

Case Study

Minnesota Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation Program Promotes Tobacco-Free Policies

Overview

Minnesota's Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation (www.ansrmn.org) program began in 2000, and since that time has assisted more than 90 Minnesota cities and four counties in establishing tobacco-free policies for their parks, beaches, athletic fields, playgrounds, and other recreation facilities.

Signage

Metal signs inform park visitors of the Minnesota cities' ban on tobacco use.

Filling the Stands: Promoting Your Program or Event

Now that you've developed detailed plans for your tobacco-free policies, programs, and events, you need to make sure that people know about them. A promotional plan based on your audience research will ensure that you get the word out about your activities to the right people at the right time. Successful communication will garner your target audiences' attention so that they support your efforts, participate in them, and tell others about them.

In this section, you will find recommendations for developing and testing a key message for your program or event, sample media materials, guidelines for placing public service announcements, tips for leveraging partnerships to extend your reach, and additional marketing ideas.



Develop and Test a Key Message

The heart of any communications plan is the key message—a short, well-crafted message to inform your target audience what they should know and do. To develop your key message, you need to determine what messages need to reach your audience and which are most likely to persuade or help them to adopt a tobacco-free, healthy lifestyle. Convene a brainstorming session with a few key stakeholders, share your objectives with them, and come up with several ideas. Select a few of the ideas to share with members of your target audience.

Getting feedback from your target audience before you develop your materials is called pretesting your message. It helps to ensure that your message will appeal to the target audience and that it will be passed along, understood, and acted upon. Pretesting can be as simple as gathering a group that is representative of your target audience from your office, recreation center, health center, or school. If you have the time and money, you can hire a professional focus-testing provider to do this for you. Be prepared to revise the messages one or more times until the messages are clear and appeal to your target audience.

Work With the Media To Promote Your Program or Event

By working with the media, you can bring exposure to the vitally important issue of tobacco use prevention and your program. Building and maintaining relationships with reporters and assignment editors at your local newspaper and television stations can be valuable to your public education, outreach, and funding efforts. At the end of this section, you will find template media materials that you can customize or use as a guide to develop your own materials.

Practice the 4 Bs

The media materials contained in this section are tools to help you practice the “4 Bs” of media relations:

- Be prepared.
- Be an educator.
- Be quotable.
- Be in control.

Do not wait until you need to get a story or event covered to introduce yourself to a reporter. Instead, get to know the local reporters who cover health, public policy, or any other topic linked to your tobacco-free sports initiatives. Then, choose one news contact at each media outlet and build a rapport by remaining in contact regularly, developing consistent message points, and becoming a “go-to” source for timely, reliable information.

Create a media list of names and contact information (e.g., phone and fax numbers and mailing and e-mail addresses) for each reporter, especially the health or science reporter. Refer to the tips for creating a media list in the guidelines on how to “Write and Distribute a Media Advisory” in this section, page 34.

Do Your Homework

In the news business, timing is everything, so you will want to look for opportunities to link your story to local, regional, or national events or observances (e.g., World No Tobacco Day, the Olympic Games). Doing so will make your “pitch” to reporters easier while helping them do their jobs. Keep in mind that reporters operate under tight deadlines, and they rely on professionals like you for stories, information, and interviews.

Develop Supporting Message Points

In addition to your key message, supporting message points are a useful tool for both internal and external communications related to your tobacco-free sports program and events. The “boilerplate” (fill-in-the-

“Smoking is a turn-off. I’ve coached Olympic Gold Medal soccer players and am currently coaching youth players, some just starting to get serious about elite soccer. The margin of success for players that reach their goals or come up short is so narrow. Why would any talented athlete consciously hurt their chances to be their best? Tobacco clearly has no place in a healthy lifestyle. There is nothing sexy or cool about smoking. Be smart! Be healthy! Be tobacco free!”

Tony DiCicco

Coach, USA Women’s

National Soccer Team

’96 Olympic Gold Medal;

’99 World Cup Champions

blank) message points provided in this section focus on current statistics on youth and tobacco use and the benefits of tobacco-free sports.

You can customize and refine these message points into shorter messages that can be used as talking points or responses during print or broadcast interviews. You also can use them for developing your own media, marketing, partnership development, and presentation materials.

