000 players, 8,500 coaches and administrators and 3,000 referees are members of MYSA. Contact information for many local soccer groups is listed on MYSA's website at www.mnyouthsoccer.org/membership/membership.htm.



Minnesota Youth Soccer Association
11577 Encore Circle
Minnetonka, MN 55343
952-933-2384
1-800-366-6972
mysa@mnyouthsoccer.org

Minnesota Hockey

Minnesota Hockey is the statewide association for youth hockey in Minnesota. They provide volunteer services for the development and promotion of amateur hockey in Minnesota. Nearly 45,000 participants and 7,000 coaches are members of the 12 Minnesota Hockey districts. Minnesota Hockey's website, www.minnesotahockey.org lists the local youth hockey associations in the state.



Minnesota Hockey
317 Washington Street
St. Paul, MN 55102
651-602-5727
markj@minnesotahockey.org



Minnesota American Legion Baseball

The Minnesota American Legion sponsors a statewide baseball league. The goals of American Legion Baseball are the development of team discipline, individual character and leadership in young people. The Minnesota American Legion website, www.mnlegion.org/html/directors.html, lists the directors of each baseball district, who can put you in touch with local Legion baseball teams.

Minnesota American Legion Baseball
Veterans Service Building
20 West 12th Street, Room 300A
St. Paul, MN 55155-2000
651-291-1800
department@mnlegion.org

Little League

Little League is a worldwide youth baseball organization. The goal of Little League is to assist youth in developing the qualities of citizenship, discipline, teamwork, and physical well-being. Minnesota has many local Little League teams, which can be found at www.littleleague.org/finder.htm. Click on the state of Minnesota, and then select the county you wish to work with.

Little League
Central Region Headquarters
9802 East Little League Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46235
317-897-6127
centralregion@littleleague.org



Girl Scouts

Girls Scouts USA is the world's largest organization for girls. The Girl Scout program helps girls build character and teach them life skills. The national Girl Scouts website contains an easy way to find local Girl Scout councils. Go to www.girlscouts.org and click on "council finder" at the top of the page.

Girl Scouts of the USA
420 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10018-2798
1-800-478-7248
councils@girlscouts.org



Boy Scouts

The Boy Scouts of America is a national youth program dedicated to character, citizenship, and personal fitness development and values-based leadership training. The national Boy Scouts website has a local Boy Scout council finder available on their website. Go to www.bsa.scouting.org and scroll down to "local councils."

Boy Scouts of America, National Council
P.O. Box 152079
Irving, TX 75015-2079
972-580-2000



Minnesota 4-H

4-H is the largest youth organization in Minnesota, with over 250,000 youth and 14,000 adult volunteers. The four “H’s” (head, heart, hands, and health) provide the framework for project activities that help youth build character and leadership skills. Visit www.fourh.umn.edu/howto.html to find out about the local 4-H groups in your area.

Minnesota 4-H
270B McNamara Alumni Center
University of Minnesota Gateway
200 Oak Street SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
612-624-2116
1-800-444-4238
4hcenter@extension.umn.edu

YMCA

The mission of the YMCA is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all. More than 2,400 YMCA’s are found in 10,000 communities throughout the United States. Each YMCA strives to meet the health and social service needs of the families and communities they serve. Nationwide, YMCA programs reach 17.9 million people, including 9 million youth, each year. To locate the YMCA nearest you, check www.ymca.net and click on “find your YMCA,” or call 1-888-333-YMCA.

YMCA of the USA
101 North Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL 60606
312-977-0031

Boys & Girls Clubs

In the United States, 3.3 million boys & girls belong to 2,851 Boys & Girls Clubs. The Clubs’ mission is to inspire and enable all young people, especially those from disadvantaged circumstances, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens. The Clubs’ primary focus is youth development, achieved by instilling a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging and influence. The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities serve more than 10,000 youth at seven clubs. The Administrative Center can provide information about clubs throughout the state. To locate the clubs in Minnesota, go to www.bgca.org/clubs, or call 651-999-0600.

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities
Administrative Center
2575 University Avenue West
St. Paul, MN 55114
651-999-0600
info@boysandgirls.org





RESOURCES

Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation Association for Nonsmokers—Minnesota (651) 646-3005

www.ansrmn.org/tfyr1.html

Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation's (TFYR) mission is to assist recreational groups in their efforts to promote and model tobacco-free lifestyles to young people. TFYR has many resources available for interested groups who want help implementing tobacco prevention strategies throughout their recreational programs. Contact TFYR staff to find out more about the resources listed below.



*TFYR's Tobacco-Free
Signage*

Resources to consider when discussing prevention partnership opportunities:

- *Playing Tobacco Free: A Guide for Recreational Organizations* – This guide is intended for recreational organizations or clubs who are interested in implementing tobacco prevention strategies. It includes player and team pledges, fact sheets, and various other resources.
- *Recreational Leaders Guide for Promoting the Tobacco-Free Message* – The handbook is a great resource for coaches and other recreational leaders who are interested in promoting the tobacco-free message. It provides tips on how they can be positive role models to the young people within their communities.
- *Being a Winning Role Model: Trainings for Recreational Leaders & Coaches* – TFYR offers this training for organizations who would like to offer an educational and entertaining glimpse at what it takes to be a “Winning Role Model.” Contact TFYR to schedule a training in your community.
- *Tobacco Prevention Posters* – TFYR has joined with a number of other health agencies to develop posters that promote the tobacco-free message.
- *TFYR Newsletter* – The TFYR electronic newsletter is a great way to promote your successes. It provides helpful examples of how you can reach out to recreational groups in your community.

Policy implementation resources:

- *Tobacco-Free Model Policies* – TFYR has developed model policies for both youth recreational organizations and city recreation departments. TFYR also has a collection of example policies from across the state and the nation.
- *A Decision Maker's Guide to Tobacco-Free Policies for Youth Recreational Facilities* – This guide is intended for municipal and county decision makers and provides information on how they can make their youth recreational facilities tobacco free.
- *Indoor & Outdoor Signs* – TFYR offers both indoor and temporary outdoor signage to organizations to help enforce their tobacco-free policy and promote the tobacco-free message.
- *Power Point/Overhead Presentation* – This 20-minute presentation explains how recreational programs can help young people remain tobacco free.

Helpful Resource Links

American Cancer Society

www.cancer.org

Visit this site to connect with the American Cancer Society chapter in your area and to find out about the organization's latest news and support services. Included are links to information on treatment for many types of cancer and a database of brochures and publications for patients and family members. The American Cancer Society offers support and planning consultation for local smoke-free coalitions. They are advocates for secondhand smoke policies at the local level and have expertise in working in the legislative arena.

American Heart Association

www.americanheart.org

The American Heart Association is a national voluntary health agency whose mission is to reduce disability and death from cardiovascular diseases and stroke. The American Heart Association's strategic goal is to reduce coronary heart disease, stroke and risk by 25 percent by the year 2010. Key work processes to achieve this goal include funding research, educating and communicating to the public and health care professionals about the findings and their implications, and advocating for policy change to support their mission. Visit the American Heart Association's website for in-depth information on heart disease and its causes, including tobacco.

American Lung Association of Minnesota

www.alamn.org

The American Lung Association of Minnesota's (ALAMN) website provides educational and program information on lung disease, asthma, tobacco control, and healthy environments. Their Breath of Life campaign features multimedia stories of people who are touched by lung disease. View the latest press releases at the ALAMN Newsroom, as well as background information on ALAMN.

Association for Nonsmokers—Minnesota

www.ansrmn.org

The Association for Nonsmokers—Minnesota (ANSR) website contains Minnesota-specific information such as a state directory of smoke-free restaurants and information on the Minnesota Clean Indoor Air Act. Information on ANSR's Secondhand Smoke Resource Center and the Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation program can also be found on this site.

Blue Cross Blue Shield—Minnesota

www.blueprint.bluecrossmn.com/topic/smokingcenter

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota is the first and only health care plan to date to win a legal battle against the tobacco industry. The 1994 lawsuit against the tobacco companies resulted in unprecedented public gains, open access to secret tobacco industry documents, and a settlement that will reduce tobacco use and improve the health of Minnesotans for many years to come. Blue Cross' Center for Tobacco Reduction & Health Improvement works to reduce tobacco use through the implementation of a comprehensive approach that includes working with providers, members, employers, and the community. The Blue Cross website has a wide variety of helpful information: tobacco facts, creating tobacco-free workplaces, smoking cessation, teens and tobacco, and how to fight the tobacco industry.

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids

www.tobaccofreekids.org

The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids is the largest nongovernmental initiative ever launched to protect children from tobacco addiction. This site provides recent news and links to sites with research data online.

Centers for Disease Control, Office on Smoking and Health

www.cdc.gov/tobacco

The Office on Smoking and Health (OSH) is responsible for leading and coordinating strategic efforts aimed at preventing tobacco use among youth, promoting smoking cessation, and protecting nonsmokers from environmental tobacco smoke. OSH has prepared information on smoking, tobacco, and health. Most of the information is available in published documents, by facsimile, and through the OSH Internet home page.

HealthPartners

www.healthpartners.com

Through HealthPartners' Partners for Better Health 2005 initiative, tobacco control has been identified as a priority within the health plan. HealthPartners' tobacco control strategies focus on a comprehensive approach, while working with care delivery systems, employer groups and the community. Their website provides information on the harmful effects of tobacco use, smoking cessation and secondhand smoke exposure. Tobacco prevention and smoking cessation resources are also highlighted including the adult smoking cessation "Dragon" Calendar and the Partners for Better Health Phone Line "Partners in Quitting" program.

Minnesota Partnership for Action Against Tobacco

www.mpaat.org

The Minnesota Partnership for Action Against Tobacco (MPAAT) is an independent, non-profit public foundation dedicated to reducing the harm tobacco causes Minnesotans. Their goal is to transform the social environment through intervention and research to reduce tobacco use in Minnesota to less than 10 percent by the year 2023. MPAAT facilitates research and supports smoking intervention strategies to reduce the harmful health effects tobacco has on Minnesotans. MPAAT has launched a statewide secondhand smoke advertising campaign called "Secondhand Smoke: Still Want to Breathe It?" Many brochures and other various resources relating to secondhand smoke are available through MPAAT. Information about Minnesota's tobacco quit line, 1-877-270-STOP, is also available on MPAAT's website.

Minnesota Smoke-Free Coalition

www.smokefreecoalition.org

The Minnesota Smoke-Free Coalition was established in 1984 to reduce tobacco use in Minnesota. The Coalition works in collaboration with member organizations, including health, business and civic groups, to provide leadership in tobacco control policy development at the state level, and advocates at the state, federal and grassroots level. In collaboration with their member organizations, the Coalition provides leadership in tobacco control policy development, which includes increasing the cigarette excise tax, reducing youth access to tobacco and eliminating secondhand smoke exposure. The Coalition also monitors tobacco industry influence in Minnesota and serves as a communications center to keep tobacco control in the forefront of the public and policy makers. The Web site includes information about secondhand smoke, the public health benefits of increasing the state's cigarette excise tax, the Tobacco Prevention Endowment, fire-resistant cigarettes, and reducing youth access to tobacco. It also maintains a list of registered tobacco lobbyists and front groups, tobacco industry lobbying disclosure reports, current press releases, and current tobacco-related news articles.

