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Best Practices User Guide: Youth Engagement

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Best Practices
for Comprehensive
Tobacco Control Programs

User Guide



YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

State and Community Interventions Category



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Ordering Information

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(1-800-232-4636).
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For More Information

For more information about tobacco control and prevention,
visit CDC's Smoking & Tobacco Use Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco>.

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Guide to the Reader

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Office on Smoking and Health, and the Center for Tobacco Policy Research at Washington University in St. Louis has developed a series of user guides for the State and Community Interventions Category for the *2007 Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs (Best Practices)*. This user guide series addresses a number of tobacco control focus areas including coalitions, youth engagement, pricing policies, policy advocacy, and health equity.

Purpose

The purpose of the user guide series is to assist state and local tobacco control staff in building effective and sustainable comprehensive tobacco control programs. The user guides will address particular practices (e.g., programs and interventions) that have evidence or potential evidence supporting their efficacy, and that fall under the coordination of state and local tobacco programs.

Organization

This user guide is organized into seven sections:

- **Making the Case** – presents a brief overview of how programs benefit from involving youth in tobacco control policy
- **A Brief History** – provides the background of youth engagement in tobacco control
- **How To** – provides the steps of how to integrate youth into a tobacco control program focused on policy development
- **Providing Support** – shares suggestions on how state programs can support youth engagement in the formation of tobacco control policy
- **In Action** – provides real world examples of engaging youth to advance policy
- **Case for Investment** – presents the information needed to advocate to decision makers for involving youth
- **Resources** – identifies publications, tool kits, and websites to help in planning efforts

State and Community Interventions Category Defined

The State and Community Interventions Category includes policies, practices, and types of programs that promote public health by supporting systems change and discouraging tobacco exposure and use. The category is organized to provide the skills, resources, and information needed for the coordinated strategic implementation of effective programs. The category excludes cessation and health communication interventions, but includes all other tobacco activities and interventions organized at the state and community level.¹

Best Practices User Guide: YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

This user guide focuses on the role youth play in advancing policy as part of a comprehensive tobacco control program. The youth perspective and voice is important, because the initiation of tobacco use most often occurs before age 18.² In addition, the tobacco industry spends millions of dollars every day targeting youth to develop its next generation of smokers.¹ Youth have the passion and creativity to fight back and to protect themselves from this formidable opponent.

This guide will provide tobacco control program managers with information on the best practices for engaging youth as a part of a comprehensive program. Youth involvement can lead to important policy and social norm changes, and advance the fight against pro-tobacco influences.

Youth Engagement: *Making the Case*

Youth enhance state and local tobacco control efforts by challenging conventional thinking, advocating for policies, and changing the social norms around tobacco use.

Youth play a unique and important policy advocacy role that contributes to an effective, comprehensive tobacco control program. The initiation of and addiction to tobacco often occurs before young people are legally able to buy tobacco products – an age when they are also highly targeted by the tobacco industry. Because they are targets, young people must be engaged in tobacco control efforts. Youth are powerful allies in the fight against pro-tobacco influences, key partners in denormalizing tobacco use, and important levers in determining the future of tobacco control policy.

The Power of Youth

- ▶ **Advocate for policy change**
Young people can be effective at garnering support for policy development and change. Youth capture the attention of political leaders and the media, making them important partners in policy advocacy.³
- ▶ **Project a powerful voice**
Youth have credibility with peers and community members. This allows them to help educate the community to reduce pro-tobacco influences and increase healthier norms and behaviors.
- ▶ **Expose tobacco industry tactics**
Young people can be effective partners in the fight against the tobacco industry by exposing its manipulative tactics and undermining its efforts.
- ▶ **Offer energy and vitality**
Youth bring energy to activities and events. Tobacco control programs should work to channel this energy into action, resulting in increased awareness and policy change.
- ▶ **Reflect genuine concern**
Youth generally volunteer their time to be involved in tobacco control efforts. They do this because of the stake they have in their own future.
- ▶ **Bring diverse representation and provide generational insight**
Youth can provide important insight about their generation. Involving youth in tobacco control efforts ensures the design of effective, population-specific policies.
- ▶ **Invoke creativity and innovation**
Young people naturally challenge the traditional attitudes that may restrict and limit how adults think and act. They add innovation and creativity to any program, making it more attractive to other youth and policy makers. Their novel ideas for policy advocacy strategies help push efforts forward.⁴
- ▶ **Mobilize their peers**
Youth have the ability to mobilize their peers for activities and facilitate access to many arenas. These actions add strength to tobacco control policy efforts while also broadening the type and number of venues involved in message delivery.

Youth Engagement: A *Brief History*

Engagement of youth in tobacco control efforts has evolved over the past few decades, both in the types of activities and in the quality of involvement. While the most effective method for involving youth has not always been clear, the need to involve youth is established.⁵ Youth are the future of tobacco control and must be engaged in tobacco policy efforts.

From the release of the 1964 Surgeon General’s Report through the early 1990s, health education was the primary youth tobacco control intervention.^{6,7} This strategy was based on the assumption that young people simply needed access to the right information so they could make the right decision and avoid using tobacco. Interventions consisted of adults talking at youth and using scare tactics to demonstrate the negative health effects of tobacco.

In the early 1990s, programs recognized that youth were primarily influenced not by statistics, but by their social environment (*e.g.*, peers, family, and media).⁸ Classroom-based life skill activities and peer resistance training replaced pure education as the primary intervention.⁹ However, while public health recognized the need to involve youth in tobacco control, the need to integrate youth as partners was not yet recognized.

The Florida “truth” campaign radically changed this trend. Released in the late 1990s, this provocative

advertising campaign brought to light the deceptive tobacco industry marketing tactics, and also highlighted the importance of engaging youth.¹⁰ For the first time, they were seen as important partners in developing solutions to combat the tobacco industry and other pro-tobacco influences.^{8,11} In 2000, Legacy launched the national *truth*[®] campaign using the same counter-marketing strategies as the Florida “truth” campaign.

Among the more recent developments in youth engagement is the use of social networking sites to recruit and organize around tobacco-free policies. Smoking in movies is another current area of concern as youth continue to address the role of the social environment in smoking initiation.