Write and Distribute a Media Advisory

A media advisory is a simple way to inform local media outlets about an upcoming press conference, briefing, or other event. You distribute this document to media in advance of your event to provide print, broadcast and Internet reporters with the basic details about what your event is and where and when it will be held. Its goal is not to tell the complete story, but instead to entice media to attend your event to learn more.

As you prepare for your tobacco-free sports event, refer to the customizable media advisory template in this section. You may use this template as the basis for your media advisory, making sure to edit it as necessary (particularly updating all of the placeholders that have been listed in brackets throughout) to customize it for your event.

If you choose to write your own media advisory, keep it short (no more than a page). The most essential components are the details of the event: what the event is, where the event is taking place, and the day and time the event will begin. A contact

name and number that media can call in advance of the event also are crucial.

Below are some suggestions for successfully distributing your advisory.

Create a media list. Send the advisory to local media outlets in your community 1 week before your event. To do so, you should develop a current media list—a fundamental tool that organizes information about reporters. Your list of media outlets must be accurate and up to date to effectively reach reporters with your story. This list also can be used when distributing your press release, which will contain more information about your event.

Here are some tips on creating a media list:

- Check your local library or bookstore for media directories of daily and weekly newspapers, television stations, radio stations, newswire services, Internet news outlets, magazines, newsletters, and business trade publications in your community. Some examples include Bacon's directories, the Yellow Book, and Gebbie's All-in-One Directory. Use the phone book or the Internet to supplement your list.
- Once you have developed a list of phone numbers and addresses, call each outlet to verify the information and to determine which editors and reporters are the most appropriate for your news, such as health reporters.
- For each media outlet, create a list with the following information: name of media outlet, address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address, and the names and titles of specific reporters or editors who cover tobacco use and health-related issues.

- Today, most reporters and editors prefer information to be e-mailed to them; therefore, secure an e-mail address when possible. When calling to verify contact information, you also should ask about the best time to call each reporter about your event (i.e., how far in advance/what time of day).

Be sure to include specialized media on your list, such as African-American, Hispanic/Latino, or other minority newspapers or radio stations. Other specialized media you may wish to include are university/college newspapers; television and radio stations; small community papers or neighborhood newsletters; and publications produced by local organizations, such as businesses, hospitals, women’s centers, health care clinics, professional associations, churches and other faith-based institutions, drug stores, and local civic clubs.

Place the media advisory on the “day-books” and in “week ahead” columns. “Day-books” are daily listings of all activities that media are invited to attend—they are not read by the general public. In contrast, “week ahead” columns reach a wider audience because they are published in local newspapers and business publications. Both of these tools can help you spread the word about your event. Call the local bureaus of newswire services, such as the Associated Press and Reuters, in your city or state and ask for the name of the daybook editor and that person’s fax number. Fax your advisory and ask the daybook editor to place it on the newswire’s “daybook” the week before, the day before, and the day of the event. (Some media services, such as PR

Newswire, charge for posting such information, so you may wish to inquire first.) Also call local newspapers and business publications that feature upcoming activities, asking them to place the advisory in their “week ahead” columns or calendar listings to encourage community members to attend your event.

As a follow-up, after you e-mail or fax the media advisory, contact reporters by phone to determine their interest in attending or covering the event. This type of personal effort often can make a difference in generating media interest.

Write and Distribute a Press Release

A timely, well-written press release is an important tool in an effective media outreach plan. While small newspapers may run the release word for word or with minor changes, other media (in fact, the majority) use it as background information to craft their own articles. Either way, the release is the key vehicle for generating media interest; thus, taking the time to make it as powerful as possible is worth the effort.

As you prepare for your tobacco-free sports events, you may want to distribute a press release announcing your program’s most important and newsworthy activity. Whether you use the sample press release provided in this section or write your own, you can follow these guidelines for writing an effective press release.

A press release distributed to local media by fax or e-mail on the day of your event, as well as in press kits handed out at your event, provides more detailed information than the snapshot you may provide in a one-page media advisory sent to media in advance of your event.

