

Maximum Return

Healthier Communities Benefit Business

Other sections of this packet have shown how businesses can improve the health of employees by taking action in the workplace to reduce tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke. Just as important, businesses can support efforts beyond their own walls to reduce tobacco use and improve health in the larger community, where employees and their families live, work and play — and where the next generation of employees is growing up. A healthy community means healthy employees and health care savings for your business.

HELPING BUILD A HEALTHIER COMMUNITY

Businesses can contribute to a healthier community — and a healthier workforce — by supporting proven measures to reduce tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke. Businesses like yours can get involved in two ways:

- Working with state and local tobacco control advocates, you can urge elected leaders to support proven solutions, such as well-funded tobacco prevention and cessation programs, smoke-free workplace laws, and higher tobacco taxes. If you want to help change policies on tobacco, send an e-mail to policy@tobaccofreekids.org, and we will put you in touch with people working to make your state and community healthier.
- Working with your state's tobacco prevention and cessation program, you can be directly involved in efforts to reduce tobacco use in your community. If you want to get involved in these efforts, send an e-mail to prevention@tobaccofreekids.org, and we will connect you with your community or state's point person.

Business leadership is critical to focusing attention on the serious problem of tobacco use and urging state and community leaders to take action.

THE STATE TRIFECTA: INTERVENTIONS THAT WORK

The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids and the Partnership for Prevention work at the national, state and local levels to support programs and policies that have been proven to improve the health of adults and youth alike. At the state and local level, three evidence-based interventions that directly reduce tobacco use and improve the health of your community are:

- 1) Tobacco prevention and cessation programs that include both statewide and local efforts
- 2) Smoke-free workplace laws that make all workplaces and public places smoke-free
- 3) Higher tobacco taxes

Businesses can play an important role in putting these life- and cost-saving interventions in place — and can participate in the programs themselves.

TOBACCO PREVENTION AND CESSATION PROGRAMS

Guided by experts at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), many states have implemented tobacco prevention and cessation programs that reduce tobacco use among both adults and kids, saving lives and health care costs.

Comprehensive programs include community-based education efforts; media campaigns that discourage kids from smoking, encourage and motivate tobacco users to quit and inform them about available treatment services, and telephone quitlines that provide free treatment to all tobacco users who want to quit.

The evidence is clear that these programs work, and recent reports from the CDC, the Institute of Medicine and the President's Cancer Panel have all called for full funding of these programs in every state.¹



In California, where these programs have been in place the longest, the adult smoking rate had declined to 13.8 percent in 2007 — compared to a national rate of 19.8 percent.² As a result, between 1988 and 2001, lung and bronchus cancer rates in California declined three times faster than in the rest of the U.S.³ A peer-reviewed scientific study published in August 2008 found that California's tobacco control program saved \$86 billion in health care costs in its first 15 years.⁴ Imagine the impact on health and health care costs if this were to happen in every community. If the national smoking rate were reduced to California's smoking rate, there would be 13 million fewer adult smokers in the U.S.

Despite this evidence, and the availability of more than \$25 billion annually in revenues from tobacco taxes and lawsuits settled with the tobacco companies, few states fund these programs at the level recommended by the CDC. The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids and our partners work in virtually every state to increase funding for these life-saving programs, but policymakers must hear from community leaders, too.

For more information on tobacco prevention and cessation programs, please see the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids' report at www.tobaccofreekids.org/reports/settlements.

COMPREHENSIVE SMOKE-FREE LAWS

Even if your business is smoke-free, your employees and their families may be exposed to secondhand smoke in other venues if your state or community is not smoke-free. Passing comprehensive smoke-free workplace laws protects everyone's health and right to breathe clean air. To date, 24 states, the District of Columbia and hundreds of communities have enacted smoke-free laws that include workplaces, restaurants and bars.

Smoke-free laws not only encourage people to quit or not start, but also create a reinforcing environment for former smokers. A 54-year-old man in Ohio who quit about a year before the statewide smoke-free law went into effect expressed his approval of the law — he even voted for it — by saying, "I don't like to be around it [smoking]. I'm afraid of the temptation."⁷

Smoke-free laws protect people from the more than 4,000 chemicals, including more than 60 carcinogens, in secondhand smoke. Secondhand smoke is a known cause of lung cancer, heart disease, chronic lung ailments such as bronchitis and asthma (particularly in children), and low birth weight.⁵ Each year, we spend nearly \$5 billion in the United States solely to cover the health care costs from exposure to secondhand smoke.⁶

Smoke-free laws dramatically improve air quality in workplaces and public places and almost immediately improve the health of workers. A number of recent studies have documented reductions in heart attacks following the implementation of smoke-free laws.

In addition to protecting everyone from secondhand smoke, smoke-free laws create an environment that encourages smokers to quit and discourages youth from starting. After Ohio's smoke-free law went into effect in May 2007, calls to the state telephone quitline jumped to 400 a day, compared to 100 calls per day

before the law. Smokers even praise the law, saying that it helps them stay smoke-free by reducing the temptation to smoke when they go out.⁸

The number of calls to Minnesota's quitline leapt 43 percent, claims for cessation treatment counseling increased 40 percent and prescriptions for cessation medication tripled after the state's smoke-free law went into effect in October 2007.⁹ Clearly, smoke-free laws provide smokers with the motivation to finally quit — and quit for good.



