

“Growing up, my grandfather was one of my biggest fans, always on the sidelines cheering me on. Sadly, he lost the ability to be my personal cheerleader when he was diagnosed with emphysema, caused by many years of smoking. Eventually, emphysema took his life. Smoking doesn’t just affect the person who lights up, but entire families.”

*Leslie Osborne
U.S. Women’s National Team*

Materials That Score

You can use many free marketing and education materials in your tobacco-free sports campaign. Check out the helpful resources available from national health and sports organizations listed in the “Resources” section of this book starting on page 58. Included in this section are some materials and templates to get you started. These materials, as well as the Tobacco-Free Sports logo, tobacco-free sports posters, and a fact sheet on smoking rates and effects are available on the Web site at www.cdc.gov/tobacco/youth/index.htm.

- Sample speech.
- Tobacco-free policy template.
- Certificate of appreciation template.
- Certificate of participation template.

Sample Speech

The following text is a generic example of a short speech that you can use to kickoff a local campaign in support of World No Tobacco Day. To make it more relevant to your audience, try to insert local statistics about kids’ sports (e.g., the number of youth enrolled in community and school programs). Quotes from local persons also would add interest to your speech. Ask local athletes who have chosen not to smoke or prominent public officials who support your event for inspirational wording. The speech runs about 8 to 10 minutes in length with the addition of a few local notes.

World No Tobacco Day Kick-Off Event

Good (morning/afternoon/evening). Thank you for coming to the (community, county, city, state) kickoff for World No Tobacco Day. You now are part of a

global team that is playing for very high stakes—the long-term health of our children. World No Tobacco Day highlights the dangers of tobacco use and our right to a healthy life for us and future generations. Here in the United States, with the support of the CDC Office on Smoking and Health, we are targeting the tobacco-free message at youth. All across the nation, concerned coaches, parents, educators, and others who care about kids are encouraging our kids to choose sports over tobacco use.

Yogi Berra, the famed baseball player, put in his good word for youth sports. He said, “I think Little League is wonderful. It keeps the kids out of the house.” [PAUSE for laughter.] Sports do so much for kids. Getting kids involved in sports boosts their self-esteem and encourages fair play and self-discipline. Sports participation also increases their level of physical activity, which will help to prevent childhood obesity and its complications.

Participating in sports is an excellent alternative to tobacco use. Research conducted by the CDC’s Office on Smoking and Health confirms this. High school kids who participate in at least one sport are 40 percent less likely to be regular smokers. They are 50 percent less likely to be heavy smokers.

Why is this so? Because kids who play sports want to win...and because informed kids are more likely to make smart decisions. Each year, about 20 million American kids sign up for youth sports. [Insert available local statistics here.] Sports are our golden opportunity to let kids know: Smoking reduces athletic performance and

endurance, decreases lung capacity, and elevates the heart rate. To be a strong, winning performer in sports and in life, avoid tobacco.

Here in our [community, city, county, or state], [organization] has teamed up with [sport] to promote the message behind World No Tobacco Day. Our message is that we can prevent our kids from getting hooked on tobacco! This is what research conducted by the CDC's Office of Smoking and Health suggests: If we can keep kids tobacco-free until they graduate from high school, most will never start using tobacco.

[Time period, e.g., today, during the next week, month], we will be holding [insert your local activities/events] to encourage our kids to choose sports participation over smoking. [Describe how you will be promoting the tobacco-free message, such as passing out free anti-smoking posters to all who attend or having a celebrity make a guest appearance.] [If using a celebrity, insert a quote from the person about why they are participating in the event. Hint: many celebrities appreciate having a quote written for them to be used with their approval. Here's an example: "Sports activities are a great way to educate youth about the dangers of tobacco use, provide them with the skills needed to refuse tobacco, and demonstrate the benefits of living tobacco free," said (name), of (organization). "Many

health-related behaviors are established during childhood, so we need to help kids make positive choices before damaging behaviors start or become a habit."]

Bring your kids to the events. Encourage your [students/neighbors/coworkers] to attend. Let's get this community involved. We want everyone who cares about kids to cheer them on to a healthy, tobacco-free life.

Every day in the United States, more than 1,500 young people become daily smokers. Most of them mistakenly believe they could quit if they wanted to. In fact, addiction can occur after smoking as few as 100 cigarettes and it can take numerous tries to quit smoking successfully. Smokeless tobacco carries its own risks. Smokeless tobacco use by adolescents is associated with health problems that vary from gum disease to oral cancer. This is the hardest fact to accept: If the current trend of youth smoking continues, 6.4 million of our children eventually will die of tobacco-related diseases.

Preventing youth from smoking is our World Series, our World Cup, and our Super Bowl. Here in [community, county, city, state], we are committed to promoting sports as an alternative to youth tobacco use. World No Tobacco Day is part of our [community, county, city, state's] game plan. We all win when kids know the score about smoking...and pick sports and healthy choices as their winning team for life. Thank you.

"As a goalkeeper, one of my responsibilities is to be the vocal leader organizing the defense and reading the field. My voice is as important as my ability to save and block shots and clear the ball. Without a strong voice as the final line of defense, my team could falter. If I smoked cigarettes or am even around secondhand smoke, it effects my ability to speak and yell at the loudest level possible to get my team in shape."

*Hope Solo
U.S. Women's National
Soccer Team*

Tobacco-Free Policy Template

[County government seal]

[County government contact information, including contact name and department]

[Date]

RECREATION AND PARKS POLICY STATEMENT # _____

TO:
RECREATION AND PARKS STAFF

SUBJECT:
USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS AT RECREATION COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

1. Purpose

To establish guidelines with respect to the use of tobacco products during recreation council youth activities.

2. Background

The recreation councils sponsor a wide variety of activities for the county's youth and have direct access to these youth through many volunteers. Studies have shown that exposure to secondhand smoke can have an adverse effect on an individual's health. Furthermore, there is concern that exposure to adults in positions of authority (such as coaches, program leaders, umpires, etc.) who use tobacco products sets a bad example for the county's youth.

3. Action

To uniformly address the issue of tobacco use at recreation council-sponsored youth activities, the following procedures are established:

- a. The use of tobacco products immediately before, during, or immediately after recreation council-sponsored youth activities is prohibited within 50 yards of the playing field or program site.
- b. This policy will be in effect at all recreation council-sponsored youth programs regardless of location and includes (but is not limited to) school, county park, municipal park, and private locations.
- c. It is not in any way the intention of [agency/department] to deter any potential volunteer from offering their services due to this policy. Further, we remain hopeful that all will cooperate and abide by this policy without confrontation with recreation council program leaders. Questions or concerns regarding this policy should be directed to the [agency/department] at [telephone number/e-mail address]

4. Effective Date

This policy statement is effective immediately and will remain in effect until canceled or superseded.

[Signature block of county official]

This tobacco-free policy template was derived from the January 24, 2001, Carroll County, Maryland Department of Enterprise & Recreation Services Recreation and Parks Policy Statement #01-1.

Certificate of Appreciation Template

[Date]

[Name of organization] extends its sincere appreciation to [name of individual/organization/municipality] for [its/his/her/their] efforts to protect the health of the public by [specific activity, such as adopting a tobacco-free policy for its youth recreational facilities]

[Signature of relevant official(s)]

Tobacco-Free Player's Pledge Template

TOBACCO-FREE PLAYER'S PLEDGE

I, as a member of

[Team/league/activity]

Know that tobacco use harms my health, hinders my physical performance, and is dangerous to those around me. I pledge to be tobacco free because I care about my health and the health of those around me.

[Date]

[Player]

[Coach]