

Youth Engagement

in Tobacco Prevention and Control



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Table of Contents

Guide to the Reader.....	1
Making the Case.....	2
Brief History.....	3
How to.....	4
What Is Youth Engagement in Tobacco Prevention and Control?	4
The Importance of Youth Engagement.....	5
How Should Programs Engage Youth?	7
What Should Youth Be Working On?	11
Creating Tobacco-Free Environments.....	11
Increasing the Price of Tobacco Products.....	12
Reducing Tobacco Industry Influence at the Point of Sale	14
Communicating the Dangers of Youth Tobacco Use	17
Building Community Awareness	22
Monitoring and Enforcing Tobacco Control Policies	24
Implementing Youth Engagement Efforts.....	26
Preparing to Engage Youth	26
Developing an Action Plan	27
Involving Youth in Reducing Disparities.....	29
Evaluating Youth Engagement	31
Sustaining Youth Engagement	32
Providing Support.....	35
Case Studies	36
Case for Investment.....	40
Resources	42
References.....	48

Purpose

The Center for Public Health Systems Science at Washington University in St. Louis is developing a set of user guides funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (contract 200-2015-87568) for the *Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs—2014 (Best Practices 2014)*, an evidence-based tool to help states plan and establish comprehensive tobacco control programs. In the user guides, tobacco refers to manufactured, commercial tobacco products.

The purpose of the user guides is to help tobacco control staff and partners implement evidence-based best practices by translating research into practical guidance. The guides focus on strategies (e.g., programs and interventions) that have shown strong or promising evidence of effectiveness. Recommendations in this guide are appropriate for programs interested in engaging youth. Implementation of these recommended practices is at the discretion of each state or community, according to its needs and goals.

Content

Best Practices 2014 recommends that states focus on four goals, including preventing initiation and promoting quitting among youth and young adults.¹ The 2012 Surgeon General's Report, *Preventing Tobacco Use among Youth and Young Adults*, defines youth as people ages 12–17.² The youth perspective is critical to tobacco prevention and control because most people start smoking cigarettes before age 18.³ The tobacco industry also continues to use advertising strategies that appeal to youth to recruit the next generation of smokers.² Youth involvement can lead to important environmental and social norm changes and reduce pro-tobacco influences. This guide gives program managers information on how to engage youth as a part of a comprehensive tobacco control program.

Links to More Information

Italicized, bolded *blue text* in the guide indicates a link to an external resource or a page within the guide itself with more information. Website addresses for blue resources are also included in the Resources section.

Organization

- ▶ **Making the Case:** a brief overview of why it is important for tobacco control programs to involve youth
- ▶ **Brief History:** how tobacco prevention and control efforts have shifted from youth education to youth engagement
- ▶ **How to:** strategies to involve youth in tobacco prevention and control efforts
- ▶ **Providing Support:** how programs can support efforts to engage youth
- ▶ **In Action:** real-world examples of how programs have worked with youth to advance tobacco control goals
- ▶ **Case for Investment:** information that can be used to inform the development of youth engagement efforts
- ▶ **Resources:** publications, toolkits, and websites to help in planning efforts

Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs—2014¹

Best Practices 2014 is an evidence-based guide to help states plan, establish, and evaluate comprehensive tobacco prevention and control programs. The report offers recommendations and evidence for five essential components of effective programs:

- State and community interventions
- Mass-reach health communication interventions
- Cessation interventions
- Surveillance and evaluation
- Infrastructure, administration, and management

Making the Case for Youth Engagement

After years of steady declines in youth tobacco use, the number of students using tobacco products has sharply increased, coinciding with the emergence of e-cigarettes.⁴ In 2018, e-cigarettes were the most commonly used tobacco product among middle and high school students.⁴ Despite claims that their tactics are aimed at adult smokers, tobacco companies continue to use themes and packaging that appeal to youth and promote their products in places visited by young people.² Because we cannot end the tobacco epidemic without preventing initiation among young people, it is critical that programs engage youth in tobacco control efforts.² Youth can be powerful allies to help communicate the impact of tobacco use on young people, implement effective tobacco control strategies, and shift social norms around tobacco use in their communities. Youth are essential partners for an effective, comprehensive tobacco control program because they:

▶ Project a powerful voice

Youth can use their credibility with peers and the public to educate the community about how to reduce pro-tobacco influences and shift social norms around tobacco use.⁵