Minnesota Youth Tobacco Prevention Initiative

www.mntobacco.net

The Minnesota Youth Tobacco Prevention Initiative is a broad-based, comprehensive youth prevention program that funds aggressive tobacco prevention efforts on a statewide level and supplements those efforts with equally aggressive community-based projects. The five main focus areas are counter marketing, statewide programs, community-based programs, Target Market (statewide youth movement), and youth access.

National Spit Tobacco Education Program

www.nstep.org

Oral Health America's National Spit Tobacco Education Program (NSTEP) was founded in 1994 as an effort to educate the baseball community and the American public about the dangers of smokeless or spit tobacco, and break the long-standing link between this potentially deadly drug and America's pastime. Each year, between 10 to 16 million Americans put their health at risk by using spit tobacco products. NSTEP's mission is to prevent people, especially young people, from starting to use spit tobacco, and to help all users quit. NSTEP is funded in part by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Secondhand Smoke Resource Center

www.ansrmn.org

With nearly a thousand cataloged items, the Secondhand Smoke Resource Center (SSRC) assists tobacco control activists and others working on reducing Minnesotans' exposure to secondhand smoke. The SSRC can provide research skills, consultations, speakers and culturally sensitive materials.



APPENDIXES

Sample Talking Points for Creating Tobacco-Free Youth Recreational Policies

I. Smoking is the #1 Preventable Cause of Death in this Country

- Tobacco is the single most preventable cause of death in the United States—killing more than AIDS, alcohol, motor vehicle accidents, murder, drug-induced events, and suicide combined. Each year, 430,000 Americans die from tobacco use. In fact, one in every five deaths nationwide is smoking related (CDC, 1993).
- In Minnesota, 5,618 people die each year from tobacco (MN Dept. Health, 2002).
- Nationally, 1 in 3 young people who become regular smokers will die from a tobacco-related disease (CDC, 1996).
- On average, someone who smokes a pack or more of cigarettes a day dies 7 years earlier than someone who has never smoked (Lew & Garfinkel, 1987).

II. Tobacco Harms Our Youth

- The younger people start smoking cigarettes, the more likely they are to become strongly addicted to nicotine (Surgeon General's Report, 1994).
- Each year 27,400 Minnesota teens try cigarettes for the first time. Of these, 12,000 will become daily smokers, and, if current smoking rates continue, approximately 97,000 Minnesota children will die prematurely from a tobacco-related illness (CDC, 1996 & 2000).
- In Minnesota, 34.7% of 12th graders and 18.7% of 9th graders use tobacco products (MN Student Survey, 2001).
- In Minnesota, high school students living with a parent, sibling, or other person who smokes are more than twice as likely to be frequent smokers than are students living with no one who smokes (MN Youth Tobacco Survey, 2000).
- Spit tobacco contains nicotine and at least 28 cancer-causing chemicals and causes cancer of the mouth, cheeks, and gums (Oral Health of America).

III. Tobacco Industry Targets Youth Involved with Sports

- Eighty-six percent of teen smokers prefer Marlboro, Camel, and Newport—the 3 most heavily advertised brands (U.S. Dept. Health & Human Services, 2000).
- The tobacco industry spends \$144 million a year in Minnesota to advertise its products—\$28 for every person in Minnesota (Federal Trade Commission, 2000).
- Big Tobacco sponsors recreational events such as the Virginia Slims tennis tournament and the Winston Cup in order to associate itself with anything athletic and counteract public awareness of the health hazards of smoking (Essential Action, 2001).
- In the words of a Marlboro executive, “What we are trying to do is associate Marlboro with activities which are favored by young people. This means sports and music.” (Marlboro document).

IV. Secondhand Smoke Kills

- Secondhand smoke contains over 4,000 chemicals, including 50 cancer-causing chemicals and 200 poisons like ammonia, formaldehyde, and carbon monoxide (National Cancer Institute, 1999).
- Every year, approximately 53,000 Americans die from exposure to secondhand smoke (American Cancer Society, 2000).
- Each year, up to 26,000 kids develop asthma from secondhand smoke (National Cancer Institute, 1999).
- Most Minnesota students are exposed at least weekly: 58% of middle school students and 76% of high school students reported being exposed in the past week (MN Dept. Health, 2000).
- Outdoor secondhand smoke can expose people to levels as high as those found in some indoor places (Repace, 2000).
- A 1998 survey showed that 68% of Minnesota parents support smoking bans in outdoor playgrounds and 80% support a ban in all public places where children are present (Alesci, 2000).