Youth engagement is now a common practice in coordinated tobacco control policy strategies.⁸ Young people are now considered not part of the problem, but part of the solution. They fight on behalf of their communities to develop policies that enhance tobacco control efforts. Youth involvement in tobacco control goes far beyond sitting in a classroom. In addition to receiving appropriate health education, young people are being engaged as agents of policy change. They help pass local policies, expose industry tactics, and take a stand against the tobacco industry and other prolific pro-tobacco influences.

Transitions in Youth Engagement

From	Example of Transition	To
<i>Youth as problems to be fixed</i>	Through the Florida “truth” campaign, young people rebelled against tobacco industry manipulation. ⁸	<i>Youth as assets or agents of change</i>
<i>Youth as tokens</i>	Tobacco Industry Gets Hammered by Teens (TIGHT) youth were given the opportunity to define their agenda in working with decision makers on youth access policies. ¹²	<i>Youth as community partners</i>
<i>A focus on individual behavior change</i>	A mass media social norms marketing campaign at Virginia Commonwealth University tried to change students’ inaccurate perceptions of the percentage of their peers who smoked. ¹³	<i>A focus on community change</i>
<i>A goal of education</i>	Product placement ordinances were successfully passed in Santa Fe, New Mexico following presentations and testimonies from student members of the Santa Fe Tobacco Free Coalition. ¹⁴	<i>A goal of policy change</i>
<i>Adults as guides</i>	Middle school students joined with the Healthy Maine Partnerships Coalition and successfully wrote to the town manager and board of selectmen, requesting that an area park be declared smoke-free with appropriate signage. ¹⁵	<i>Adults as partners</i>
<i>Fighting against smoking</i>	Young people from Teens Take on Big Tobacco protested and gained media attention at an Altria shareholder’s meeting in Richmond, Virginia. ¹⁶	<i>Fighting pro-tobacco influences</i>

Youth Engagement: *How To*

What Is Youth Engagement?

Engagement of youth in tobacco control involves providing the opportunity for young people to gain the ability and authority to make decisions that help improve the policy environment, change social norms, and reduce smoking initiation and consumption in their communities.



Minnesota youth hold 'Freedom to Breathe' march in St. Paul to thank legislators for passing a clean indoor air policy

What is the Role of Youth in Comprehensive Tobacco Control?

Every day 4,000 young people try their first cigarette.¹⁷ Tobacco control programs must work within communities to address this issue. To accomplish this goal, it is important to engage young people in tobacco control efforts. Young people are valuable partners because they reflect genuine concern for their generation and also project a powerful voice in advocating for community change.

Community organizations that work on comprehensive tobacco control goals have realized that their efforts to minimize tobacco use are much more effective when young people are involved. Youth want to participate,

hold a stake in the outcome, and help organizations meet public health policy goals, including:

- Increasing the retail price of tobacco products;
- Decreasing minors' access;
- Increasing smoke-free ordinances in public places;¹⁸ and
- Decreasing consumption of tobacco products.

Recent efforts to include youth have shown the important role they play in policy advocacy. They challenge the tobacco industry to change social norms, influences, and education practices.^{1,3,8}

Involvement of young people in comprehensive tobacco control programs reinforces and complements existing efforts such as:

Youth Engagement Helps Meet Public Health Goals

CDC Best Practices	Example of Youth Engagement Efforts
Increase the unit price of tobacco products.	REAL: Hawaii Youth Exposing the Tobacco Industry and other student groups participated in a Kick Butts Day rally at the state capital. They met with lawmakers, urging them to increase taxes on all tobacco products, including cigarettes, chewing tobacco, and smokeless tobacco. ¹⁹
Mobilize the community to restrict minors' access to tobacco products when combined with additional interventions.	YUFA STAR (Youth United For Action Showing Tobacco Ain't Right) is a local youth coalition in Yolo County, California that works with the community to raise awareness about the dangers of tobacco and pro-tobacco influences. Youth partnered with local law enforcement to conduct sting operations and successfully advocated for a county-wide tobacco licensing ordinance. ²⁰
Conduct mass media education campaigns combined with other community interventions.	Oklahoma's Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) is a statewide, youth-led movement that works on youth access, clean indoor air policies, and smoke-free schools. SWAT teams have successfully used the media to recruit members and highlight community protests against tobacco. They also developed a tribute wall dedicated to people affected by tobacco. ²¹⁻²³
Implement school-based interventions in combination with mass media campaigns and additional community efforts.	Reality Check is a statewide youth-led campaign that partnered with the NY State Attorney General's Office and two major magazine publishers to initiate production of tobacco-free classroom editions of <i>Time</i> , <i>Newsweek</i> , <i>People</i> , and <i>Sports Illustrated</i> . Additionally, Reality Check youth work to remove smoking from movies and place warning ads in newspapers to show how smoking in movies influences youth smoking. ^{24,25}

- Development of, and advocacy for, tobacco-free policies in communities, businesses, and schools;
- Development of, and advocacy for, policies that restrict youth access to tobacco products;
- Implementation of community-based prevention activities that solidify partnerships with local organizations to promote governmental and voluntary policies;
- Enforcement of tobacco control policies; and
- Implementation of counter-marketing efforts.¹

