

# Highlights in Tobacco Control: Practical Ideas Online

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## Putting GASO to Work

November 17 will mark the 29<sup>th</sup> American Cancer Society Great American Smokeout<sup>®</sup> (GASO). Each year, this event challenges Americans to quit smoking for one day and is often the catalyst for permanent success.



Friends, families and coworkers are typical support groups for smokers trying to make it through the day. This year, why not encourage entire workplaces to support the effort? Recruiting employers to promote GASO has several benefits:

- ◆ They can create large-scale awareness and support for employees who are trying to quit.
- ◆ They will have the opportunity to examine their facility's smoking policies.
- ◆ They can be educated about the advantages of offering cessation services as part of their benefits plan to promote a healthy workforce.

You'll find tips in this issue for promoting GASO events to employers in your area.

## How to get employers on board with GASO

Start talking to local employers about the Great American Smokeout<sup>®</sup> now. Here are a few ideas to help you pitch the idea and make their involvement easy:

- ◆ Create a package of stickers, flyers and other materials to help employers promote the event to their staff. Include a timeline, event suggestions, and a sample article for the employee newsletter. (Sample article and flyer included in this issue.)
- ◆ In the packet, provide a cover letter with your contact information and a copy of the Breathe Easy brochure included in this issue. In the letter, encourage employers to support employees who are quitting for GASO by making the entire facility smoke-free for the day if they currently allow smoking.
- ◆ Make appointments with human resources directors, employee wellness directors or managers and deliver the packet. Make a point to ask about their facility's smoking policies and whether they offer cessation benefits, and offer your help if they would like more information.
- ◆ Mail the packet to employers if you cannot make a personal appointment.
- ◆ Invite the news media to cover local businesses' efforts to support GASO and the health of their employees.



Tips and helpful materials can be found at the American Cancer Society's Web site at [http://www.cancer.org/docroot/COM/content/div\\_TX/COM\\_5\\_2x\\_1\\_Resources\\_for\\_Worksite-Community.asp](http://www.cancer.org/docroot/COM/content/div_TX/COM_5_2x_1_Resources_for_Worksite-Community.asp)  
**Click this link!**

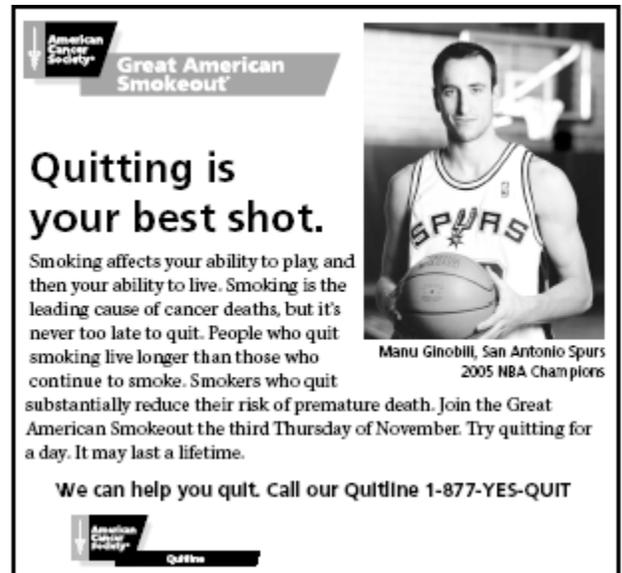
## Media Tips

It's not always easy to get media coverage for your event. In metropolitan markets, you have to compete with a vast variety of news events; in smaller markets, local media outlets have few reporters available to cover community events.

Here are some tools to make your GASO story or event interesting to the media:

1. Make sure your news release is timely, concise, and contains the following elements: a headline that captures attention; lead sentence that tells why the story is important; body with background, quotes and facts; and contact information. (The sample newsletter article in this issue could be modified for a news release.)
2. Think visuals. Provide a photo or describe a good photo opportunity.
3. Consider the audience. Ask yourself "what's the value to the reader?"
4. Find the right reporter or editor and develop a relationship. Be aware of their schedules and find out the best time and method to contact them (phone, e-mail or fax) so you don't call at deadline.
5. Be responsive when the reporter calls for more information, and make it easy for them to arrange coverage. Deliver what you promise to make the story worthwhile.