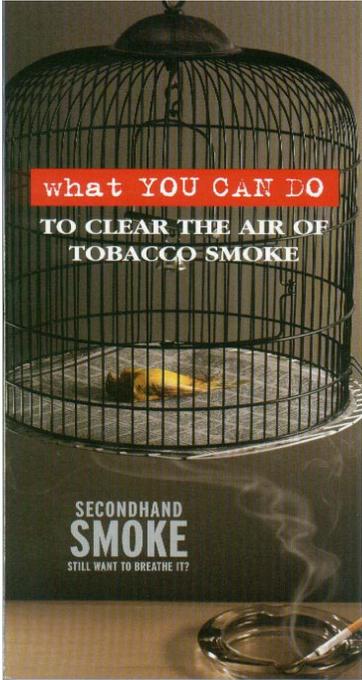
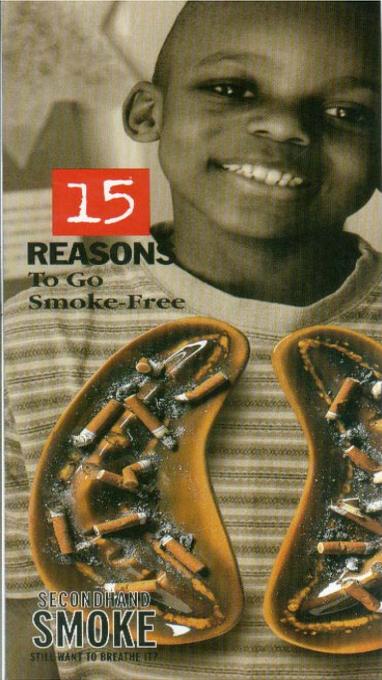
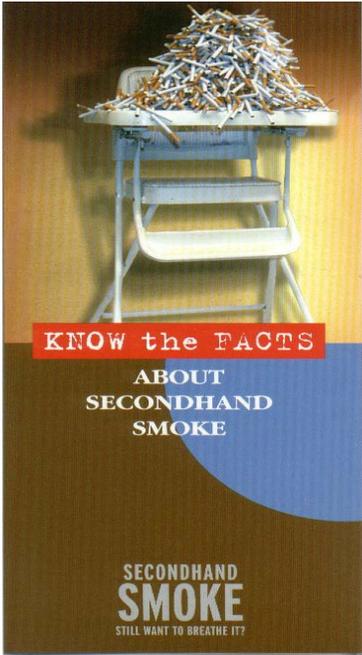
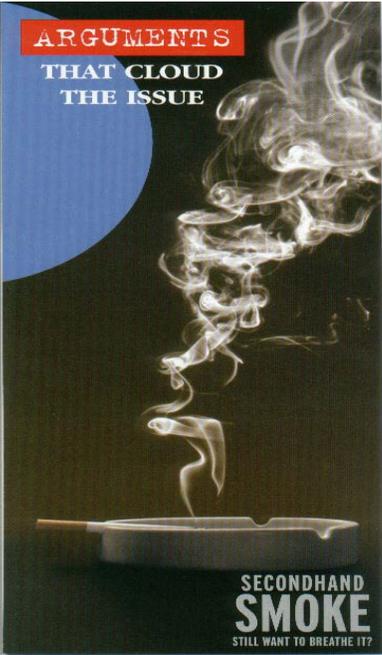
V. Tobacco-Free Policies Reduce Youth Tobacco Use

- Policies send a clear message to youth participants, leaders, parents, and spectators that tobacco use is not a behavior the recreational organization condones.
- Policies establish community norms that tobacco use is not acceptable for young people or adults within the recreational organization or the entire community (Forster, 2000).
- Communication and enforcement of these policies also limit the opportunity for youth to engage in the negative behavior of tobacco use (Perry, 1999).
- Tobacco-free recreation facilities also help break the connection between tobacco and recreation that the tobacco industry has fostered for decades (Surgeon General's Report, 1994).

VI. Tobacco Policies for City-Owned Park & Recreational Facilities Make Sense

- Policies for city-owned facilities have a far-reaching impact because city park & recreation departments operate the majority of the facilities used by youth recreational organizations.
- These policies support local youth recreational groups who already have existing policies by providing a unified message that promotes tobacco-free lifestyles.
- This type of policy creates a consistent policy for all community youth recreational facilities since many school districts already ban tobacco use on all school grounds (including school recreational facilities).
- Litter caused by discarded cigarette butts not only diminishes the beauty of the city's park facilities, but also causes additional maintenance expenses and puts toddlers at risk for ingestion.
- Creating smoke-free environments protects the health, safety, and welfare of the community by ensuring that participants and spectators are not exposed to secondhand smoke.

MPAAT Secondhand Smoke Brochures



Minnesota Partnership for Action Against Tobacco (MPAAT) created these secondhand smoke brochures as part of their "Secondhand Smoke: Still Want to Breathe It?" advertising campaign. See the "Resources" section for information on how to obtain these and other secondhand smoke materials. These brochures and other MPAAT resources can be used to educate recreational groups about secondhand smoke and the benefits of smoke-free environments.

Example Policy Reminder



PLACE SCHEDULE HERE

Dear Parent:

We want you to know that our organization is pledging to be tobacco free. During the season, our coaches will be talking to your children about the health benefits of staying tobacco free and the harmful effects of secondhand smoke. The coaches will also be teaching them about the importance of avoiding all tobacco products, now and in the future.

As part of this effort, we ask that all spectators refrain from using tobacco products during our events.

Thank you for your support and we look forward to seeing you at our events.

Example Recognition Certificate



**Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation and the
Owatonna Area Smoke Free Coalition recognize
the City of Owatonna**

**for its efforts to protect the health of the public
by adopting a tobacco-free policy for its
youth recreational facilities.**

Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation

Owatonna Area Smoke Free Coalition

Date

Policy reminders and recognition certificates help inform parents and community members about a recreational organization's tobacco-free policy.

Example Team & Player Pledges



Tobacco-Free Player's Pledge

I, as a member of _____

know that tobacco use harms my health, hinders my physical performance and is dangerous to those around me. I pledge to be tobacco free because I care about my health and the health of those around me.

_____ player _____ coach
_____ date



Tobacco-Free Team Pledge

We, the members of _____

knowing that tobacco use harms our health, hinders our physical performance and is dangerous to others, pledge to be tobacco free because we care about our health and the health of those around us.

_____ player	_____ player	_____ player	_____ player
_____ player	_____ player	_____ player	_____ player
_____ player	_____ player	_____ player	_____ player

_____ coach _____ date _____ coach

Recreational organizations can help raise awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco by asking individual players and teams to sign tobacco-free pledges.



Example Secondhand Smoke Education Letter

Dear Youth Recreational Leader:

As you may know, secondhand smoke exposure is a dangerous health risk. In the U.S. each year, up to 26,000 kids develop asthma from secondhand smoke and hundreds of thousands of children suffer from bronchitis, pneumonia, and ear infections caused by inhaling secondhand smoke. In fact, just by sitting in the non-smoking section of a restaurant for 2 hours causes you to inhale the same amount of smoke that you would have inhaled if you had smoked 1 1/2 cigarettes.

Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation (TFYR) would like to offer you a few tips on how to protect the health of the youth in your organization while they are involved in their team/group activities. Here are some easy steps you can follow:

- Host your practices, competitions, and events at tobacco-free facilities/grounds
- Hold group/team meetings in establishments that are tobacco free
- Ensure that all vehicles used to transport your youth are tobacco free
- Patronize tobacco-free restaurants, and thank those restaurants for being tobacco free (For a complete list of tobacco-free restaurants in Minnesota, go to www.ansrmn.org).
- If your favorite restaurant is not tobacco-free, encourage them to become tobacco free

Adults involved with youth recreational activities, including coaches, officials, and parents, influence the decisions youth make about tobacco use. As role models, let's do our part to make a positive impact on their decisions. Show youth that you care about their health by encouraging your teams to avoid areas where tobacco use is present. For additional information on how TFYR can help your program model tobacco-free lifestyles, contact Daniel Ehrke at (651) 646-3005.

Sincerely,

Daniel Ehrke
Program Director
Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation

Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation sent this letter to youth recreational organizations in the Rochester, MN, area educating them on the harmful effects of secondhand smoke and providing helpful tips on how they can protect the health of their youth. This is just one example of how you can reach out to recreational groups to address secondhand smoke. The MPAAT secondhand smoke brochures found on page 45 are other educational tools that can accompany a secondhand smoke letter. They also can be distributed at recreational events such as registration events or parent nights.

Example Slogans

**Want to be an MVP?
Stay Tobacco Free**

**"Smoke defenders
not cigarettes"**

**"Play with fire in your heart,
not smoke in your lungs"**



"Rule with fire, not smoke"

"We smoke opponents not cigarettes"



**"Don't let your game
go up in smoke"**

"Our only addiction is the game"

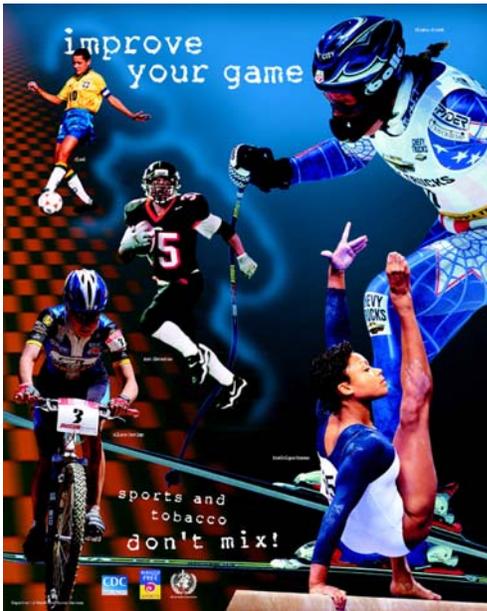
**"Smokeless does not
mean harmless"**



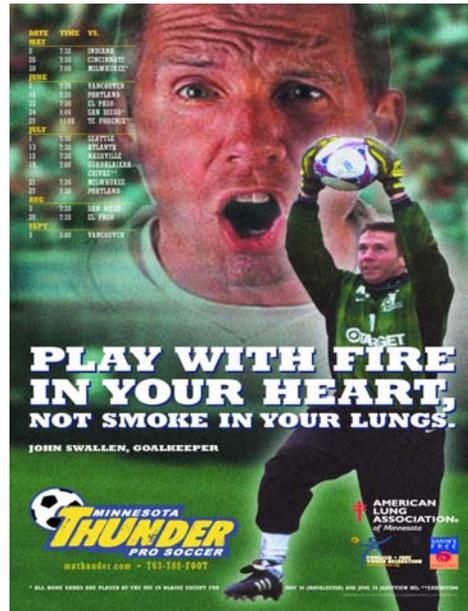
**"Traditional use,
not abuse"**

These slogans can be used to develop posters, advertisements, banners and other creative strategies to reach young people with the tobacco-free message. Conducting a slogan contest is another way to involve local youth within your prevention strategies.