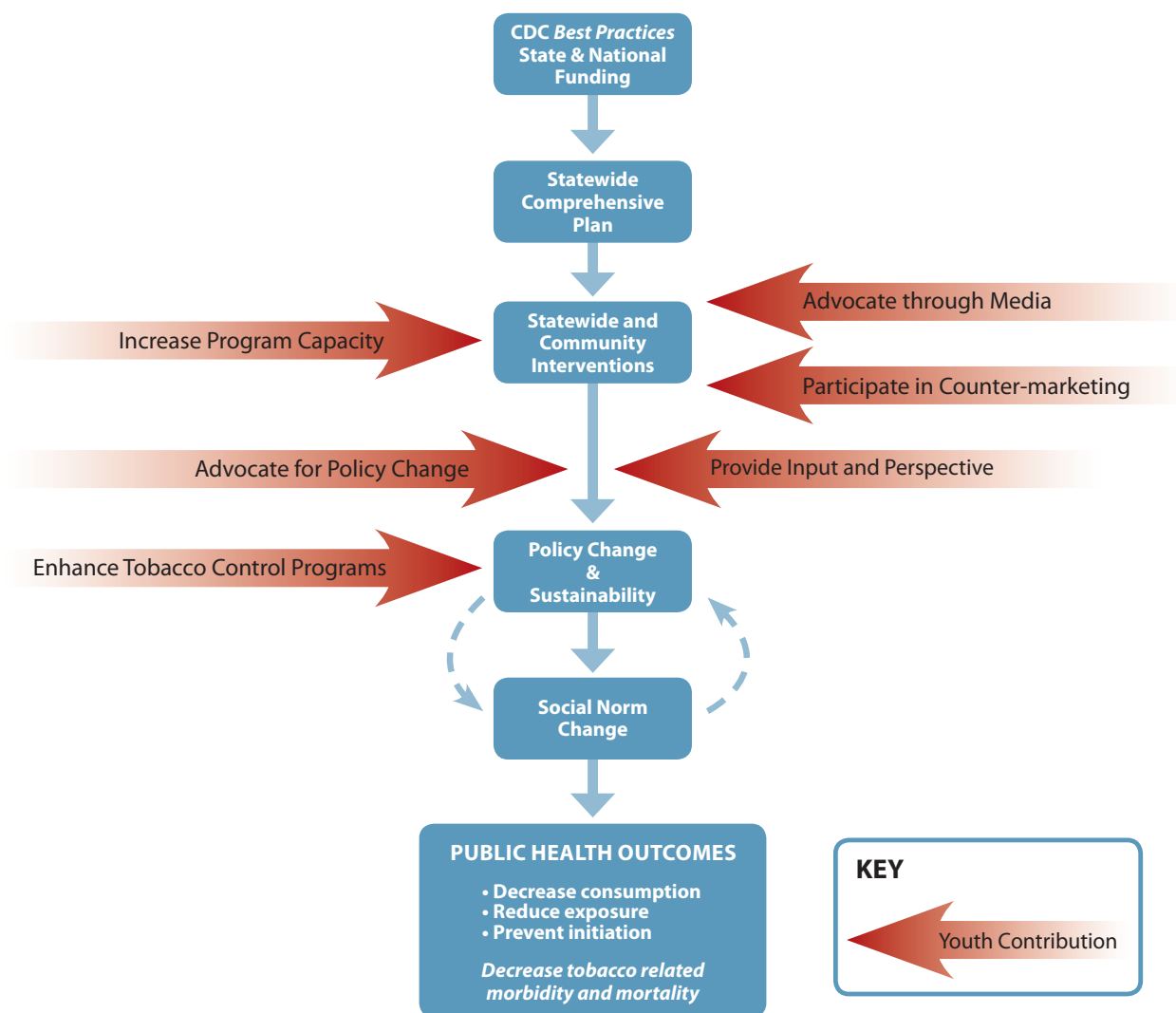
Young people are a unique population in tobacco control because the tobacco industry depends on recruiting young users to replace former smokers. They also know that the more young people are exposed to tobacco advertising, the more likely they are to initiate tobacco use.^{26,27} Armed with this knowledge, the tobacco giants have made youth a main target of their advertisements and promotions.²⁸ When young people learn they are being manipulated by the tobacco industry, they want to fight back. This feeling of rebellion also fuels their desire to participate in policy advocacy and counter-marketing efforts.²⁹

Young people who are given opportunities to contribute to positive public health outcomes also benefit their communities through continued social and civic engagement. They contribute to building tobacco-free communities through leadership, permanence, and commitment, as youth and later as adults.³⁰ Often, the field of public health reaps the benefits of involving our next generation. Youth may further their commitment to leadership and advocacy and devote their careers to building healthier communities.

“Adolescence represents a real opportunity to make a difference in life-long patterns, at a key developmental state when choices and behavior patterns are being determined.”
 - World Health Organization³¹

Youth Engagement: *How To*

Impact of Youth Actions on Health Outcomes



How Should Programs Engage Youth?

Young people join tobacco control efforts for many of the same reasons adults do. Some young people have an aversion to the smell of cigarette smoke; some have family members who have died from tobacco-related causes; others are themselves victims of diseases caused by secondhand smoke.³² As a result of strong education efforts, many young people have learned about the negative health effects of tobacco and have become advocates for policy change in their communities.

Whatever the reason for their passion for tobacco control, one thing is clear from history: young people

are ready to stand up for their beliefs, rise up against social injustice, and make a difference in peoples' lives. It is important that they are not overlooked as valuable participants in tobacco control and other important public health issues.

"We are cultivating not only youth leadership but also creating a pipeline for the next researchers and organizers who will focus on tobacco prevention and control."

– Reggie Moore,
Legacy

Finding, Recruiting, and Preparing Youth

There are many ways to recruit young people for tobacco control policy work. Whatever the approach, the endeavor requires persistence and creativity. In some instances, a core group of young people agrees to lead the responsibility of recruiting. In other cases, it

is necessary to cultivate relationships with community youth workers who can help navigate existing social networks. Teachers and school administrators can also successfully recruit individual students, but this strategy should complement peer-to-peer recruiting and broader community outreach.³³

At-a-Glance: A Youth Perspective

Traci Harr began her involvement in tobacco control as a middle school student in her hometown of Maryville, Missouri. Since that time, she has firmly established her commitment to tobacco control. Traci was involved in the development of Maryville's smoke-free policy and played an integral part in the passage of the University of Missouri-Columbia's smoke-free policy. She is a strong believer that young people play an essential role in tobacco control. According to Traci, they add a new perspective and keep ideas fresh, mainly because "they have not been exposed to the bureaucratic process, are not so consumed by it, and can think a little more freely."

Traci also recognizes that young people have a strong voice in their communities. In her successful work on smoke-free policies, she has seen that "youth are so effective at getting policies passed at the local level because they seem very sincere and honest. The city council seems to really respond." She attributes the success in implementing these policies directly to the perseverance of the student group and their power to sway administrators.

Finally, Traci believes that young people are an excellent resource in the fight against tobacco use. "It's naïve to think that students don't know what is going to best impact them. If we need to figure out why our prevention and policy efforts aren't working, then it makes sense to ask them. Without a connection to youth, efforts would be very much wasted."