While the brief media advisory serves to entice media attendance at your event, a press release can help the media flesh out their stories. For example, the press release can contain quotes from local officials and mention other activities your organization is planning along with the main event. If you have multiple newsworthy activities planned, you may wish to distribute a separate press release for each of your other activities, if they can stand on their own. Or you may wish to issue a news release with an attached fact sheet describing all of the events being hosted in your community for the entire tobacco-free sports program.

For example, your tobacco-free sports event release may be considered newsworthy if your organization:

- Honors a local individual or organization as part of the celebration.
- Plans an event to issue a tobacco-free sports proclamation by a local lawmaker or other official.
- Conducts seminars or workshops featuring a local or national celebrity speaker.
- Publicizes the local impact of a national news event or campaign, such as World No Tobacco Day (<http://www.who.int/tobacco/communications/events/wntd/en/>).
- Announces the results of a poll, survey, or study on youth and tobacco use.
- Launches a new public education campaign.

Refer to the press release template in this section when writing your tobacco-free sports initiative press release. You may use this template as the basis of your press release, making sure to edit it as necessary

for your event (particularly updating all placeholders that have been highlighted in bold and listed in brackets throughout the release). Here are some tips to help you write your release.

- **Stick to a traditional format.** Releases should be issued on your organization's letterhead. At the top of the page, include the name and phone number of a contact for more information. The release should begin with the name of your city and the date. If the release is longer than one page, type "more" at the bottom of each page except the last. Signify the end of the release by typing "###" centered after the last sentence.
- **Keep it short.** A press release should be no more than two pages, double-spaced; it should contain short sentences and paragraphs.
- **Give the most important details first.** Begin with a headline that summarizes the release. The first paragraph should answer the five basic questions about your event—who, what, where, when, and why.
- **Be careful with language.** Avoid using slang or technical terms dealing with tobacco use or sports initiatives. If necessary, explain terms.
- **Check for accuracy.** Be sure to verify all spelling, statistics, names, and titles in your tobacco-free sports initiative release.
- **Write factually.** Opinions should be expressed in direct quotes only. When quoting an individual in your press release, get consent before publishing.

- **Seek placement.** Distribute your tobacco-free sports initiative release at your event and via e-mail or fax to local print, broadcast, and Internet reporters in your community on the day of the release’s date. An explanation of how to develop a media distribution list is provided with the sample media advisory in this section. Follow-up by phone to encourage reporters to write or air a story. Try to schedule an interview with an official of your organization to give the media additional information. Collect samples of any resulting coverage to document your outreach efforts. If you invite the media to your event, have a place for them to sign in so you can keep track of who attended and monitor for resulting media coverage.

Write and Place an Op-Ed

Most newspapers publish a page of opinion columns and letters opposite the editorial page; hence the term “opinion editorial,” or “op-ed.” Important ideas and issues are debated on the op-ed pages—an ideal place to raise awareness of your tobacco-free sports initiative and to address important issues related to tobacco use and prevention.

Writing an op-ed places you in the role of a columnist—expressing your views while presenting the facts. Whether you use the sample provided at the end of this document or write your own, here are some tips for writing an op-ed:

- **Develop an outline.** It will help you stay focused and act as a reminder to cover key points.

- **Stick with one subject.** Choosing one theme will most effectively persuade the reader and drive home your point.
- **Express an opinion.** Be clear about your point of view from the beginning of the piece.
- **Provide background information.** Do not assume your readers are aware of the issue or your viewpoint, so paint a general picture of the issue or problem.
- **Support your position.** Statistics or study results add credibility, but take care not to bury your readers in numbers.
- **Use appropriate anecdotes.** Reference a recent news event, story, or personal anecdote to bring your piece to life.
- **Localize it.** Include local statistics about tobacco use. Refer to local tobacco-free programs and resources that have a direct impact on your community.
- **Contact a local authority or expert to request a quotation.** Including a relevant quote can provide additional context to your argument and demonstrate that other respected figures in your community support tobacco-free initiatives.
- **Ascertain specific word limits and required submission information.** Word limits are generally 400–600 words. Be succinct—less is more.
- **Identify yourself.** At the end of your piece, include in italics your full name, daytime telephone number, e-mail address, and a brief description of who you are and what you do that makes you an expert on the subject.

“Playing sports is a fun way to develop lifelong habits of exercise, eating right, and setting your priorities. You can accomplish whatever you want in life through such discipline, hard work, and staying healthy and fit. Take that first step that will carry you through a lifetime and start playing sports on any level, and you too will see and feel the rewards.”

*Bruce Arena
Head Coach, U.S. Men’s
National Soccer Team
2006, 2002 World Cup
Qualifier*

To submit your op-ed for publication, get the process started about 2 months before your tobacco-free sports event. Begin by calling your local newspaper to find out the name of the appropriate editor to contact. Establish a rapport with the identified editorial page member and brief this person about the tobacco-free sports initiative.

The paper may require that you send a written copy of the op-ed to the editorial page editor and may specify a word limit for your piece. Submit your op-ed by e-mail, fax, or mail, depending on the newspaper's preference. Send an accompanying letter that explains who you are and provides some background information about your initiative and the topic. It should briefly, but clearly, state the issue and why your thoughts on the subject are important. Give the editorial staff a week or so to review the piece, and then call to be sure the op-ed was received and to answer any questions.

Speaking Effectively With the Media About Tobacco-Free Sports

It is important to remember that most reporters are “generalists” who cover a wide range of topics and may not have an in-depth knowledge of tobacco-related issues. That is why you should view the relationships you cultivate with the media as partnerships—you provide useful information to them and their audience, and they provide access to the public you want to reach.

As part of your tobacco-free sports activities, you may generate opportunities to tell your story to local media representa-

tives as part of an in-person or telephone interview. Newspaper reporters normally conduct interviews to gather background information when writing their stories, and this provides an excellent opportunity for you to share your point of view.

Below are five tips on making the most of a media interview as well as some ways to communicate with reporters about your tobacco-free sports initiative.

1. **Keep it simple.** Identify, in advance, no more than three key points you want to convey in your interview and stick to them. Cluttering your interview with numerous messages can be confusing.
2. **Get right to the point.** Reporters generally do not have time (and they may lack the patience) to sit through lengthy speeches. State the most important points first, and then ask the reporter if you should elaborate on any of them.
3. **Remember your audience.** Your interviewer, like the general public, likely does not spend as much time thinking about tobacco use issues as you do. Avoid using terms unfamiliar to those outside the field, and be prepared to explain basic facts about tobacco use and prevention.
4. **Make yourself useful.** Offer to locate additional experts and arrange for the reporter to speak with them after your interview is completed. If you do not know an answer to a reporter's question, offer to research it and get back to the reporter right away with the answer.
5. **Practice.** If you rehearse ahead of time, you are more likely to state your key points clearly during your interview.

You also can anticipate media questions you might receive and prepare appropriate responses.

Sample Message Points

Because of their popularity, sports activities are a great way to reach young people with information on how to make important health decisions related to tobacco use. That's why we're hosting [event].

If current tobacco use trends continue, 6.4 million of today's young people will die of tobacco-related diseases. In [insert your city, county, or service area name], more than [insert estimated number of local statistical] youth currently use tobacco.

Keeping youth tobacco free as adolescents and teens can go a long way toward preventing tobacco-related deaths. More than 90 percent of all adult smokers begin while in their teens or earlier, and more than half become regular, daily smokers before they reach the age of 19.

We're holding our event on May 31 to participate in the annual global observance of World No Tobacco Day. The goal of World No Tobacco Day is to inform the public on the dangers of using tobacco and what people around the world can do to claim their right to healthy living and protect future generations.

Our message is that youth tobacco use can be prevented. This week we are focusing on [insert your local activities/events]. Over the next few months [insert your organization's name] will be [insert future activities] to help youth in [insert your city, county, or service area name] live tobacco free.

We invite communities and parents to help us in the fight against youth tobacco use. Encourage local businesses to strongly enforce laws that ban the sale of tobacco to youth. We urge parents to role model the health behaviors they want their children to adopt. If you smoke, try to quit, and tell your children that you don't want them using tobacco.