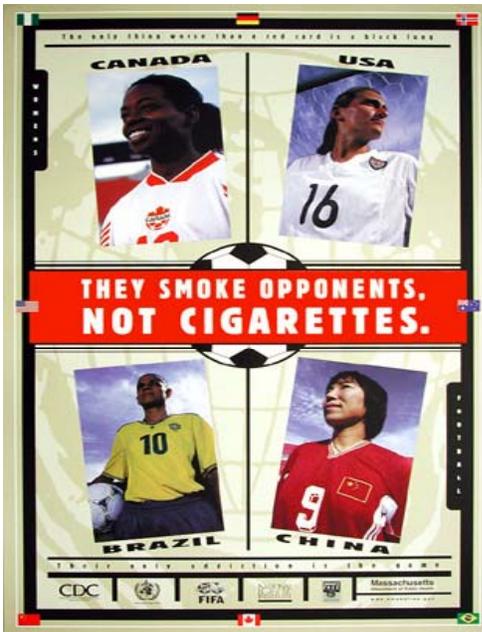
Example Posters



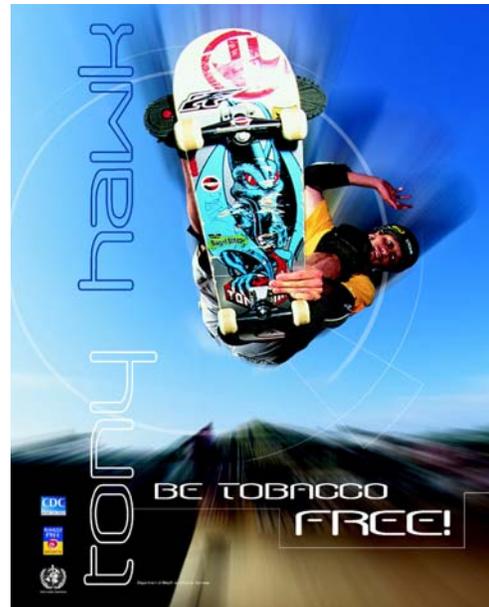
"Improve your Game" multi-sport poster



"Play with Fire in your Heart, not Smoke in your Lungs" Minnesota Thunder poster



"They Smoke Opponents, not Cigarettes" International Women's Soccer poster



"Be Tobacco Free!" Tony Hawk poster

Sports-related tobacco prevention posters are an excellent way of teaching youth that tobacco use hurts their health. Contact TFYR for copies of these posters and various other posters featuring the tobacco-free message.

Example Advertisements

Be a Tobacco Free Role Model



Parents and coaches can encourage youth to refrain from using tobacco by:

- Modeling a tobacco-free lifestyle
- Talking about the dangers of tobacco use and
- Supporting tobacco free policies and environments

SmokeFree Soccer is supported by the Minnesota Department of Health, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, and the MYSA. For more information visit these Web sites at www.smokefree.gov or www.ansrmn.org (click on TFYR)







Smoke Defenders NOT Cigarettes



“Smoking and athletics don’t mix. In **soccer**, we play 90 minutes without a time out. We would never let something as unhealthy and artificial as smoking interfere with our performance.”

Julie Foudy
U.S. Women’s National Soccer Team Co-captain

Pick up your free SmokeFree Soccer posters at the next MYSA event!

SmokeFree Soccer is supported by the Minnesota Department of Health, Blue Cross Blue Shield and the MYSA. For more information visit the SmokeFree Kids and Soccer site www.smokefree.gov

Periodically, SmokeFree Soccer has placed advertisements in the Minnesota Youth Soccer Association’s “Soccer Times” newspaper to promote tobacco-free lifestyles. Advertisements are good examples of how you can reach young people and adults with the tobacco-free message by utilizing local recreational newspapers and newsletters.

Example Community Events

Attending or hosting your own community events is a great way to promote healthy lifestyles to young people and the entire community. Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation (TFYR) has compiled ideas for local activities to help raise awareness around the harmful effects of tobacco in your local community. Each idea can be combined with an existing event to enhance it, or it can stand alone as its own event. Remember to be creative and involve your local youth in planning your event. TFYR has banners, posters, tobacco-free pledges, signage and other resources that can help add to your event. If you would like any additional help planning your event contact, TFYR at (651) 646-3005.

Tobacco-Free School Assembly

Conduct sports-related anti-tobacco assemblies with local elementary, junior high and high schools to raise awareness about the dangers of tobacco use and the benefits of living a tobacco-free lifestyle. Ask young athletes to talk to their peers about why they don't use tobacco or invite high profile athletes to discuss how remaining tobacco free has helped them reach their athletic goals.

Striking Out Tobacco

Work with a local junior high or high school to host a student/faculty softball game (or other sporting event) where the theme of the event will feature a tobacco prevention message. Work with local youth to develop the slogan that will be used for the event or use a slogan found on pages 49 and 50 of this guide. Feature the slogan on banners, t-shirts or think of other ways to promote the tobacco-free message at the event.

Tobacco-Free Olympics

Work with local recreational organizations and school districts to recruit young people to participate in your own local youth Olympic-style event. Youth can compete in various activities including relay races, the 100-yard dash, and a punt, pass and kick competition. You can work with the local media to promote the event and raise awareness around the harmful effects of tobacco. During the event you can promote the tobacco-free message to those in attendance and ask participants to sign pledges to remain tobacco free.

Kids Kicking Their Way to a Healthy Lifestyle

Have kids get their parent's permission to look for old magazines in their home and remove tobacco ads found in the magazines. Have kids bring the ads to school to construct a mural that would fit the dimensions of a soccer goal (22' by 8'). Invite peer and high-profile soccer players to the event to remind the children that to be a champion on the field, you must remain tobacco free. The day of the event have the young soccer fans kick the soccer balls through the mural, destroying the ads and freeing the goal for play. This is a great way to illustrate to kids how they are targeted by the tobacco industry.

Tobacco-Free Tailgating Event

Holding a tailgating event at a local park is a great way to recognize organizations that have worked to make the youth recreational facilities in the community tobacco free. Invite the local media and present the local park and recreation department with a certificate for their great work.

Adapted from World No Tobacco Day's *Turnkey Idea Kit* and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service's *Kid's Kicking Their Way to Health*.



Youth Advocacy Projects

Involving youth in your health prevention initiatives provides opportunities for youth to use their enthusiasm, ideas, energy, and skills to help create tobacco-free environments in your community. The Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation (TFYR) program recognizes the importance of involving youth in prevention efforts to create tobacco-free environments for youth participating in recreational activities. TFYR suggests the projects below as ideas for involving youth from your community in helping to create tobacco-free environments.