By the time Traci graduated from college, she had gained ten years of experience in tobacco control education and policy work. She has extensive knowledge of the issues, knows how to engage apathetic college students, and is a compelling public speaker. Traci is a model of her own belief: "Investing in

young people from the beginning in unique and innovative ways helps young people remain smoke-free, helps their parents or friends overcome addiction, and helps build smoke-free environments." Traci recently secured her first full-time job in the field of tobacco control and plans to continue to promote health in our communities for years to come.



Traci Harr with Columbia, MO Mayor Darwin Hindman

Youth Engagement: How To

The best way to recruit young people is to go to where they naturally gather. Agencies and groups working in tobacco control tend to recruit through the following avenues:

- Online social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter);
- Clubs and school groups (e.g., 4-H, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, and Girl and Boy Scouts);
- Community events and gathering areas (e.g., parks, pools, concerts, farmers' markets, and rallies);
- Community and faith-based organizations, such as those working specifically with ethnically diverse populations; and
- Youth hangouts (e.g., bowling alleys, movie theaters, and malls).

"Youth are the target. By not engaging them, we're alienating a constituency that the tobacco industry spends billions of dollars marketing to every year. They can be the best spokespeople for the cause."

– April Kusper,
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids



Youth from Rage Against the Haze gather at a Kick Butts Day event at South Carolina's State Capitol

Overcoming Challenges to Youth Engagement Efforts³³⁻³⁶

Challenge:	Limited funding
Solution:	Seek in-kind donations, mini-grants, and foundation grants to help with the cost of including youth.
Challenge:	Transportation concerns
Solution:	Go to where young people gather. Form partnerships with agencies that can transport youth. Use public transportation and carpooling.
Challenge:	Time conflicts
Solution:	Adjust frequency and duration of meetings. Recognize that young people have busy schedules and numerous time commitments. Work around their school and extracurricular schedules.
Challenge:	Staying informed about new products that target youth
Solution:	Do your research! The tobacco industry continues to re-invent itself and bring new products to market. Stay up to date on the newest products and know how youth are being targeted.
Challenge:	Retention of youth members
Solution:	Youth volunteers naturally cycle in and out of programs. Provide increasing opportunities for leadership. Set up programs that will transition leadership when youth "graduate."
Challenge:	Lack of diversity
Solution:	Diversity extends the reach of a group's influence. Evaluate the target population and ensure the group is truly representative with respect to culture, gender, race, ethnicity, geography, age, and education.

As part of recruiting efforts, careful consideration must be given to the group's diversity. An organization should work to represent its unique community demographic. It should also demonstrate openness to collaborating with other groups committed to reducing tobacco use.

To be effective policy advocates, young people should be educated and trained in tobacco control and policy advocacy. Training should focus on providing:

- Knowledge of tobacco use statistics;
- Education about tobacco control policy issues;
- Practice in how to approach and influence local leaders, business owners, and community members; and
- Media literacy.

Youth advocacy is most effective when linked to the community's public health initiatives.³⁷ Activities should focus on tobacco control policy goals of reducing tobacco use and availability.

Establishing Complementary Youth and Adult Roles

To maintain a successful tobacco control program where young people have a voice, adult and youth roles must be clearly defined. Both add perspectives and skill sets that are mutually beneficial. The challenge is having enough adult input so that efforts are organized and intentional, yet enough youth contribution so that young people are engaged, challenged, and dedicated to the cause.

As a group, young people bring energy, idealism, and a unique perspective to tobacco control. As individuals, they possess varying personalities, talents, and skill sets. While some young people may choose to be organizers, others may want to act as representatives at board meetings or participate in social networking. When adult collaborators offer a range of options, youth are able to select the type of involvement they prefer. Having these choices helps deepen their dedication to the project.³⁹

It is clear that young people can play an important role in community tobacco control policy efforts. However, there is a complementary need for adult support. Adults can influence youth participation by creating the social context in which young people have opportunities to

"The mutual contributions of youth and adults can result in a synergy, a new power and energy that propels decision making groups to greater innovation and productivity."

- Youth in Decision Making³⁸

participate. By focusing on relationship building, a good adult collaborator can help organize and mobilize a group of interested young people.⁴⁰ Adult collaborators who are most successful at supporting youth advocacy efforts:

- Relate well and care about young people;
- Are flexible and thrive in creative, sometimes chaotic environments;
- Have good advocacy skills and are not intimidated by community heavyweights or state legislators;
- Possess an understanding of policy advocacy campaigns and are sufficiently trained to implement them;
- Are well-informed about specific tobacco control issues; and
- Are comfortable talking about tough issues.⁴⁰

What Should Youth be Working On?

Tobacco control program staff must remember that efforts should focus on changing community policies. Research clearly shows that environmental changes, especially those targeted at policy change, have the most impact on changing social norms around tobacco use.^{1,33} Young people can enhance policy-driven goals by participating in policy and media advocacy, forming community and school linkages, and fighting pro-tobacco influences.

Engaging Youth in Policy Advocacy

Programs that involve youth should focus on changing community environments through policy advocacy and development. With community assistance and encouragement, young people can be effective at garnering support for policy development and change. Policy development initiatives should aim to create communities that support and reinforce

Youth Engagement: *How To*

tobacco-free norms. Some of these policies involve increasing the retail price of tobacco products, decreasing minors' access, and increasing smoke-free ordinances in public places.¹⁸

Policy Advocacy Activities

- ▶ Write letters to legislators
- ▶ Attend school board meetings to promote comprehensive tobacco-free school policies
- ▶ Promote policies restricting retail advertising
- ▶ Collect signatures for petitions
- ▶ Testify at city and county council meetings
- ▶ Meet with legislators and rally in front of the state capitol
- ▶ Engage social networks by talking to friends, family, and community members

Engaging Youth in Media Advocacy

Media advocacy is a recommended strategy to advance youth-involved policy initiatives and counter tobacco-related messages. Media advocacy has been proven to build community level support for tobacco control policies.⁴¹ Involving young people in media advocacy is one way to capture the media's support, highlight community objectives, and enhance tobacco control efforts.

Depending on the level of funding, media advocacy activities can range from the use of earned media (*e.g.*, writing op-eds and inviting reporters to community forums) to having youth design advanced media campaigns. Earned media opportunities are useful for programs with limited funding. Developing relationships with a local reporter can also increase news coverage as well as awareness of activities and policies that youth are involved in.



