

Highlights in Tobacco Control

Practical Ideas Online

January 2007

Volume 6, Issue 3

Cessation campaign adds new media elements



The new "Yes You Can" Web site includes quitting tips, information about the Quitline and a comments page for quitters to share success stories and encouragement.

DSHS has launched a new Web site at www.yesquit.com to support the "Yes You Can" cessation media campaign.

Many tobacco users choose to make a quit attempt at the beginning of the year, and this new resource can assist them in their efforts. The site promotes the American Cancer Society Quitline and includes helpful quitting tips, links to other resources and a "share your story" feature to develop a support system for those who are trying to quit. A video showing what happens when someone calls the Quitline will be available soon. The site is also available in Spanish.

Media increases Quitline calls

American Cancer Society Quitline reports show that media promotion of their service has a positive impact on call volume. When media is running, callers typically identify television and newspaper advertising as their resources for learning about the Quitline. A comparison of last year's media activities with call volume highlights the following points:

- **Targeted media buys are most effective.** Most targeted media buys are placed in Houston and Beaumont-Port Arthur. Calls from those areas increase during media promotions. Harris and Jefferson County accounted for 22.4 percent of call volume statewide last fiscal year.
- **Comprehensive media and activities support cessation.** When DSHS conducted a variety of media campaigns and activities in the comprehensive program area, call volume rose, even when some of the activities were youth-related.
- **Free nicotine replacement therapy (if available) is a big motivator.** When newspaper advertisements promoted the availability of free NRT in Beaumont-Port Arthur last July, calls tripled over the previous month.

"Yes You Can" media ran in Houston, Beaumont and Port Arthur during the fall and helped encourage an increased number of calls to the Quitline during that time (see related article this page). The "Mi Familia No Fuma" Spanish-language television ads were tagged with the Quitline phone number and also ran in Beaumont during October and November. The fall media effort coincided with the Great American Smokeout Nov. 16 to encourage those trying to quit for the event to get long-term help through the Quitline.

Additionally, television, radio, newspaper, billboard and Internet ads ran in Amarillo and Tyler during December to give potential quitters a resource as they planned their New Year's quit attempts. The same campaign will run again in these areas mid-February through mid-March. The TV and radio ads are available in English and Spanish.

Please contact Darah Waldrip at 512/206-4884 or at darah.waldrip@dshs.state.tx.us for more information about the "Yes You Can" media campaign.



Trade school students need cessation help

Ask Dr. Phil Huang

Dear Dr. Phil (Huang),

How is the recent cigarette tax increase likely to affect adult smoking rates?

Past research shows that for every 10% increase in the price of cigarettes, adult consumption falls by about 4%. This means an estimated 132,800 adults would quit smoking as a result of the tax increase.*

This could help Texas continue a downward trend in adult smoking rates. According to the 2005 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 20% of adults were current smokers, which is the lowest rate recorded since the survey began in 1987.

Higher cigarette taxes have an even greater impact on youth smoking rates. Studies show that for every 10% increase in the price of cigarettes, youth consumption decreases by 7%. Fewer young smokers should have a long-term effect on future adult smoking rates because almost 90% of adult smokers started before age 18.

**Based on U.S. Census 2005 adult population estimate of 16.6 million.*

Trade and technical school students report a higher rate of cigarette smoking than the general population. According to a study conducted by the University of Texas at Austin¹, more than 33 percent of trade and technical school students in Jefferson County reported current cigarette use.

The survey sample included 617 students who were surveyed at two technical schools in Jefferson County during fall 2004 and spring 2005. Over two-thirds of the smokers said they want to quit smoking before finishing school. Nearly three-fourths of the smokers surveyed said they have tried to quit, but most failed to use proven resources. The methods they were most likely to use included:

- Nothing: 61%
- Medication (patch, gum, or Zyban): 33%
- Herbal Products: 31%

The methods they said they were least likely to use included:

- Free phone counseling: 13%
- Community program/support group: 11%
- Online community or support group: 10%

Just half of the student smokers recalled seeing any kind of tobacco prevention messages at school. The most common messages seen were brochures, flyers, and posters. These students' smoking rates and desire to quit represent a huge opportunity for tobacco control professionals to educate them about effective cessation methods.

¹ Boeglin, Loukas and Sneden (2005). *Preliminary Report: Selected Findings Texas Trade and Technical School Tobacco Survey.*

Getting the word out about quitting

A simple way to promote the Quitline is to place flyers in strategic locations. Although Quitline callers most frequently say they heard about the service through TV and radio ads or from their doctors, some of clients usually say they learned about the Quitline from a flyer at work or school.

You can make copies of the flyer attached to this newsletter and use them to supplement your Quitline promotion efforts. Work with your community partners to post them in prominent locations at trade schools, pharmacies, clinics, worksites and any other place where people may be looking for help to quit smoking. Leave extra copies at each location along with a stack of Quitline cards.

ON THIS DATE:

/ /

I WILL QUIT SMOKING.

Did you know that if you set a date to quit smoking, then you are more likely to quit for good? It isn't easy to quit smoking or toss the dip, but you CAN be successful if you keep trying. Whether it's your first or your 37th attempt, the American Cancer Society Quitline can be a valuable resource for you. Call **1-877-YES QUIT** or visit us on the Web at **YesQuit.com** for more tips like this.