▶ Expose tobacco industry tactics

Young people can be effective partners in exposing the tobacco industry's manipulative tactics to recruit youth as replacement smokers.⁶

▶ Offer energy and enthusiasm

Youth bring energy to activities and events that can increase awareness and advance tobacco control goals.⁷

▶ Provide generational insight

Youth can offer important insights about their peers. Involving youth helps programs design effective tobacco control strategies that respond to youth's actual experiences.⁸

▶ Bring new perspectives and innovative ideas

Young people naturally challenge the traditional attitudes that may limit how adults think and act. They can add innovation and creativity to any program, making it more attractive to other youth and community leaders.⁹ Their novel ideas for tobacco control strategies can help push efforts forward.⁹

▶ Mobilize their peers

Youth can play a vital role in reaching other youth.¹⁰ They can mobilize their peers for activities, strengthening and expanding tobacco control efforts.⁵

▶ Become the next generation of tobacco control leaders

Offering leadership opportunities encourages youth to stay involved in tobacco control over the long term.¹⁰ Some young people may continue this work by devoting their careers to building healthier communities.⁸

From Education to Engagement

Youth engagement in tobacco control efforts has evolved over the past few decades, both in the types of activities and in the quality of youth involvement (see **Figure 1** below). While the most effective method for involving youth has not always been clear, the need to involve youth in tobacco control programs is established.²

From the release of the 1964 Surgeon General’s Report, *Smoking and Health*, through the early 1980s, health education was the primary youth tobacco control intervention.^{11,12} This strategy was based on the idea that young people simply needed access to the right information so they could make the right decision and avoid using tobacco.¹¹

In the 1980s, programs recognized that youth were not influenced by statistics but by their social environment (e.g., peers, family, and media).¹² Delivering classroom-based life skills training and teaching youth to refuse offers of tobacco replaced pure education as the primary interventions.¹² However, while public health acknowledged the need to involve youth, the importance of integrating youth as partners was not yet realized.

The Florida *truth*[®] campaign radically changed this trend. Released in the late 1990s, this provocative advertising campaign exposed the tobacco industry’s deceptive marketing tactics and highlighted the

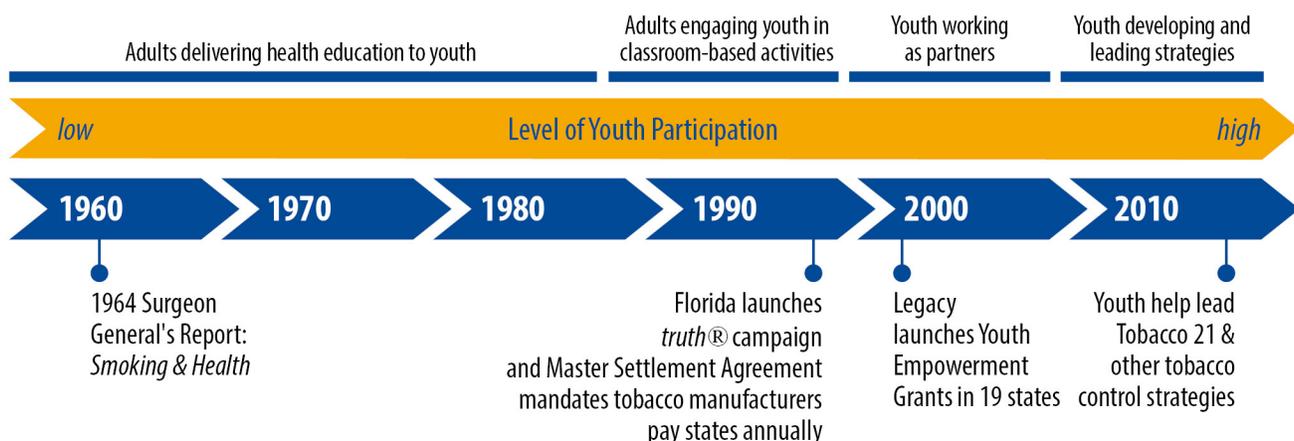
importance of involving youth in tobacco control efforts.¹³ For the first time, youth were seen as important partners in developing solutions to combat the tobacco industry.