Star-Ledger Photographs © The Star-Ledger, Newark, NJ

Nutley High School AP Government and Politics student testifies before New Jersey lawmakers

Media Advocacy Activities

- ▶ Advertise in school publications
- ▶ Advocate against tobacco advertising and promotion in magazines, movies, and schools
- ▶ Educate the public about smoking in movies by hosting community forums and interactive movie nights, distributing fliers, and placing warning ads in newspapers
- ▶ Design counter-marketing campaigns (*e.g.*, PSAs, billboards, and websites)
- ▶ Use earned media to create awareness, promote policy, and highlight youth activities
- ▶ Send letters and petitions to movie executives to request stricter ratings for movies that contain smoking
- ▶ Attract news coverage of “Smoke-Out” days and other tobacco control activities⁴²

Forming Community Linkages

Community-based policy activities that engage young people help shape the environment around tobacco use. Programs or groups that involve youth should develop partnerships with local organizations to deepen community networks and pool resources. As community interest groups join forces, public health concerns are communicated and shared by diverse groups in the population.

Community Engagement Activities

- ▶ Coordinate efforts with local organizations (e.g., health advisory boards, state and community tobacco control coalitions, health agencies, schools, parent-teacher organizations, and health clubs)
 - ▶ Promote tobacco-free initiatives at community events
 - ▶ Recruit university and college campus advocates
 - ▶ Perform community assessments
-

Fighting Pro-Tobacco Influences

The tobacco industry spends over \$15 billion annually, over \$41 million each day, promoting its products to new, young customers.⁴³ This includes spending billions annually on magazine advertisements, point of purchase advertising, and promotions that make tobacco use appear socially desirable.⁴⁴ Evidence has shown that young peoples' exposure to tobacco use in movies leads to smoking initiation.⁴⁵ The CDC concludes that this exposure may have stalled or even reversed declines in adolescent smoking rates.⁴⁶ In fact, worldwide, the tobacco industry may profit as much as \$894 million each year from new smokers influenced to smoke by the movies.⁴⁷

Because young people are targets of the industry's prolific and manipulative tactics, they are important partners in fighting the industry and other pro-tobacco influences. Their engagement can enhance community-

wide efforts to combat pro-tobacco influences, change social norms around tobacco use, and reduce public exposure to secondhand smoke.

Activities to Fight Pro-Tobacco Influences

- ▶ Monitor tobacco industry activities and report MSA regulation violations to health authorities (e.g., targeting youth, product placement, and sponsorships)
 - ▶ Create counter-marketing campaigns and materials to advocate against advertisements in magazines with high youth readership
 - ▶ Expose tobacco industry efforts that create disparities in specific populations (e.g., Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids' Cancer No. 9)
 - ▶ Protest tobacco use in youth-rated movies to reduce tobacco product exposure
 - ▶ Fight to reduce store product placement and marketing efforts through "Operation Storefront" and "Store Alert" type projects⁴⁸
-

"To ensure increased and longer-term growth for the Camel Filter, the brand must increase its share penetration among the 14-24 age group which have a new set of more liberal values and which represent tomorrow's cigarette business."

- R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. Memo, 1975⁴⁹

At-a-Glance: Looking Forward – HR 1256 Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act

In June of 2009, President Obama signed new legislation granting the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulatory authority over tobacco products. The Act represents the strongest action Congress has ever taken to reduce tobacco use. It gives the FDA the necessary authority and resources to regulate the manufacturing, marketing, and sale of tobacco products. Among other things it will:

- Restrict tobacco advertising, marketing, sales, and promotions, especially to youth;
- Stop illegal sales of tobacco products to youth;
- Ban candy and fruit-flavored cigarettes;
- Strictly regulate all health claims about tobacco products to ensure they are scientifically proven and do not contain misleading messages; and
- Require that tobacco companies disclose the contents of tobacco products, as well as changes in products and research about their health effects.⁵⁰

With the passage of this legislation, state and local governments remain free to pursue key policies (*e.g.*, smoke-free laws, sales restrictions, tobacco tax increases, tobacco prevention funding increases, and enhanced access to tobacco cessation services). Engaging youth in these policy efforts will continue to be

important. The legislation also opens the door for states to adopt and enforce new measures to restrict youth or adult access and to restrict the distribution and possession of tobacco products. For the first time, states may take actions such as:

- Supplement the new requirement that all retail ads for cigarettes and smokeless products consist of only black text on white background. States may apply the restrictions to cigar and other tobacco product ads;
- Restrict or eliminate “power walls” (multiple pack displays) of cigarettes being offered for sale at retail outlets;
- Limit the number or size of tobacco product ads at retail outlets; and
- Require that all tobacco products and ads be kept away from cash registers in order to reduce impulse purchases by smokers trying to quit.⁵¹

While some provisions of HR 1256 are effective upon enactment, most will be implemented according to a timeline that spans the next three years. As the national, state, and local implementation processes unfold, youth will be important partners in policy advocacy, media advocacy, and tobacco industry monitoring activities.

How Can Programs Advance the Focus on Policy Change?

Evidence shows that involving youth in efforts to develop local and institutional policy change is effective, provided there is sustained funding and commitment from partners.^{41,44,52} Schools are excellent venues to find and engage youth, but pure education on the harms of tobacco use is not sufficient to change social norms.

In particular, individually-based clinical or education services are expensive, and have limited reach.⁵³ Thus, individual level change efforts such as youth cessation programs and one-on-one peer education should not be the primary focus of youth engagement programs. Increasing knowledge about tobacco control should be integrated with action and policy-oriented activities.

Involving young people as institutional and community advocates for tobacco policy change can be challenging. However, it is essential that school-based programs advance involvement in a sustained fashion to promote social norm change. The first step is to assist these programs in focusing efforts on policy-driven deliverables. School-based activities should also sync with local community tobacco control policy efforts and statewide educational and/or media campaigns, such as local smoke-free air campaigns and licensure projects.

There are a variety of evidence-based intervention options that will bring about successful efforts to decrease initiation and encourage cessation. Involving young people as part of these interventions enhances tobacco control program policy efforts to meet the CDC *Best Practices* prevention principles.¹

How Should Programs Address Disparities?