A 2008 study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found a 17 percent decrease in the number of hospital admissions for acute coronary syndrome within a year after Scotland implemented its smoke-free law in March 2006; 67 percent of this decrease was among nonsmokers.¹⁰

Despite claims to the contrary, smoke-free laws protect health without harming the hospitality industry. The U.S. Surgeon General's 2006 report, *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke*, concluded, "Evidence from peer-reviewed studies shows that smoke-free policies and regulations do not have an adverse economic impact on the hospitality industry."¹¹

The voice of businesses like yours can be critical to passing a smoke-free workplace law in your community or state. More information on smoke-free laws is available from the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids at www.tobaccofreekids.org/reports/shs/and from the Partnership for Prevention at www.prevent.org/actionguides/SmokeFreePolicies.pdf.

REDUCING TOBACCO USE THROUGH HIGHER TOBACCO TAXES

Research has demonstrated conclusively that raising tobacco taxes reduces tobacco use among adults and even more among youth, who are more price sensitive. Most smokers want to quit, and for many, an increase in price can be the motivation to finally do so.

In Wisconsin, which increased its cigarette tax by one dollar in January 2007, the state quitline logged a record number of calls following the increase. The state fielded 20,000 calls in the first two months of 2008, compared to about 9,000 calls in the full year before the tax increase.¹²

State after state, year after year, the proof is there — higher tobacco taxes reduce tobacco use and health costs and increase revenues for states to fund important programs and balance budgets.

For more information on how higher tobacco taxes reduce tobacco use, see the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids' report at www.tobaccofreekids.org/reports/prices.

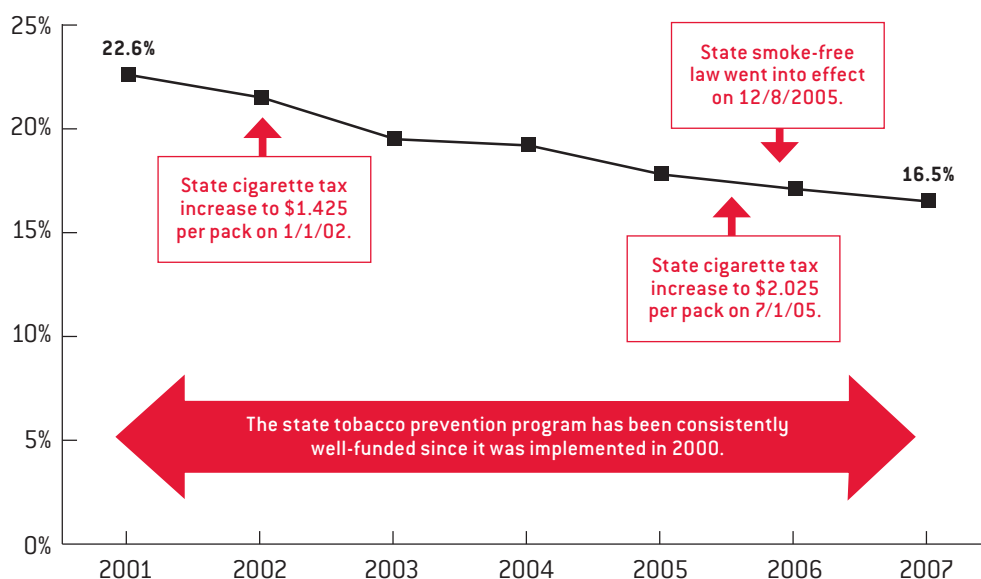
THE STATE TRIFECTA: IMPACT ON SMOKING

While each of these strategies is effective independently, their combined effect is especially dramatic.

Between 1997 and 2007, Maine was one of just a few states that funded a tobacco prevention and cessation program at the level recommended by the CDC. It also went smoke-free and raised its cigarette tax to one of the highest in the country. As a result, smoking among Maine high school students declined a dramatic 64 percent between 1997 and 2007 (from 39.2 percent to 14 percent).¹³ These declines translate to 18,000 fewer youth smokers and 5,700 youth saved from premature, smoking-caused deaths, saving Maine more than \$300 million in long-term health care costs.

Similarly, Washington state has had a well-funded tobacco prevention and cessation program, went smoke-free in December 2005 and has one of the highest cigarette taxes in the country at \$2.025 per pack. The results? Adult smoking has declined by 25 percent (from 22.4 percent in 1999 to 16.5 percent in 2007) — now one of the lowest smoking rates in the country.¹⁴ This remarkable decline translates to more than 275,000 fewer smokers, saving about \$2.6 billion in future health care costs. The chart below shows how tobacco control programs and policies have driven this decline.

ADULT SMOKING PREVALENCE IN WASHINGTON STATE



New York City and New York state both have taken comprehensive approaches to reducing tobacco use, including several tobacco tax increases, smoke-free workplace laws implemented in 2003 and cessation assistance for smokers. Between 2002 and 2007, adult smoking rates in New York City declined by an impressive 22.7 percent (from 21.6 percent to 16.9 percent), resulting in about 300,000 fewer adult smokers.¹⁵

GETTING YOUR BUSINESS INVOLVED IN IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF YOUR COMMUNITY

As a leader in your community, you and your business can improve the health of your workforce — and reduce health care costs — by getting involved in the fight to reduce tobacco use, the nation's leading killer. While the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, the Partnership for Prevention, and our partners work hard, the leadership and support of business is essential. By working with us to reduce tobacco use, your business can help build a healthier workforce, a healthier community and a healthier bottom line.



ENDNOTES

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- 6 Behan, DF et al., Economic Effects of Environmental Tobacco Smoke, Society of Actuaries, March 31, 2005, [http://www.soa.org/files/pdf/ETSReportFinalDraft\[Final%203\].pdf](http://www.soa.org/files/pdf/ETSReportFinalDraft[Final%203].pdf).
- 7 McKinnon, JM, "State's New Smoking Ban Fires Up Attempts to Quit Habit," The Toledo Blade, May 13, 2007.
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