

Taking What We Know Into the Community for the Community

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Op-ed

The Office on Smoking and Health (OSH) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) developed a Spanish-language campaign called “Sabemos.” This kit is designed to help community leaders heighten awareness among Hispanic/Latino parents who have recently arrived in the United States about secondhand smoke and how it can affect them and their children. “Sabemos,” which means “we know,” is an appropriate title for the campaign. The campaign and an accompanying tool kit are designed to promote awareness within the Hispanic/Latino population of positive health behaviors related to in-home protection against secondhand smoke.

Upon the launch of the campaign, CDC will distribute a multimedia tool kit to key stakeholders such as local and state agencies. The kit is intended to help stakeholders to strengthen tobacco prevention efforts and provides them with tools for conducting a multimedia campaign to reinforce healthy practices among Hispanic/Latino parents as well as to the community at large.

As parents are provided with accurate information about the dangers of secondhand smoke, they become better equipped to address the issue and more motivated to protect their children from this hazard. Furthermore, the kit is designed to provide guidance to Hispanic/Latino parents and community leaders on practical steps they can take to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke and ultimately achieve smoke-free environments in their households, workplaces, and communities.

It is our hope that, by providing Hispanic/Latino parents and their children with the facts and emphasizing the benefits of not smoking and avoiding secondhand smoke, communities will be able to reduce tobacco use and nonsmokers’ secondhand smoke exposure. The tool kit will communicate key health messages to Hispanic/Latino parents and community leaders. For example, did you know that:

- ***Secondhand smoke causes over 3,000 lung cancer deaths and more than 35,000 heart disease deaths among nonsmokers in the U.S. each year?***
- ***About 85% of Hispanic/Latino homes are smoke-free?***
- ***About 80% of Hispanics/Latinos in the U.S. do not smoke?***
- ***We have the right to live and work in a smoke-free environment?***

Well, now “we know.” It is our hope that this tool kit and its supporting materials will encourage parents and especially children to work together to protect their communities from secondhand smoke. Hispanic/Latino communities, including Hispanic/Latino-owned businesses, are taking action to protect families and children from tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure.