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Smoke-Free Air Policy as a Social Justice Issue


*Who is still affected and why?
Who is trying to break free and can't?*

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- The facts about smoke-free air
- Secondhand smoke (SHS) and its impact on priority populations
- Promoting smoke-free environments
- Reducing barriers to access for smoking cessation services – a key to clean air everywhere

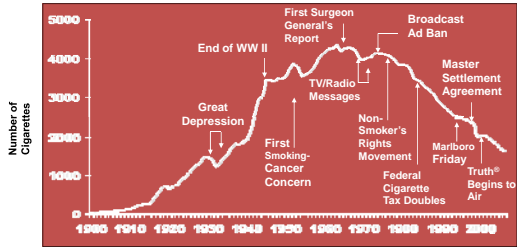
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Legacy *Mission and Programs*

- Not-for-profit public health foundation located in Washington, D.C.
- Born out of the landmark 1998 Master Settlement Agreement between the five major tobacco companies, 46 states and five U.S. territories
- Two-part mission:
 - 1. Build a world where young people reject tobacco (prevention)
 - 2. Anyone can quit (cessation)



Adult Per Capita Cigarette Consumption and Smoking-and-Health Events, 1900-2006





Tobacco Costs the Nation Both Lives and Money

- Tobacco is the No. 1 preventable cause of death, costing the nation more than 400,000 lives annually – 1,200 per day.
- Lung cancer is the nation's No. 1 cancer killer.
- America's Medicaid system could spend nearly \$10 billion less within five years if all Medicaid beneficiaries who smoke, quit.



Tobacco is a Social Justice Issue

- The tobacco industry has been successful in addicting those who have the least information about the health risks of smoking, the fewest resources, the fewest social supports and the least access to smoking cessation services.
- The link between smoking and low income and lower levels of education cannot be overemphasized.
- Tobacco is not an equal-opportunity killer.



Secondhand Smoke (SHS)

- About 9 percent of parents report that their children have been exposed to secondhand smoke in their home in the past seven days.
- About 5 percent of parents report that their children have been exposed to secondhand smoke in their car in the past seven days.
- In 2003, for 82 percent of the youth who lived with a smoker, that smoker was a parent. The same year, about 5.6 million youth lived in a household with at least one parent who smoked, and, of these youth, 1.3 million lived in a household with two smoking parents.



The Toll of Secondhand Smoke

- Among adults, SHS exposure causes approximately 50,000 deaths a year.
- SHS exposure is responsible for about 3,400 lung cancer deaths of U.S. nonsmokers annually.
- Approximately 46,000 deaths from cardiovascular disease are attributable to SHS exposure each year.



Minority Groups' Smoking Rates

- In 2008, 22 percent of white Americans smoked, compared with...
 - 21.3 percent of black Americans
 - 15.8 percent of Hispanic Americans
 - 32.4 percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives
 - 9.9 percent of Asian Americans



The Impact of Secondhand Smoke on Infants and Children

- SHS exposure:
 - can be particularly damaging for infants and children, whose respiratory rates are higher than those of adults.
 - contributes to lower respiratory illnesses, middle ear infections, cough and wheeze and persistent adverse effects on lung function across childhood.
 - presents an increased severity of symptoms in children with asthma.
 - increases the number of symptomatic days and the use of healthcare services, including hospitalizations.
- Maternal smoking during pregnancy and exposure to secondhand smoke in infancy doubles the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and contributes to low birth weight.



Secondhand Smoke

- Collaboration with the Advertising Council on the *Don't Pass Gas* public service campaign







Smoke-Free Air Policies

- In addition to protecting against SHS exposure, studies indicate that smoke-free homes and workplaces encourage smokers to quit and reduce the number of cigarettes consumed per day.
- Exposure to SHS tends to be greater for persons with lower incomes.



Smoke-Free Policies at Home

- Having rules about not smoking in the home can substantially reduce health risks to children who live with smokers.
- Smoke-free homes have proven to reduce SHS exposure in adolescents who live with a smoker by 92 percent.
- In 2001, while 60 percent of children reported that smoking is not allowed in their home, only 32 percent of children who lived with a smoker reported living in a smoke-free home. Smoke-free homes are least common where they are able to benefit most.



Smoke-Free Air Policies in the Workplace

- The Surgeon General has concluded that smoke-free workplace policies are the only effective means to eliminate secondhand smoke exposure in the workplace.
- Separating smokers from nonsmokers, cleaning the air and ventilating buildings will not eliminate exposure.
- In 2008, about 23 percent of adults in the United States were not covered by smoke-free workplace policies, down from 34 percent in 2000.



Smoke Free Versus Smoker-Free Workplaces

- Refusing employment to smokers is not the answer to the vital public health issue of smoking and tobacco-related disease. Helping smokers quit through work-based cessation programs and smoke-free workplaces is the right way to go.
- A growing number of employers have adopted policies against hiring smokers. Some have said that they will fire current employees who do not quit. They explain that their workforces should be models of healthy behavior or that this step is necessary to reign in healthcare costs. These employers are right to discourage smoking among their employees, but “smoker-free” employment policies are not the right answer.



For more information on the work we do,
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