Steps Youth can Follow to Help Create Tobacco-Free Environments

Follow the steps below to begin creating tobacco-free recreation environments in your community:

1. Contact TFYR for assistance in planning your strategy.
2. Check out tobacco prevention websites to learn more about youth tobacco use (tmvoice.com, cdc.gov/tobacco, ansrmn.org).
3. Survey local youth recreational organizations to see if they have a tobacco-free policy. If they do not, work with them to create a tobacco prevention strategy that includes such a policy.
4. Work with your group advisor to create a short presentation about the dangers of tobacco use. Then present the information at a youth practice or group meeting and ask the group to sign a tobacco-free pledge.
5. Tear tobacco ads out of sports and recreation magazines. Discuss how the tobacco industry uses these ads to appeal to youth.
6. Find and review tobacco industry documents that target sporting events. Write a story about them for your school or city newspaper.
7. Organize the ads and documents and put together a skit that will educate local recreational organizations about why they should not accept tobacco advertising funds.
8. Write a letter to local recreation departments to advocate for tobacco-free outdoor youth recreation facilities.
9. Collect cigarette butts in a local park and/or circulate a petition collecting signatures of local residents who support tobacco-free recreational facilities. Present these to the park board explaining the dangers of secondhand smoke and cigarette butts left as litter.
10. At the meeting explain how a tobacco-free policy for youth recreational facilities would benefit your community.

Example Tobacco Survey

We would like to know what you think about creating more tobacco-free recreational places for the youth of our community. Please answer the following questions.

What is your age? 6-10 18-24 40-50
 11-17 25-39 60+

Are you a... Smoker Parent Youth leader/coach
 (check all that apply) Non-smoker Grandparent Youth sports official
 Former smoker

Where do you live? In [insert your community's name]
 Within 20 miles of [insert your community's name]
 Over 20 miles from [insert your community's name]

I support NO TOBACCO USE in the following places:

(For each place, circle the number on the scale that best describes how you feel).

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| 1. Community centers | strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | strongly agree |
| 2. Indoor sports arenas | strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | strongly agree |
| 3. Outdoor sports facilities | strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | strongly agree |
| 4. Parks | strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | strongly agree |
| 5. Playgrounds | strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | strongly agree |
| 6. Skateboard/bike parks | strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | strongly agree |
| 7. Beaches | strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | strongly agree |
| 8. Vehicles transporting youth to recreational activities | strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | strongly agree |
| 9. Other _____ | strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | strongly agree |

I support NO TOBACCO USE for the following individuals during youth recreational events:

- | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| 1. Coaches/youth leaders | strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | strongly agree |
| 2. Youth sports officials | strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | strongly agree |
| 3. Parents attending events | strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | strongly agree |
| 4. Spectators attending events | strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | strongly agree |

Recreational Organization Questionnaire

Information about the recreational organization

1. What is the mission of the organization?
2. What are the typical activities in which the youth participate?
3. What is the age range of the youth?
4. How many youth, adult leaders, and parents are involved in the organization?
5. How many teams or groups are in the organization?
6. Is the organization affiliated with a statewide or national organization?
7. Is there a board of directors or similar governing body for the organization?
8. When and how often do they meet?

Tobacco policy information

1. Does the organization have a tobacco policy? (if so, request a copy of it)
2. What are the policy's provisions?
 no tobacco use
 no tobacco possession
 indoor facilities
 outdoor facilities
3. Whom does the policy cover?
 parents coaches youth participants
 officials spectators staff
4. What property does the policy cover?
 all property owned by the organization
 all property rented, leased, or used by the organization
 all places or events sponsored by the organization, regardless of the site

5. How is the policy communicated?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> published in their handbook | <input type="checkbox"/> distributed to parents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> published in their newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> distributed to officials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> communicated via email | <input type="checkbox"/> publicized to youth |

6. Have members of the organization signed statements regarding tobacco?

- | |
|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> player's pledge against tobacco use |
| <input type="checkbox"/> team pledge against tobacco use |
| <input type="checkbox"/> coach's pledge against tobacco use during the organization's activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> parent's statement of acknowledgement of policy |

7. What type of signage does the organization have?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> permanent outdoor signage | <input type="checkbox"/> temporary outdoor signage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> permanent indoor signage | <input type="checkbox"/> temporary indoor signage |

8. How does the organization enforce the policy?

Who enforces it?

What are the penalties?

Do violations occur?

Who typically commits the violations?

9. Are there tobacco policies enacted by other organizations that cover this organization's activities?

- | |
|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> the state or national governing organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> the city park and recreation department (park policy or city ordinance) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> the local school district |
| <input type="checkbox"/> the local athletic association |

Does the organization enforce this tobacco policy? How?

Tobacco education and awareness

Does the organization have:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> coaches' trainings | <input type="checkbox"/> newsletters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> parents' meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> a website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> events such as tournaments, family days, fairs, or registration days | |



Example Letter of Support for a Policy

[Insert Date]

Dear [insert park & recreation board member's name here]:

Please support tobacco-free recreational environments for our young people. By adopting a tobacco-free policy, the Park & Recreation Board can send a clear message that we, as a community, care about the health of young people and want them to make positive lifestyle decisions. A tobacco-free policy will also encourage coaches and parents to be positive role models by not using tobacco during youth recreational events.

Tobacco use not only exposes participants and spectators to the harmful effects of secondhand smoke, but it is also a nuisance and safety concern. The litter caused by tobacco use diminishes the beauty of the city's recreational facilities and can be accidentally ingested by young children. Tobacco use in these settings also sends negative messages to our youth that tobacco use is an acceptable behavior within our community.

I encourage you to prohibit tobacco use at all city-owned public recreational facilities where children are present. I especially urge you to prohibit tobacco use at all youth athletic events, playgrounds, beaches, and other youth recreational facilities.

Thank you for your consideration of the adoption of such a tobacco-free policy for our youth recreational facilities.

Sincerely,

John Doe
Concerned Community Member

Parents and other concerned citizens who are interested in supporting tobacco-free environments for youth recreational facilities can send a letter such as this one to policy makers.

Example Advocacy Postcard



Working to create tobacco-free environments for our youth!

I would like you to consider adopting a tobacco-free policy for your youth recreational programs and facilities to protect the health of our youth.

Sincerely,

To:

For more information on how your organization can be tobacco-free, please contact Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation at (651) 646-3005 or by email at ansrmn@ansrmn.org. You can also visit our web page at www.ansrmn.org.



Postcards are another way parents and other concerned citizens can voice their support to recreational organizations for tobacco-free environments for their youth recreational facilities.



Example Letter to the Editor

In Minnesota, smoking among youth is a prominent problem. According to the Minnesota Student Survey of 2001, 34.7% of Minnesota 12th grade students and 18.7% of Minnesota 9th grade students currently use tobacco. When our youth use tobacco, they are ingesting thousands of chemicals. These chemicals cause lung, throat, and mouth cancer, as well as bronchitis and emphysema. Tobacco use also inhibits lung growth, causes muscle fatigue, raises blood pressure, and leads to heart disease. What's more—the nicotine in tobacco is extremely addictive, making it very difficult to break the smoking addiction.

Why do our young people start smoking? They are influenced by people around them who smoke. Friends, family, and other adult leaders are key role models in whether or not youth choose to use tobacco. How can we, as a community, work to ensure that youth are surrounded by positive role models? We can start by being positive role models ourselves. One way we can do this is by prohibiting tobacco use during youth activities at our recreational facilities and playgrounds. Prohibiting tobacco use reinforces to our youth that tobacco use is unacceptable and shows them that we, as adults, care about their health.

Tobacco use poses other problems for our recreational facilities and playgrounds. Cigarette butts are usually discarded on the ground, diminishing the beauty of our facilities. Cigarette butts also cause a large amount of unnecessary litter, which costs our city tax dollars to clean up. Furthermore, cigarette butts are a danger to our toddlers, since they may pick up the butts and ingest them.

By prohibiting tobacco use at our recreational facilities and playgrounds during youth activities, we are also protecting all of our citizens from the dangers of secondhand smoke. Over 3,000 nonsmokers in the United States die from lung cancer every year due to exposure to secondhand smoke. Since secondhand smoke saturates the air around smokers, outdoor secondhand smoke levels can reach levels as high as those found indoors.

I urge you, as responsible, caring citizens of our community, to support a ban on tobacco use at our city's recreational facilities and playgrounds during youth athletic activities. Take time to discuss this important issue with city park board members and city council members. Urge them to vote in favor of our future by protecting the health of the young people living in our community!

Sincerely,

Jane Smith
Concerned Citizen

Writing letters to the editor provides another opportunity to raise awareness around tobacco and raise support for your tobacco prevention efforts.



Example Educational Article

PROTECT YOUR TEAM'S HEALTH! AVOID SECONDHAND SMOKE

Cathy is a volunteer youth soccer coach for a 12-year-old girls team in her community. She has enjoyed coaching the girls on her team, and they have had a fun, successful season. After their final game, Cathy decides to treat her team to a pizza party at the favorite local pizza place.

After ordering, Cathy sits back to recap the excitement of the game with her team. By the time Jessica, the goalie, finishes describing her game-saving stop, she has tears in her eyes. Surprised that such a happy event would cause her to cry, Cathy asks, "Jessica, what's wrong?" "I don't know, Coach," she replies, "all of a sudden my eyes are burning." Figuring she is just tired from the game, Cathy shrugs it off.

Halfway through the meal, Cathy notices that Megan, a midfielder, is having a hard time breathing normally. "Megan, do you have your asthma inhaler in your pocket?" Cathy asks. "Yes," she answers. "I think I need to take a puff." Thinking it is odd that she would need her inhaler during a meal, Cathy takes the last bite of her piece of pizza. It does not taste as good as it did 15 minutes ago. She asks herself, "Why do I feel so nauseous?" Glancing across two rows of tables into the smoking section, Cathy answers her own question. "The cigarette smoke. Of course--that's why my team is feeling ill."

Even for a youth soccer team and nonsmoking coach, secondhand smoke causes health problems. In fact, just by sitting in the nonsmoking section of a restaurant for 2 hours, you can inhale the same amount of smoke that is in 1 ½ cigarettes. The chemicals emitted from a lit tobacco product (cigarette, cigar, or pipe) cause eye irritation, sore throat, nausea, and hoarseness in nonsmokers. Nationally, hundreds of thousands of children suffer more from bronchitis, pneumonia, ear infections, and asthma caused by inhaling secondhand smoke. In Minnesota, 34% of middle school students and 49% of high school students are repeatedly exposed to secondhand smoke during the course of a week. Children of parents who smoke inhale the equivalent of 102 packs of cigarettes by age 5. An estimated 53,000 people die every year from exposure to secondhand smoke, as a result of lung cancer, heart disease, and hardening of the arteries.

For youth involved in recreational programs, at the very least secondhand smoke causes them to feel ill. But it can also hinder their physical performance. One of the very benefits for a young person to be involved in recreation is to enhance their physical fitness. Exposing them to the harms of secondhand smoke prevents youth from performing at their best.

How can you help protect your health and the health of the youth on your team?

- Adopt a tobacco-free policy for your own team or club, and publicize the policy with signage during your events
- If the facilities you use are not tobacco-free, talk to policy makers about making them tobacco-free
- Hold team meetings in establishments that are tobacco-free
- Ensure that all vehicles used to transport your youth are tobacco-free
- Patronize tobacco-free restaurants, and thank them for being tobacco free

Adults involved with youth recreational activities, including coaches, officials, and parents, influence the decisions youth make about tobacco use. As role models, we can do our part to make a positive impact on their decisions. Show them that you care about their health by encouraging your teams to avoid areas where tobacco use is present!

Educational articles such as this one help demonstrate the importance of tobacco-free environments. Submitting educational articles to local youth recreational organizations' newsletters and websites and local media outlets helps raise awareness about reducing youth tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke.

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