Young people from different social groups have unique experiences in relation to tobacco control. Activities that seek to include youth are especially important for groups that have traditionally been excluded and ignored from health promotion.⁵⁴ Young people from different ethnic groups may have varying attitudes toward tobacco-related policy, perceptions of their ability to make change, and expected outcomes of policy advocacy work.⁵⁵ In addition, tobacco companies have a track record for targeting certain populations to encourage tobacco use.⁵⁰

Tobacco companies started targeting women and girls as early as the 1920s, when cigarettes were marketed

“There is a pressing need to engage non-traditional leaders from poor, urban cities who have been excluded. These voices are rarely heard. If the anger felt by many disenfranchised youths is merged with a vision, the result can be profound.”

- Wendy Lesko, Youth Activism Project⁵⁶

as the key to weight loss and independence.⁵⁷ The targeting continues today, with the development of pink and teal Camel No. 9 and Virginia Slims “purse packs,” advertised in women’s magazines with high teen readership, including *Glamour*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Marie Claire*.^{58,59} When including girls in tobacco control, staff should be aware of potential concerns about weight and femininity that may encourage them and their peers to smoke.

Another target is low income communities, which tend to have more tobacco advertising than higher income communities.⁶⁰ As a result, youth living in these areas are at a greater risk for smoking and should be involved in creating awareness of, and a response to, this advertising. In addition, youth from low income communities may require different kinds of support than other youth. Nonetheless, efforts should be made to include these young people because they provide a valuable perspective and are able to influence tobacco initiation and policy in their communities.^{61,62}

Ideas for Engaging Specific Populations

- Be knowledgeable about the groups you are working with and address concerns specific to each group
 - Recruit youth from a variety of populations, gather their insights, and offer assistance where appropriate
 - Work to implement comprehensive tobacco-free policies, especially where tobacco use prevalence is highest and youth are most targeted
 - Use media advocacy to expose population-specific advertising by the tobacco industry
-

Interventions to prevent youth tobacco use should take into account their ability to create change, the cultural and environmental factors that might influence tobacco use, and youth attitudes toward tobacco. For instance, staff should consider the role of tobacco in culture when working with the American

Youth Engagement: *How To*

Indian population⁶³ and the role of marginalization in prompting many lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth to take up smoking.⁶⁴ All of these differences

among young people must be kept in mind when deciding how they can be included and supported in tobacco control policy activities.

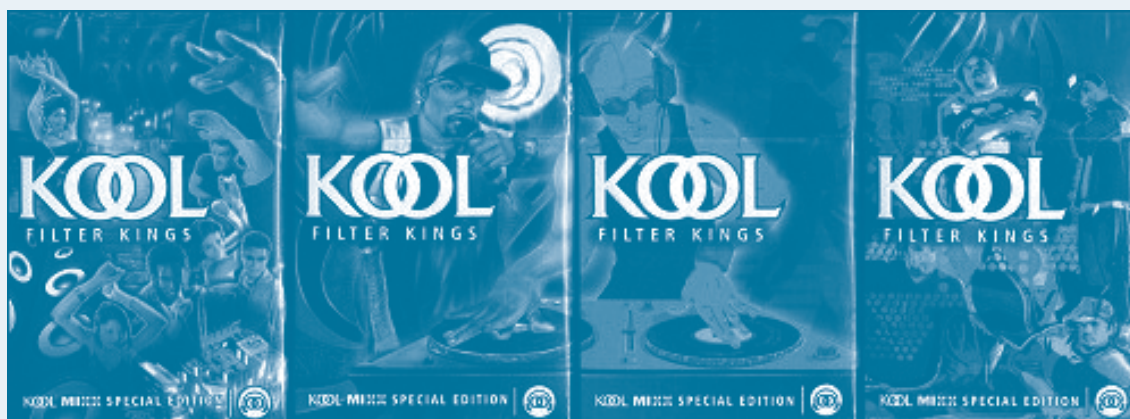
At-a-Glance: Youth Successfully Advocate Against *Kool Mixx* Advertising

In August 2000, Brown & Williamson Tobacco Company launched a promotion clearly targeting African American youth called *Kool Mixx*.⁶⁵ Young D.J.s across the U.S. entered a competition with the goal of being selected to open at concerts for big name performers such as De La Soul and Cam'ron.

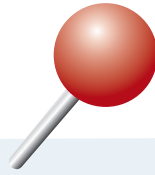
A total of ten competitions took place in cities with large African American populations, including Detroit, Chicago, New York City, and Washington, DC. Promotional gear included cartoon-like images of D.J.s, along with other symbols of urban culture. Free CDs were strategically included in issues of magazines with high youth readership, including *Vibe*, *Entertainment Weekly*, and *Rolling Stone*.⁶⁶ The most distinguishable

form of advertisement was a set of four promotional cigarette packs designed to create a 'mural' when placed side by side.

Outraged by this direct targeting, young people joined forces with the National African American Tobacco Prevention Network to launch Operation Storefront.⁶⁷ As part of this project, youth spoke out against this target promotion and asked their state Attorneys General to file a complaint. As a result of their efforts, in 2004, state Attorneys General from Maryland, New York, and Illinois filed lawsuits against Brown & Williamson. The company was forced to shut down the *Kool Mixx* website and destroy 79,000 cartons of the special edition cigarette packages still in stores.⁶⁸



Kool Mixx packaging



How Can Program Managers Support Youth Engagement?

Here are some ways that tobacco control program managers include and support youth in their comprehensive tobacco control programs.

Coordination & Collaboration

- ✓ Involve youth in conducting mass media education campaigns, when combined with other community interventions.
- ✓ Help support and coordinate local media campaigns to avoid duplication of efforts and communicate a clear and unified message.
- ✓ Act as the convener. Bring all partners, including youth programs and organizations, to the table on a regular basis.
- ✓ Involve youth in implementation of comprehensive school-based policy interventions, when combined with mass media campaigns and additional community efforts.
- ✓ Involve young people in development and implementation of local and statewide policy interventions (e.g., increasing the unit price of tobacco products).
- ✓ Mobilize youth and community partners to restrict minors' access, strengthen local laws directed at retailers, and enforce retailer sales laws.
- ✓ Facilitate youth involvement in community coalitions.
- ✓ Make youth engagement a priority during the program's strategic planning process and incorporate youth engagement into work plan.