Media Advisory Template

[Date]

[Community/State] Celebrates World No Tobacco Day

[Your Organization] Helps Local Youth Stay Tobacco Free by Getting in the Game

WHO: [participants]

WHEN: [date and time]

WHERE: [address of location]

CONTACT: [name and phone number of primary contact for event (including after business hours contact information)]

An estimated [number] of [state or city]’s youth currently use tobacco. In an effort to reduce tobacco use among youth and in observance of World No Tobacco Day, [your organization] will host [an event] on [date].

Sports activities are a great way to reach our nation’s young people with information on how to make important health decisions related to tobacco use. More than 90 percent of all adult smokers begin while in their teens or earlier, and more than half become regular, daily smokers before they reach the age of 19, which suggests that if kept tobacco free, most youth will never start using tobacco.

[Insert brief paragraph to elaborate on your organization’s efforts for World No Tobacco Day. Note any visuals that will present a good “photo opportunity”.]

Press Release Template

For Immediate Release

[Date]

Contact: [Your Organization]

[Your Name]

[Your Phone Number]

[Community/State] Celebrates World No Tobacco Day

[Your Organization] Helps Local Youth Win the Game of Life by Staying Tobacco Free

An estimated [number] of [state or city]’s youth currently use tobacco. In an effort to reduce tobacco use among youth and in observance of World No Tobacco Day, [your organization] will host [an event].

More than 90 percent of all adult smokers begin smoking while still in their teens or earlier, and more than half become regular, daily smokers before they reach the age of 19. “Sports activities are a great way to educate youth about the dangers of tobacco use, provide them with the skills they need to refuse tobacco, and demonstrate the benefits of living tobacco free,” said [name], [title] of [your organization]. “It is critical to reach young people early and to deliver ongoing prevention messages via sports and other youth-oriented channels.”

[Insert brief paragraph to elaborate on your organization’s efforts for World No Tobacco Day. Include quote from a prominent local official and a youth participant.]

World No Tobacco Day, observed annually on May 31, informs the public on the dangers of using tobacco and what people around the world can do to claim their right to healthy living and protect future generations.

[Add a brief paragraph about your organization and its mission.]

Sample Op-Ed

With the Bases Loaded, “Do as I Say, Not as I Do” Not Enough To Keep Kids From Smoking

Most parents, if asked, would say that they hope to keep their children from using tobacco and would actively discourage them from doing so. I know I would. And my guess is that even smokers feel the same way. But do we, as individuals and communities, go far enough in protecting our kids from addictive and deadly tobacco products? We might tell them not to smoke or use other forms of tobacco. Then we send them into situations, including the great American pastime of baseball and other sports, where they are exposed to secondhand smoke, the wrong role models, and big-budget tobacco marketing.

As the May 31 observance of World No Tobacco Day approaches, let us turn our attention to creating an environment where kids can learn the dangers of tobacco and gain the skills they will need to hang tough against marketing and peer pressure. Sports provide the perfect entrée. Despite the tobacco industry’s association with major sporting events and the use of tobacco products by some pro athletes, tobacco use simply is not consistent with sports performance. Not that all of our children are, or should be, elite athletes. But at whatever level they hope to compete, using tobacco will not help them achieve their goals.

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 when it comes to behaviors like smoking. How can we, as a community, work to ensure that

youth are surrounded by positive, healthy role models? We can start by being positive role models ourselves.

One way is to demand that the [city] Department of Recreation and Parks adopt a zero-tolerance policy for tobacco use at recreational facilities and playgrounds. This means posting signs and enforcing a smoking and spit tobacco ban for players, coaches, and spectators. We should ban tobacco company paraphernalia worn by players, coaches, and spectators. And coaches and administrators should incorporate pro-health and anti-tobacco messages into communications with youth players.

We can talk all we want, and coaches can (and should) educate their players about the dangers of tobacco. But we all know that kids have a hypocrisy detector. If after all this talking they play their games in a fog of cigarette smoke from the sidelines, this is a mixed message. If they look up to the stands and see you proudly sporting a tobacco-company logo on your hat or T-shirt, again, this is a mixed message.

By prohibiting tobacco use at municipal recreation facilities and playgrounds, we also would be protecting all of our citizens from the dangers of secondhand smoke.

Consider this staggering fact: If current youth tobacco use trends continue, 6.4 million of today’s young people will die of tobacco-related diseases. And the time to prevent it is now. More than 90 percent of all adult smokers begin smoking while still in their teens or earlier, and more than half become regular, daily smokers before they reach the age of 19, suggesting that if kept tobacco-free during this time, most kids will never start using tobacco.

