

Highlights in Tobacco Control

A Newsletter for Texas Communities

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Key Findings from Texas Tobacco Research

In mid-1998, Texas settled its multibillion dollar lawsuit against the tobacco industry. This settlement helped fund many programs, including a broad tobacco prevention and control plan through the Texas Department of Health (TDH).

In 1999, state legislators requested that TDH determine what factors were most effective in controlling Texans' tobacco use. During 2000, TDH and its 8 academic partners conducted a pilot study to investigate and evaluate tobacco control measures in east Texas and the Houston area. The 4 areas of focus were school/community programs, cessation, enforcement, and media.

In early 2001, TDH presented state legislators with results from the 6-month pilot study. Overall, researchers found that a single area of focus was not effective. In contrast, a comprehensive, "big picture" approach showed a reduction in tobacco use and its impact on Texans of all ages.

Key findings included:

- ◆ High intensity media campaigns combined with comprehensive school and community programs were most effective.
- ◆ Areas funded at a minimum of \$3/capita (high level media and combined community programs) were associated with significant reductions in tobacco use.
- ◆ Media campaigns magnified the effects of community programs.
- ◆ A 10% decrease in tobacco use was seen in comprehensive program areas, compared to a 23% increase in areas without campaigns or services.

The pilot study also found some gaps that exist. For instance:

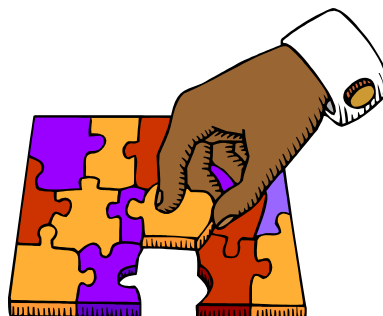
- ◆ Most community leaders agreed that tobacco use is a serious problem, yet community-based tobacco control programs are scarce.
- ◆ Texas has some of the strongest laws in the US for minors' access to tobacco, but many law enforcement officers are not fully aware of them.

TDH and its partners have built a solid foundation for tobacco control, but much critical work still lies ahead. A continued commitment to tobacco control will ensure success with future efforts.

For more information, contact Megan Haley at TDH, 512-458-7402.

TDH'S PARTNERS

- ◆ Baylor College of Medicine
- ◆ Prairie View A&M University
- ◆ Southwest Texas State University
- ◆ Texas A&M University
- ◆ Texas Southern University
- ◆ University of Houston
- ◆ University of Texas at Austin
- ◆ University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston



Comprehensive programs in tobacco control require the use of multiple components. All pieces are needed to complete the picture.

Alliance for a Tobacco-free Texas
Live it. Breathe it.

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Here are some websites that contain useful information on tobacco prevention and control.

Texas Department of Health, Office of Tobacco Prevention & Control: www.tdh.state.tx.us/otpc

Texas Statewide Tobacco Education & Prevention (STEP):
<http://sherlock.tdi.swt.edu/step/default.htm>

Tobacco and Youth: www.ducktexas.com

Tobacco Control News & Information: <http://www.TobaccoWeek.org>

Tobacco Cessation Guidelines: www.surgeongeneral.gov/tobacco/

American Legacy Foundation: www.americanlegacy.org

National Center for Tobacco-Free Kids: www.tobaccofreekids.org

Stop Teenage Addiction to Tobacco: www.stat.org

Action on Smoking and Health: www.ash.org

Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights: www.no-smoke.org

CDC Office of Smoking and Health: www.cdc.gov/tobacco

Tobacco Control Resource Center: www.tobacco.neu.edu

Doctors Ought to Care: www.bcm.tmc.edu/doc

State-specific trends in tobacco policies, trends, and interventions:
www.uic.edu/orgs/impacteen

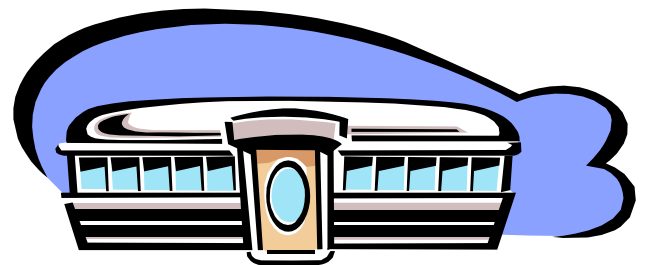
Special points of interest for building tobacco control coalitions:

- ◆ Clearly define roles and responsibilities.
- ◆ Create open, on-going communication.
- ◆ Stay flexible, be willing to make changes as needed.
- ◆ Know the science and the local social, cultural, and political climates.
- ◆ Elect a leader or co-leader to manage group processes.
- ◆ Keep your focus on the big picture.

Restaurant Sales Remain Strong with Local Laws on Clean Indoor Air

In March 2000, researchers at TDH published their analysis of restaurant revenues in 4 Texas cities with clean indoor air ordinances. The cities were Arlington, Austin, Plano, and Wichita Falls. The data on restaurant sales were obtained for all quarters of 1987-1999.

Results showed that profits as well as public health remained robust



under these no-smoking laws. The findings support results from previous studies in other states.

This study is an important piece of evidence for communities seeking to enact clean indoor air ordinances. With

careful planning and support from local businesses and leaders, tobacco control coalitions can get regulations passed that promote clean, smoke-free indoor air.

For more details, contact Dr. Phil Huang at 512-458-7111 ext. 7234.