Administrative Support

- ✓ Disseminate surveillance and evaluation data to local youth programs and agencies for use in program design and promotion of program activities and accomplishments.
- ✓ Fund staff, organizations, or activities at local level for comprehensive tobacco control and to facilitate effective youth engagement.
- ✓ Develop and share materials that can be used at the local level.
- ✓ Provide a forum for youth to interact (e.g., website, conference calls, or blog).

Technical Assistance

- ✓ Sponsor local, regional, and statewide trainings and conferences that involve youth. Provide ongoing technical assistance to youth partners.

Idaho youth coalition influences local and statewide smoke-free policy change: Magic Valley Tobacco-Free Coalition

Using policy driven goals, youth advocates in the Magic Valley Tobacco-Free Coalition (MVTFC) successfully used minimal funding to change tobacco control policy in Idaho. The dedication and determination of the youth and their adult partners has strengthened state and local policies, increased awareness in diverse populations, and promoted community tobacco control education and prevention.

Local youth and physician join forces

MVTFC was formed in 1994 by a small group of high school students and Dr. David McClusky, a local surgeon who recognized the need for tobacco prevention efforts in the community. Dr. McClusky believed that if youth were given tools and training they could affect policy and create community-level change. MVTFC is supported by the Idaho Tobacco Prevention & Control Program, and is composed of 5-10 volunteer youth and a full-time adult coordinator. Guided by strong leadership, MVTFC has become a strong organization and has accelerated work on its policy agenda. Tami Pearson, Program Coordinator, explains that MVTFC's impact is attributable to its transition from education and awareness campaigns to a policy focus. Pearson says, "To affect change and behaviors, the policy work needs to happen." By nurturing relationships with community stakeholders, MVTFC has engaged youth in influential policy advocacy and development.

Affecting state and local policy change

In 2007, this youth-led coalition partnered with national organizations and a local bowling league to advocate for eliminating the bowling alley exemption from Idaho's Clean Indoor Air Act. When the youth were first asked to testify at the capitol, Pearson said, "It was a little new to them, but young people are so adaptable and learn so quickly. They were off and running." Senator Brent Hill, one of the bill's co-sponsors, was impressed by their speeches before a Senate committee. "They provided the most powerful

testimony...to be so frank and so honest; they just won the hearts of both committees."⁶⁹ Although the bill passed in the Senate and House, the Governor vetoed the bill. This challenge did not deter the coalition; instead, the young people maintained strong resolve. The coalition partnered with other organizations, petitioned legislators, and submitted editorial letters to newspapers statewide. Several of the youth were also members of the high school bowling team and, according to Pearson, would not "take no for an answer". With perseverance and commitment to their goal, these young people garnered enough support to overturn the Governor's veto and eliminate the exemption from the Clean Air bill.

The coalition's greatest success came in 2008 when the members initiated a campaign for a smoke-free campus at the College of Southern Idaho (CSI). To accomplish this, MVTFC partnered with CSI students, assessed support for a smoke-free campus, and delivered formal presentations for administrators and trustees. These efforts resulted in enthusiastic support and investment from the campus community and implementation of a smoke-free campus policy the following school year.

Small coalition continues to make a big impact

Building on the momentum of their successes, MVTFC continues to promote smoke-free environments and focus on tobacco policy change in the Twin Falls, Idaho area. The group also conducts community education through television and radio public service announcements and development of the first anti-tobacco billboard in the state. The group's adult partners believe that young people have the passion, interest, and influence to make an impact on policy; they just need the information and the access. Pearson says her role is simple: "I give them the information and I get them into the places they need to be. You don't have to have a lot of money. You don't have to have a lot of kids. You just need to find the right kids that are passionate, and are willing to work to make a difference."

For more information visit: <http://www.phd5.idaho.gov/Tobacco/index.htm#coalition>

Latino youth develop skills to fight back against tobacco advertising: Sociedad Latina

Community youth organizers working with Sociedad Latina are changing tobacco norms in the Greater Boston area by organizing advocacy events, developing policy initiatives, and building action plans for tobacco policy change. Through their membership, youth have developed critical thinking and leadership skills to confront city officials, challenge the tobacco industry, and change community social norms. To date they have succeeded in increasing merchant fees and passing a sign code to restrict the disproportionately high number of tobacco ads in their neighborhood.

From immigrant support to youth engagement

Sociedad Latina was founded in 1968 as a gathering place for Latino immigrants. Originally focused on providing recreational activities for young people, Sociedad Latina has grown into an organization providing a comprehensive array of programs designed to empower Latino youth and their families. As part of their community organizing branch, youth partners work to reduce tobacco disparities in the Mission Hill area of Boston. While in past years funding was provided by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, current tobacco control funding is in the form of a mini-grant from Massachusetts Youth Against Tobacco and support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Sociedad Latina's efforts are driven by a peer leadership model, which creates well-rounded leaders who are equipped to engage in community improvement. Program organizer Melissa Luna explains, "One of the key things about the youth organizing program: it's never the adult just giving the answer. It's coming through the process of figuring it out for yourself."

Raising merchant fees to fund enforcement

In 2004, youth at Sociedad Latina began policy advocacy activities by petitioning the Boston City Council to increase merchant fees and strengthen

enforcement of community youth access laws. After collecting petition signatures to present to the legislature, meeting with city council leaders, attending hearings, and organizing an education day at city hall, the law was successfully passed.

Fighting targeted advertising

Sociedad Latina focuses its efforts on high poverty areas, which are most targeted by tobacco companies. The tobacco industry preys on these neighborhoods by paying shop owners incentives to advertise their products. Merchants rely on this financial boost to help pay rent and other costs. By contrast, many wealthy neighborhoods lie in designated historical districts and have heavy restrictions on advertising. To address targeted industry advertising, youth at Sociedad Latina conducted a multi-year project to advocate for zoning laws and sign codes regulating advertising. The group worked with the Inspectional Services Department of Boston to conduct a pilot project to identify policy loopholes before large scale implementation of the zoning law occurs. They also worked with Boston City Councilor Mike Ross to pass an ordinance establishing a system of fines to regulate the number of advertisements on storefront windows. In these projects the high turnover rates of youth members has actually worked to the organization's advantage. The continual influx of new youth workers helps to energize staff members, adding momentum and sustainability to the program.