Tobacco use can be prevented, but it will not happen without you. And it will not happen if our children are continually exposed to messages, overt and otherwise, that encourage them to smoke. Take the first step on World No Tobacco Day. Support a tobacco-free policy at [city]’s recreational facilities and playgrounds. Take time to discuss this important issue with Department of Recreation and Parks board members and city council members. Urge them to vote in favor of the future by protecting the health of young people living in our community.

[Insert writer’s name, telephone number and affiliation]

Place Radio Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

Public service announcements (PSAs) are unpaid advertisements that promote the programs of organizations serving the public interest. PSAs can be a powerful and economical way to reach audiences. For a message to qualify as a PSA, it must be:

- Non-commercial in nature.
- Brief and concise (generally 30 or 60 seconds).
- Delivered by, or on behalf of, a nonprofit organization, charity, or other important community group.

Radio is a valuable medium for promoting tobacco-free sports initiatives. Because radio stations are no longer required to use PSAs, competition is intense for the time they choose to donate. However, most station media managers want to respond to a community’s concerns and are especially interested in communicating timely and

relevant information on public health. This is where you can play a critical role—by meeting or talking to your local station media managers to explain the importance of promoting a tobacco-free lifestyle to their local audience and the importance of disseminating information on physical activity as an alternative to tobacco use.

Some radio stations may prefer to use live-read announcer scripts for brand identity purposes. In addition, when announcers and disc jockeys read a PSA, the audience identifies the familiar voice and recognizes that the information is a public service message meant to benefit their community and listeners.

Included in this section are two live-read scripts, at 60 and 30 seconds. To distribute these scripts, call local radio stations to find out the name and address of the public affairs director at each station. If there is no one with that exact title, ask for the name and title of the person in charge of PSAs. Explain to this person that you are working as part of an initiative to promote tobacco-free sports for youth and want to secure the support of radio stations in promoting sports and healthy activities to youth in your area as an alternative to using tobacco.

Once you have spoken with the public affairs director or other contact, you should either fax or mail copies of the PSA scripts for their consideration. When you retype the scripts to send them out, do not forget to list your contact name, organization, and phone number. Make sure to include a cover letter summarizing the main points you discussed, and convey your appreciation for the airtime these important messages will receive.

“Sports have been such an important part of my life. Growing up, I played all kinds of sports, both organized and pickup with friends. There are so many wonderful benefits. It was a way to express myself, a great way to stay in shape, meet new friends, challenge myself, and travel the world. I always did better in school when I played sports because I organized my time better. And I learned how to become fit and understand the importance of taking care of my body. That includes saying no to smoking and drugs, despite the pressures you may feel. Having others around you committed to the same goal can make that an easy choice. I hope that each of you finds a sport that you are passionate about and that makes you feel good about yourself.”

Lauren Gregg
Player and Coach, U.S.
Women’s National Team
Two-time World Champion;
Olympic Gold Medalist

World No Tobacco Day: Sample Tobacco-Free Sports Live-Read Radio PSAs

Public Service Announcements

: 60

Hey, parents! Get your kids in the game!

May 31st is “World No Tobacco Day.” It’s a great opportunity to talk with your kids, give a clear message about not using tobacco, and encourage healthy activities instead.

More than 90 percent of all adult smokers begin in their teens, or earlier, and more than half become regular, daily smokers before they reach 19. It’s no wonder, then, that roughly one-third of all youth smokers will eventually die prematurely from a disease caused by tobacco use.

Sports offer a great alternative. Kids will have a better chance of making the team—and staying on it—if they don’t use tobacco. And kids who get involved in sports now are more likely to stay tobacco free for life.

So get your kids in the game! This May 31st, celebrate “World No Tobacco Day”—take your kids for a swim, go for a run, or challenge them to a family soccer game in the park. Show them that tobacco free is the way to be.

This message is brought to you by [insert local organization].

: 30

Hey, parents! Get your kids in the game!

May 31st is “World No Tobacco Day.” It’s a great opportunity to talk with your kids, give a clear message about not smoking, and encourage something healthy instead.