For more media ideas, contact Darah Waldrip at the Texas Department of State Health Services at 512/458-7111 ext. 3294.



The advertisement is a black and white graphic. At the top left is the American Cancer Society logo. To its right, the text reads "Great American Smokeout". On the right side is a photograph of Manu Ginobili in a San Antonio Spurs jersey, holding a basketball. Below the photo, his name and "2005 NBA Champions" are written. The main headline is "Quitting is your best shot." Below this is a paragraph of text: "Smoking affects your ability to play, and then your ability to live. Smoking is the leading cause of cancer deaths, but it's never too late to quit. People who quit smoking live longer than those who continue to smoke. Smokers who quit substantially reduce their risk of premature death. Join the Great American Smokeout the third Thursday of November. Try quitting for a day. It may last a lifetime." At the bottom, it says "We can help you quit. Call our Quitline 1-877-YES-QUIT" and includes another American Cancer Society logo.

## Upcoming Media Buys

DSHS is excited about an upcoming media buy for the "Yes You Can" cessation campaign. For the first time, radio and television spots will be placed in markets throughout the state rather than in a limited area. Tentative run dates are from the week of November 14 through the week of January 23 to coincide with the Great American Smokeout® and New Year's. (Please note that this buy will not include Jefferson County due to interrupted airtime during Hurricane Rita. A cessation buy is planned there for the spring.) Schedules for specific markets are not yet available, but information will be sent to staff and partners when it is finalized. Contact Darah Waldrip at 512/458-7111 ext. 3294 for more information.



**Dear Dr. Phil (Huang),**  
**How do we respond to smokers who say that “as long as they work with hazardous materials, giving up tobacco is useless”?**



For most workers who smoke, cigarette smoking is a greater cause of death and disability than any hazard in the workplace.<sup>1</sup> In addition to causing cancer and heart disease, tobacco use interacts with certain occupational hazards to increase the risk of cancers. Examples of occupational materials that when combined with smoking present serious health risks:

Aromatic amines	Asbestos	Cotton dust	Grain	Pesticides
Petrochemicals	Silica	Welding materials		

More people die from tobacco and secondhand smoke (SHS) than all other regulated occupational substances combined.<sup>2</sup> Giving up tobacco is particularly important for those who work around hazardous materials.

1. National Toxicology Program. 10th Report on Carcinogens. Research Triangle Park, NC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, National Toxicology Program, December 2002. Accessed: February 2004.
2. US DHHS, The health consequences of smoking: Cancer and chronic lung disease in the workplace. A Report of the US Surgeon General, Office of Smoking and Health,(DHHS Publication No. 85-50207).

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## Reader Response

Please take a few moments to answer the following survey. E-mail your response to Darah Waldrip at [darah.waldrip@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:darah.waldrip@dshs.state.tx.us) by November 11, 2005.

1. Which article in this issue of *Highlights in Tobacco Control* did you find most helpful?
2. Least helpful?
3. Which ideas from the newsletter do you plan to implement?
4. What questions, if any, do you have now that you have read the newsletter?
5. How could this issue have been improved?
6. What kind of information would you like to see in upcoming issues?

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## Want to know more about the clean indoor air ordinance in your area?

Check out the Texas Smoke-free Ordinance Database at <http://txshsord.coe.uh.edu>

On this site you can CREATE REPORTS on:

- Specific city ordinances
- City ordinances by levels of restrictiveness
- Bar and restaurant ordinances



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*Highlights in Tobacco Control* is available online at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/tobacco/htcnews.shtm>. If you receive a paper copy of this newsletter and prefer instead to receive electronic notification for each issue, please contact Darah Waldrip at [darah.waldrip@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:darah.waldrip@dshs.state.tx.us) with your e-mail address.

# Thinking about quitting smoking? We can help.



**Call Quitline toll free:  
1-877-YES-QUIT (937-7848)**  
Confidential. Personal. Anytime.



Quitline™



(Quitline is funded by TDSHS using tobacco settlement funds)

## **SAMPLE NEWSLETTER ARTICLE**

### **[COMPANY NAME] ENCOURAGES QUITTERS NOV. 17**

Go ahead...quit! Tobacco, that is.

[COMPANY NAME] is providing support for smokers trying to quit for the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout® November 17.

For 29 years, smokers across the nation have participated in the event by smoking less or quitting for the day on the third Thursday of November. The event challenges people to stop using tobacco and raises awareness of the many effective ways to quit for good.

[COMPANY NAME] is getting involved in the effort by making all areas smoke-free Nov. 17. All staff members are encouraged to help their co-workers who smoke stay tobacco-free for the entire day.

Here are some ways you can help:

- Adopt a smoker or a dipper for the day. Provide them with gum and sugar-free candy, take them to lunch, and go for a short walk with them during breaks.
- Give up chocolate, donuts, coffee, or another daily "fix" so you can identify with quitting tobacco to some degree.
- Send a supportive note or e-mail to a coworker who is trying to quit.
- Help to make the day as stress-free as possible for those who are trying to quit.

Research shows that smokers are most successful at quitting when they have access to support, such as nicotine replacement products, counseling, prescription medicine to lessen cravings, guide books, and the encouragement of friends and family members. Many people have been able to quit tobacco for good through the American Cancer Society's free telephone counseling Quitline at 1-877-YES-QUIT.

Regardless of how long a person has smoked, quitting has tremendous health benefits by substantially decreasing the risk of lung, laryngeal, esophageal, oral, pancreatic, bladder and cervical cancers. Quitting also lowers the risk for major diseases including coronary heart disease and cardiovascular disease.

"We are like an extended family at [COMPANY NAME], and we want to help employees live healthier, longer lives," said [COMPANY REPRESENTATIVE]. "We think supporting the Great American Smokeout is a good way to make a positive impact on people's lives by encouraging them to take that first step in giving up tobacco."

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## Facts About Smoking & Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS)

**Fact:** The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) officially classifies ETS as a Class A Carcinogen, one that causes cancer in humans.

**Fact:** ETS causes an estimated 53,000 deaths annually in the U.S., about two-thirds from heart disease and about 4,000 from lung cancer. Passive smoking can result in aggravated asthma conditions and impaired blood circulation.

**Fact:** Tobacco kills more than alcohol, AIDS, illicit drugs, auto accidents, suicide, homicides, and fire COMBINED!

**Fact:** Tobacco-caused diseases remain the chief preventable cause of death. It is directly responsible for an estimated 400,000 deaths each year, that is 46 persons every hour, or one out of every five deaths.

**Fact:** Smoking makes lung cancer the #1 cancer killer of American men and women.

**Fact:** Smoking is the cause of about 30% of all cancer deaths, and 87% of lung cancer cases overall.

**Fact:** Smoking increases the risk of miscarriage, lowers birth weight, raises a baby's chances of complications at delivery and the likelihood of health problems during infancy.

**Fact:** A 1990 Gallup Poll showed that almost two-thirds of smokers say they would like to quit.

**Fact:** Tobacco smoke contains more than 4,700 chemical compounds, including carbon monoxide, nicotine, sulfur dioxide, ammonia, vinyl chloride, hydrogen cyanide, formaldehyde, benzene, and arsenic. The Environmental Protection Agency treats many of these compounds as hazardous when they are emitted into outdoor air by toxic waste dumps and chemical plants.