Funds from the 1998 Master Settlement Agreement partly went to form the American Legacy Foundation (now the Truth Initiative), which launched the national *truth*[®] campaign using the same strategies as the Florida campaign.¹⁴ Legacy also funded local youth-led tobacco control efforts in 19 states through Youth Empowerment Grants.¹⁵ Activities funded by Legacy, along with many state programs, further highlighted the importance of partnering with youth and helped to expand youth engagement initiatives.¹⁵

Today, youth engagement is an important part of a coordinated tobacco control strategy.¹⁶ Many states and localities have involved youth in tobacco control efforts in some way.¹⁴ Young people work diligently on behalf of their communities to help prevent and reduce tobacco use. Youth have helped inform the public about the dangers of secondhand smoke, the influence of the tobacco industry in stores, and the importance of increasing the sales age to 21.¹⁷⁻¹⁹

Recent developments in youth engagement include the use of social media to recruit and organize around tobacco control strategies, making it easier to reach a broad audience, and an expanded focus on all tobacco products.²⁰ As youth use of other tobacco products has increased, youth engagement efforts have begun to address these products.

Figure 1. Youth Engagement Continuum and Timeline



What Is Youth Engagement in Tobacco Prevention and Control?

Youth engagement is the involvement of young people in decision making to create positive social change.²¹ Youth engagement efforts give young people the ability and authority to make decisions that improve the policy environment, change social norms, and reduce tobacco initiation and use in their communities.

Youth engagement is more than youth participation in program activities or events (see **Figure 3** on [page 9](#)).²² It is characterized by ongoing, frequent, and meaningful opportunities for youth to contribute to tobacco control efforts.²³ When youth are engaged, they work as full partners with adults, with equal responsibility to plan and implement strategies carried out by the program. The contributions of youth and adults are equally valued, and their interactions are based on mutual respect.²⁴ Young people add diverse perspectives that help achieve better results than if youth or adults work separately to advance tobacco control goals.²⁴

Youth are defined as people ages 12–17.² The age of youth involved with a program may vary based on the communities served by the program and the program’s goals. Older youth such as high school students can be especially helpful for more complex, long-

Characteristics of Youth Engagement²⁶

Youth are engaged when:

- They are respected and trusted
- They are involved as both teachers and students
- Their opinions and ideas are valued
- They help make decisions
- They see change as a result of their contributions

term projects.²⁵ Middle school youth may have more free time to take part in activities.²⁵

Programs work best when they take a comprehensive approach to tobacco prevention and control.²⁷ Successful programs involve youth in population-level strategies based on strong science, such as creating tobacco-free environments and communicating the dangers of tobacco use.²⁷



Minnesota youth hold march in St. Paul to thank legislators for passing a clean indoor air policy Source: Andy Berndt - Catalyst

The Importance of Youth Engagement

Young people are important to tobacco control efforts. The tobacco industry knows that exposure to tobacco advertising causes young people to start smoking, and most people start smoking cigarettes before the age of 18.^{2,3} The industry’s own internal documents make it clear that companies see youth as an important source of “replacement smokers.”² Despite some restrictions on marketing targeted to youth, tobacco companies continue to create advertising that appeals to youth, using themes such as independence and a sense of belonging.² Tobacco companies also design products and packaging to attract youth and promote their products in places frequently visited by young people.² When young people learn they are being manipulated by the tobacco industry, they want to take a stand and get involved in tobacco control.²⁸

Trends in Youth Tobacco Use

Despite recent declines in youth cigarette smoking, young people have increasingly turned to other tobacco products.²⁹ From 2011 to 2018, current e-cigarette use