Sports offer a great alternative. And, kids will have a better chance of making the team—and staying on it—if they don’t smoke. And kids who get involved in sports now are more likely to stay tobacco free for life.

So get them in the game!

This message is brought to you by [insert local organization].

Equip Partners To Spread the Word

Partnerships with sports celebrities, teams, organizations, sponsors, and others offer opportunities to reach target audiences in ways that will leave a lasting impression of the experience and your message. For this reason, it is important to have a well-planned strategy to be successful among the fierce competition for goodwill activities beyond the endorsements, advertisements, and promotions paid by advertisers.

Learn about other individuals and organizations that promote for-profit and not-for-profit activities. Learn who your competition is and find a niche that a relationship with your group can fill without

creating competition for existing responsibilities. Develop a clear understanding of how your partners will benefit from the relationship as well as how they can help your cause.

For example, if the local semi-pro team were to sponsor a tobacco-free sports night, could you generate increased ticket sales by promoting the event with the media and in schools and other venues where advertising would normally have to be paid for?

As you think about how your ideal partnership would work, be prepared to make adjustments to fit with the objectives of potential partners. For example, if a local team already sponsors youth practice sessions, you could work at the registration desk for participants and at the same time distribute materials or provide giveaways with your message on them. Keep in mind, there are many ways to work with individuals and organizations, including:

- Arrange celebrity appearances.
- Participate in scheduled events.
- Add messages to team sponsored activities.
- Tie-in with local observances.
- Plan special promotions.
- Use public service advertising space.
- Provide volunteers.
- Coordinate media events.
- Distribute promotional materials.

It is better to start small and establish a solid foundation for a long-term partnership than to expect more than what can reasonably be expected at the outset.

Additional Marketing Ideas

To build awareness and motivate people to take action, you want your target audience to see, hear, or read your message repeatedly in a variety of places over time. In addition to working with the media to promote your program or event, your communications plan should include a variety of outreach vehicles. For example:

- Print materials (fact sheet, brochure, or newsletter).
- Information posted on the Internet (a Web site of your own, information on the city or town site, an online “chat”).
- A PowerPoint presentation for use at group meetings.
- A speech by a local leader.
- Posters (placed in settings relevant to your target audience such as parks, schools, doctors’ offices, grocery stores, and libraries).
- A paid advertisement in a newspaper or magazine or on the radio.
- Banners at shopping malls or events.
- Collateral materials such as T-shirts, baseball caps, water bottles, refrigerator magnets, buttons, sticky notes, or key chains.
- A staffed table at a health fair or sporting event.

Please refer to the “Materials That Score” section on page 54 for sample materials.

Case Study

Maryland—Smoking Stops Here Introduces HERE Club Card

Program Overview and Goal

Launched by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Maryland—Smoking Stops Here program (www.smokingstopshere.com) the HERE Club Card is a unique partnership that brings together businesses and citizens who strive for a healthier, tobacco-free community by combining consumer discounts with promotions at participating businesses throughout the state.

The Game Plan—Objective

Develop a partnership that provides consumers with a way to support the state's economy, supports tobacco-free lifestyles, and provides businesses with a tool to increase revenue.

The Playbook—Maryland's Winning Tactics and Strategies

- Make it a win for businesses. Participating business partners agree to reward HERE Club Card members with special discounts for their personal support of tobacco-free lifestyles. In return, businesses have an opportunity to increase revenue, attract new customers, retain regular patrons, and decrease both smoking-related productivity losses and smoking-attributable medical expenditures.

- Make it a win for consumers. Marylanders choosing to join the HERE Club Card program will have the chance to save money by taking advantage of special HERE Club Card member discounts while making a personal commitment to a tobacco-free lifestyle. People become members by agreeing to pledge their support for the Maryland—Smoking Stops Here program goals, which include smoking cessation and the reduction of tobacco-related illnesses.
- Actively promote the program and tobacco-free messages. The HERE Club is actively promoted at the hundreds of community events in which the Maryland—Smoking Stops Here program regularly participates. The program serves as a new tool to deliver positive tobacco-free messages to Maryland's youth, young adults, and parents.