American Cancer Society  
728 134th Street SW, Suite 101  
Everett, Washington 98204

Place  
Stamp  
Here

## Order Your Free Guide

Order free resources to help create a smoke-free environment, by calling an American Cancer Society office near you.

Call  
**1-800-ACS-2345**

### Our Mission

The American Cancer Society is the nationwide, community-based, voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by preventing cancer, saving lives and diminishing suffering from cancer, through research, education, advocacy, and service.

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U.S. businesses are becoming increasingly sensitive to health and safety practices at the workplace that protect employees. The company leadership seeks to provide the healthiest environment possible to enhance productivity, provide for the well-being of employees, and prevent lawsuits that may result from an unhealthy or unsafe workplace.

Given what we now know about the effects of smoking on nonsmokers, it is absolutely necessary for companies to move towards establishment of 100% smokefree working conditions.

It is an American Cancer Society goal to significantly increase the number of workplaces which provide worker benefits, programs, services, and materials which support prevention and cessation of tobacco use.

Provided in the brochure is information, which will provide you with important facts about smoking and will direct you to resources designed to help move your company toward a 100% smokefree, healthy work environment.



## Benefits of a Smokefree Workplace

### For the employees

- ❖ A smokefree environment helps create a safe, healthful workplace.
- ❖ A well planned and carefully implemented effort by the employer to address the effects of smoking on employees' health and the health of their families shows the company cares.
- ❖ Workers who are bothered by smoke will not be exposed to it at the work site.
- ❖ Smokers appreciate a clear company policy about smoking at work.
- ❖ Managers are relieved when a process for dealing with smoking in the workplace is clearly defined.

### For the employer

- ❖ A smokefree environment helps create a safe, healthful workplace.
- ❖ Direct health care costs to the company may be reduced.
- ❖ Lower absenteeism due to smoking related illnesses.
- ❖ Maintenance costs go down when smoke, matches, and cigarette butts are eliminated in facilities.
- ❖ Office equipment, carpets, and furniture last longer.
- ❖ It may be possible to negotiate lower health, life, and disability coverage as employee smoking is reduced.
- ❖ The risk of fires is lower.
- ❖ Managers are relieved when a process for dealing with smoking in the workplace is clearly defined.

Source: *Making Your Workplace Smokefree: A Decision Makers Guide.*

## Economic Impact of Smoking in the Workplace

- ❖ Estimates of the excess annual cost per smoking employee vary, but conservative estimates are \$1,300 per smoker per year.
- ❖ Indirect costs of smoking to society, such as lost productivity from increased absenteeism and productive years of lives lost, are enormous. For 1990 the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment estimated that indirect costs from smoking-attributable illness and death totalled 47.2 billion.
- ❖ Smokers are absent from work 50% more often than nonsmokers, have twice as many on-the-job accidents, and are 50% more likely to be hospitalized than workers who do not smoke.
- ❖ Recognizing that employees of smoke-free companies overall may be healthier year-round, many insurers are inclined to give those companies a break on premiums. Some fire and casualty companies, for example, will cut their premiums by 50%.
- ❖ Smoking-attributable direct health care costs in the U.S. equal: \$75.5 billion. That is:
  - \$1,623 per person in the state;
  - 8 percent of personal medical costs
- ❖ Direct health care costs linked to smoking are equal to \$3.45 per pack of cigarettes sold in the U.S. during fiscal year 1989.

## Breathe Easy... Get more information

We are interested in knowing more about going 100% smokefree\*. Please send me a copy of the "Making Your Workplace Smokefree: A Decision Makers Guide" (ACS Code TN 20 38).

- Our workplace is 100% smokefree\*.  
 Our workplace will go 100% smokefree\* on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Business Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Daytime Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax # (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

\*100% Smokefree Guidelines: the inside area of the entire workplace must be 100% smokefree all the time. Workplaces that have smoking areas are not considered to be 100% smokefree.

**Breathe Easy...  
This Establishment  
Is Smoke-Free.**



55% of actual size