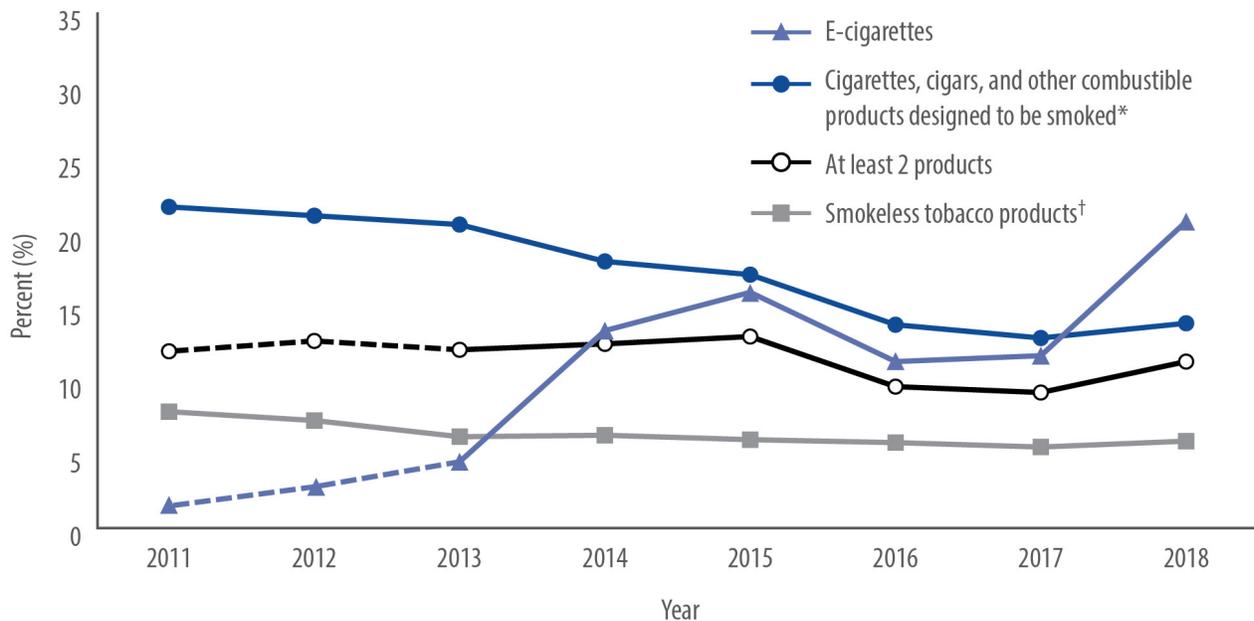
among U.S. high school students increased by more than 1000% while other tobacco use declined, as shown in **Figure 2** below.⁴ E-cigarettes are now the most commonly used tobacco product among both middle and high school students.²⁹ Involving young people in developing relevant, effective strategies is critical to counter these alarming trends.

Benefits of Involving Youth

Young people offer fresh perspectives.⁷ They understand the resources and needs of their communities and are not afraid to try new approaches.^{7,30} Their input can expand the reach of strategies and improve their acceptance by youth.^{30,31} Youth can also add energy to efforts with their enthusiasm and creativity.³⁰

Young people who are given opportunities to contribute to positive public health outcomes can also benefit their communities through continued civic engagement. They may help build tobacco-free communities as youth and later as adults.⁸

Figure 2. Youth Tobacco Use among High School Students from 2011 to 2018



Adapted from: Gentzke et al.⁴

*Cigarettes, cigars, pipes, bidis, kreteks, and/or dissolvable tobacco †Chewing tobacco, dip, snuff, snus, and/or dissolvable tobacco

Notes: Dotted lines show changes in how e-cigarettes are measured. Data collected before 2013 may not be comparable to new estimates.

Youth E-cigarette Use

Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) are the most commonly used tobacco product among youth.²⁹ Growth in e-cigarette use has risen alarmingly fast: from 2017 to 2018, use increased by 78% among high school students and 48% among middle school students.³² Youth use e-cigarettes for a variety of reasons, including flavors and social exposure.³³ However, any youth use of e-cigarettes is unsafe; e-cigarettes can contain harmful ingredients, including nicotine.³⁴ Nicotine exposure during adolescence can lead to addiction and can harm the developing brain.³⁴ Youth e-cigarette use is also strongly associated with the use of other tobacco products, including cigarettes.³⁴



SAFER ≠ SAFE

Screenshot from the truth® "Puppets" campaign Source: Truth Initiative

Since its introduction to the U.S. market in 2015, the e-cigarette brand JUUL has become increasingly popular.³⁵ Shaped like a USB flash drive, this product is easier to conceal and use discreetly in places like classrooms and bathrooms.³⁶ Despite being marketed as a faster way to deliver nicotine, many youth users (63%) are unaware that all JUUL products contain nicotine.³⁷

In 2016, the FDA began regulating e-cigarettes. State programs can also play an important role in preventing e-cigarette initiation and promoting cessation in youth by taking the following steps:

- Educating youth on nicotine in e-cigarettes and the dangers of using them
- Informing parents of the risks of youth e-cigarette use and how to talk with their children about e-cigarettes
- Reaching out to doctors on how and why to talk about e-cigarette use with young patients
- Teaching school staff how to recognize e-cigarette use and providing resources to share with students
- Involving youth in the creation of messages and educational materials to ensure they are relevant to young people
- Monitoring and enforcing existing population-level strategies, such as the inclusion of e-cigarettes in smoke-free indoor air laws, prohibitions on sale of flavored e-cigarettes, and increases in the minimum legal sales age for tobacco products to 21