The Scoreboard—Results

Eighty-seven businesses representing 123 locations throughout the state of Maryland have joined the program as founding business partners. The partners include national chains, regional companies, and several independently-owned businesses representing a variety of industries.

Sample Print PSA

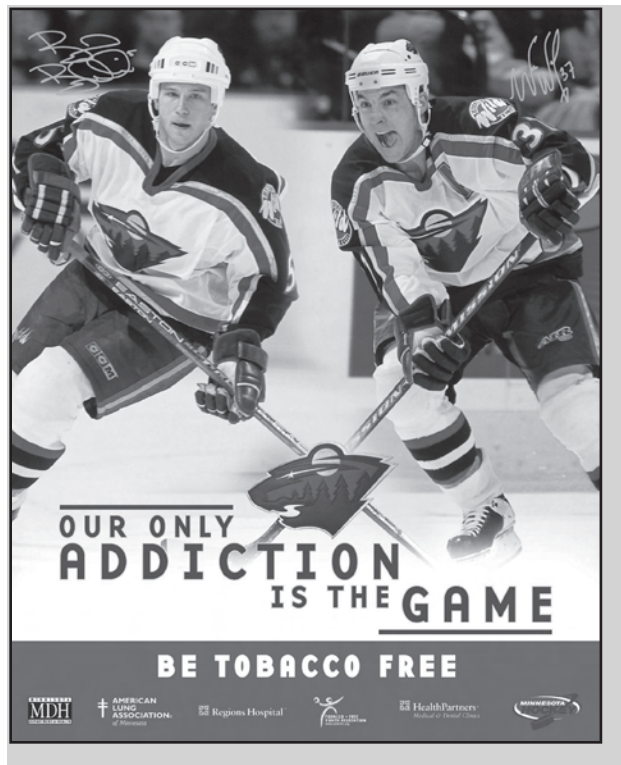
This print ad informs readers about tobacco-free park policies in Minnesota.



“As the Captain of the U.S. Women’s National Soccer Team, I wanted to do whatever I could to be the best and to help my team win. Along the way I realized that being successful took a lot more than playing well. It was being a role model for the next generation. Working hard was a big part of being fit, but my success came from making good decisions along the way, too—like not smoking. I know the habits I developed will help me lead a healthy and active life. I hope the young people today can help us get back on track as a nation and get fit, stay away from smoking, and make their dreams come true.”

Sample Poster

Members of the Minnesota Wild hockey team are featured in this Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation program poster.



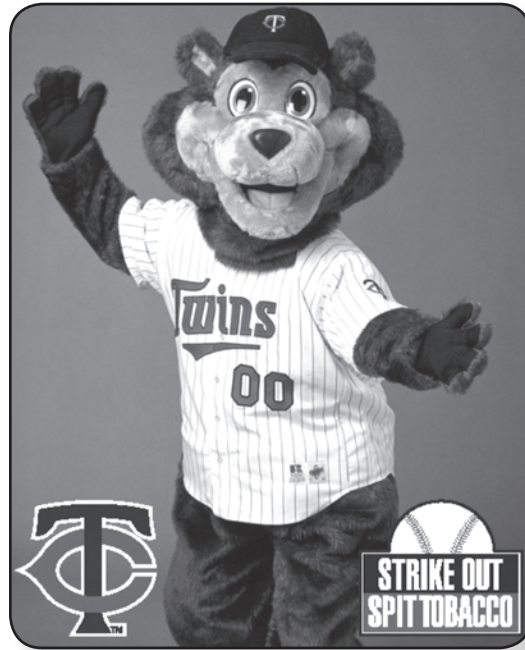
Julie Foudy

U.S. Women’s National Team
1987–2000

Two-time World Champion;
two-time Olympic Gold
Medalist

Sample Trading Card

Minnesota's Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation program featured the Minnesota Twins mascot in tobacco-free baseball trading cards.



T.C., Minnesota Twins Mascot

T.C. wants you to know:

- Most baseball players are spit tobacco free!
- Smokeless tobacco is addictive and dangerous.
- Tobacco doesn't make you a better athlete.
- You can get bad breath, brown teeth, and sores in your mouth from spit tobacco.
- Smokeless tobacco does not mean harmless tobacco.

