

Best Practices for Parenting Healthy, Tobacco-Free Hispanic/Latino Youth

“*Sabemos*” Sample Talking Points

The Tool Kit:

- In 2007, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) unveiled the *Sabemos* tool kit. This is a Spanish-language communications kit designed to promote awareness of existing positive social norms regarding in-home protection against secondhand smoke within the Hispanic/Latino population.
- This kit is designed to provide guidance to Hispanic/Latino parents and community leaders on practical steps they can take to achieve smoke-free environments in their households, workplaces, and communities.
- The tool kit is intended to reach recent immigrant Hispanic/Latino parents with messages about secondhand smoke and how it can affect them and their children.
- The *Sabemos* tool kit provides a call to action for families, children, and community leaders to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke in homes, workplaces, and public places.
- By the fall of 2007, the tool kit will be distributed to key stakeholders. The tool kit will provide these stakeholders with tools for conducting a multimedia campaign to reinforce continued healthy practices and expand protection to the Hispanic/Latino community at large.
- The kit was developed using an approach based on social norms, defined as the perceived standards of acceptable attitudes and behaviors prevalent among the members of a community.
- The kit aims to reinforce protective and preventive health attitudes and behaviors found within the Hispanic/Latino community.
- The kit includes carefully selected and tested health messages and images that were considered the most effective for the intended audience based on input received from members of this audience.
- This kit includes social marketing principles that will provide a more accurate perception of smoking among Hispanics/Latinos in the United States. The *Sabemos* tool kit will educate and encourage Hispanics/Latinos to take on more positive health behaviors related to tobacco prevention and secondhand smoke reduction.

Development of Kit Contents:

- Nearly all of the respondents in focus groups chose the message: “Secondhand smoke kills over 3,000 nonsmokers each year from lung cancer” as the one with the greatest appeal and impact from among those tested. This statement demonstrates how secondhand smoke negatively affects a large number of nonsmokers, who in the parents’ minds represented their young children.
- Respondents felt that including statistics and straightforward pictures in prevention messages would enhance the impact of these messages. Messages that secondhand smoke can cause lung cancer among nonsmokers and other health problems among children -- who represent the family’s future -- were deemed to have an especially great impact.
- “Sabemos,” which means “we know,” is an appropriate concept and title for the communications kit. As parents are provided with accurate facts about the dangers of secondhand smoke, they become better equipped to address the issue and more motivated to reduce secondhand smoke exposure among their children, their family members, themselves, and others in their communities.

Intended Audience – The Parents:

- To raise awareness about the tool kit and promote it, CDC will distribute the kit to Hispanic/Latino community leaders and community-based organizations which can further disseminate the kit’s key messages and materials to Hispanic/Latino parents who have recently arrived in the United States.
- Hispanic/Latino parents (with children ages 14 and under) and trusted Hispanic/Latino community leaders gave their input and shared their perspective on what approaches and messages would motivate them to support smoke-free environments in their households, workplaces, and communities.
- Focus group participants consistently overestimated the actual smoking rates among U.S. Hispanics/Latinos. Most participants perceived that the majority of the Hispanic/Latino population smokes and found it difficult to believe that the opposite is the case—almost 80 percent of this population does not smoke.
- CDC compiled feedback from recently arrived Hispanic/Latino parents from 10 Latin American countries living and working in the New York City metropolitan area and San Antonio, Texas. This not only ensured a broad multicultural representation of countries of origin, but also provided insight into the various Spanish-language dialects and terminology for tobacco-related messages.
- During toolkit development, parents reported that their children receive messages about tobacco prevention in school, but also noted that they (the parents) may not be receiving sufficient exposure to these messages and to basic information on smoking and health.
- During toolkit development, parents mentioned that their cultural values can sometimes pose a barrier to restricting tobacco use in the home or car (i.e., concerns about treating visitors with courtesy and respect may make it difficult to ask them to refrain from smoking).
- Hispanic/Latino culture places greater emphasis on the family and the community than on the individual.

Intended Audience – Trusted Community Leaders:

- During toolkit development, CDC conducted one-on-one, in-depth interviews with trusted community advisors/community leaders in their own settings (office, after-school programs, etc.). This provided CDC with additional insight into the Hispanic/Latino communities' views and beliefs relating to tobacco.
- CDC gained useful knowledge on how to work with these community leaders to promote this communication campaign throughout the whole community.
- Some community leaders felt that some teenagers see smoking as “a cool thing” and as a lesser evil compared to other risky behaviors. They also felt that some youth viewed smoking as a socially acceptable and even desirable behavior.
- Unlike the parents, some of the community leaders believed that many young people are stopping or refraining from smoking because some school and television prevention messages are getting through to them effectively. This was an important perspective to hear and to integrate into the campaign-related activities.