Connecting the dots: awareness to action

Through their involvement in Sociedad Latina, young people have learned how tobacco use is linked to health concerns like asthma and high health care costs. They have also witnessed how the tobacco industry targets their neighborhoods. They have then been given the support and tools to contribute to policy change. Youth members have developed expertise and leadership skills, raised awareness in their communities, and made significant contributions to public health policy in the greater Boston area.

For more information visit: <http://www.sociedadlatina.org/>

Youth Engagement: *Case for Investment*

Youth engagement is cost effective for advancing tobacco control policy

Why Invest in Youth Engagement?

Engaging youth is essential for advancing comprehensive tobacco control program efforts. Involving youth in tobacco control provides economic and social returns to the community and the field of public health. Through advocacy and education, young people play a critical role in collaborating with community partners to develop and implement policies and programs that will make tobacco less desirable, less acceptable, and less accessible.¹ This case for investment provides information to use when educating decision makers and leadership on why youth engagement should be funded as part of a comprehensive tobacco control program.

History and Adoption

Youth engagement gains wider adoption as part of larger community efforts

For over 40 years there has been broad consensus among public health experts that tobacco control efforts must focus heavily on preventing young people from initiating tobacco use.⁷⁰ While this long history has led to wide adoption of youth focused interventions, there has not been agreement over time about how to involve youth in these efforts. Every state and most localities currently include youth in tobacco control efforts in some capacity. The need to engage youth in community efforts and policy development continues to gain wider adoption. This is a direct result of the benefits that many states see from integrating youth into policy advocacy, media advocacy, and fighting the tobacco industry.^{71,72} Recent evidence has shown that individual-based interventions are not effective alone. More and more tobacco control programs are focusing their efforts on community-based policy interventions that work to change social norms around tobacco use.¹⁸ Because young people are a large and important segment of our community populations, they play a critical role in creating that change.

Scientific Evidence

Youth engagement contributes to public health outcomes and social norm change

Direct evidence linking the involvement of youth in tobacco control to positive health outcomes is limited, due to the lack of evaluation of youth engagement efforts. However, this does not mean that engaging youth is not important, or that it is not working. Recent research has shown how the CDC *Best Practices* can be linked to community practice through “Community Change Chronicles”, which document the successes of youth engagement efforts in tobacco control.⁷¹ Other research has noted, “The popularity on the front lines far outpaces the amount of high-quality theoretical and empirical research on the efficacy of youth empowerment.”⁷³ The Director of the Massachusetts Tobacco Control Program, Lois Keithly, explains that creating the science for youth involvement is a work in progress. Involving youth in counter-marketing and local policy change is effective, provided there is sustained funding and commitment from partners.⁷⁴⁻⁷⁶ To provide additional support for youth impact on public health outcomes, many point to the number of tobacco-free policies passed, the number of stakeholders contacted, the impact on attitudes and smoking intention, and the reductions in youth smoking rates in their communities. All of these contribute to social norm change around tobacco use.

Cost

The relatively low cost of youth engagement can yield a high social and economic return on investment

The cost of engaging youth in tobacco control varies depending on the level of involvement sought and the funding mechanism in place. Many programs operate with only the help of youth volunteers and in-kind donations. With available funds, others have invested in an adult staff person specialized in working with youth. While the latter approach requires funding, the return on investment can be great when that adult effectively engages youth in policy change efforts.

Including youth in existing community programs is more cost effective than building youth programs from the ground up. Also, programs involving youth that focus on community, policy and social norms change, rather than individual change, will provide a better return on investment. For example, as a result of the national *truth*[®] campaign, there was a 22% decrease in youth smoking and over 160,000 youth were prevented from ever initiating smoking. Total costs for the campaign were \$324 million, but estimated health savings were \$1.9 billion.¹⁸ Some research also suggests that the often large and immediate gains made from involving youth are in danger of being reversed when funding is reduced.⁷⁴

Sustainability

Youth engagement enhances program sustainability

Engaged youth can make meaningful contributions to comprehensive tobacco control efforts that build program capacity and sustainability. Youth efforts that specifically contribute to sustainability of tobacco control programs include policy advocacy and influencing social norms around tobacco use. According to Lois Keithly, “Many participants within youth-led, adult-guided tobacco control programs believe that they have helped make a positive impact in their community and laid the foundation for future tobacco-related policy changes.” High youth turnover can also be used to sustain a program, according to Melissa Luna of Sociedad Latina. By continuously spreading the message to newly involved youth, excitement about creating change in tobacco control never wanes. Youth participation can help achieve better program outcomes for the young people involved with an organization, for the adults in the organization, for the target audiences of young people and providers, and for the community as a whole.⁷⁷

The Evidence: What Works and What Doesn't Work

What Works^{53,74-76}

- **Counter-marketing and media advocacy**
Media is often what encourages youth to smoke; it is also effective at discouraging tobacco use.
- **Social norm change**
The focus should be on the environment rather than the individual.
- **A community and school approach**
Involve everyone with influence on youth – family, peer groups, schools, churches, local businesses, and recreational programs.
- **Involvement in local policy work**
This shows youth a concrete result of their efforts, can inspire additional advocacy, and helps to create an environment where being tobacco-free is the norm.

Under Review⁸

- **State-wide rallies**
Inspiring for a day, but the effects can be limited if not used in conjunction with specific policy change.
- **Social influence model**
Focusing on peer pressure and resistance skills is useful, but only one piece of what is needed.
- **Pure youth empowerment programs**
Without opportunities to apply new skills and self confidence, these programs may have little impact on tobacco control.

What Doesn't Work^{7,78}

- **School-only programming**
The tobacco industry's reach goes far beyond the classroom, so a broader approach is needed both in the school, and in connecting schools to community efforts.
- **Information deficit model**
Simply providing information does not prevent youth from smoking.
- **Using youth as tokens**
If youth are given a seat at the table without a voice in designing strategies for tobacco control, they are not full participants and the impact on reducing youth smoking will be limited.

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