Learn more about educating parents, teachers, and health care providers about pod-based e-cigarettes in the CDC tip sheet, [E-cigarettes Shaped like USB Flash Drives: Information for Parents, Educators, and Health Care Providers](#). For health care professionals, the Surgeon General resource, [Health Care Professionals: Educate Your Young Patients about the Risks of E-cigarettes](#), offers helpful guidance and education. Recommendations for parents are available in the Surgeon General tip sheet, [Talk with Your Teen about E-cigarettes](#). For information to share with youth about e-cigarettes, see the CDC presentation, [Know the Risks: A Youth Guide to E-cigarettes](#).

Involving youth can also:

- Increase adults' commitment to tobacco control^{9,21}
- Build public support for tobacco control efforts⁵
- Enhance the credibility of tobacco control programs^{5,7}
- Add unique skills, such as digital and social media expertise³⁰
- Make programs more appealing to potential funders^{7,38}

Youth, in turn, benefit from engaging in tobacco control. Youth engagement programs build youth self-confidence, knowledge, and skills such as leadership, problem solving, and public speaking.^{9,39} Youth also learn that their voices matter and that they can achieve their goals.⁹

Youth engagement connects youth to their communities and creates a sense of belonging.⁹ Some evidence has also shown that involvement in youth engagement programs can change how youth view tobacco and can reduce youth tobacco use.^{40,41}

How Youth Help Advance Tobacco Control Strategies

Young people are essential partners for implementing tobacco control strategies. They can add a vital perspective when learning about a community's tobacco use patterns, access to tobacco products, and support for tobacco control.⁸ They are also passionate, effective communicators who can speak with community members, local businesses, and decision makers about the importance of tobacco control efforts.²⁵ Youth also learn and work in places covered by tobacco control policies. They can help monitor new policies and ensure they are enforced. Programs that involve youth quickly find that their creativity and enthusiasm generate innovative approaches.⁹

Recent efforts to include youth have shown the important role they play in achieving program goals. For example, youth in Boston gathered letters of support from community organizations, spoke with store owners, and met with the city's Board of Health about removing



Youth leaders from the Tobacco Use Reduction Force (TURF) make their voices heard at San Mateo City Hall. Source: Youth Leadership Institute How Youth Help Advance Tobacco Control Strategies

tobacco products from pharmacies.¹⁸ These strategies would later be used by youth and partners in over 160 other Massachusetts communities.⁴² Youth have also impacted federal efforts. For example, the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) used survey data gathered by Virginia youth to conclude that the availability of dissolvable tobacco products (*i.e.*, products that melt in the mouth) could increase tobacco use.¹⁷

How Should Programs Engage Youth?

Young people may join tobacco control efforts for many of the same reasons adults do. Some have experienced the negative effects of secondhand smoke exposure, some have family members who have died from tobacco-related diseases, and others are themselves victims of diseases caused by tobacco use.⁴³ Whatever the reason for their passion, it is important that young people are not overlooked as valuable partners in tobacco control and other public health issues. Before engaging youth, it is important for program staff to first develop a recruitment strategy and clearly define youth and adult roles.

Finding, Recruiting, and Preparing Youth

Successful efforts to involve youth begin with careful consideration of how best to reach young people, how they should be involved, and what training will help

them make a real contribution.³¹ Involving youth who already work with the program in planning efforts can help staff select the best recruitment strategies.³⁰

Young people themselves are often the best recruiters; they can share their positive experiences with peers and encourage them to get involved.³⁰ School staff can also help programs reach out to students.¹⁰ In other instances, a trusted parent or teacher can be an effective recruiter, but this strategy should complement peer-to-peer recruiting and broader community outreach by staff.²⁵ To engage these partners in youth recruitment, programs can:²⁵

- Give youth members examples of how their peers can get involved
- Build relationships with many school staff, such as coaches and counselors
- Highlight the connection between tobacco control and class projects
- Offer resources to schools in return for their help recruiting youth
- Attend parent group meetings to share successes and the benefits of youth involvement
- Invite parents to attend youth events

Young people lead busy lives and are often already engaged with other causes important to them.²³

Programs that give youth something they value will be more likely to engage them in activities. Some youth may be motivated by small incentives, food, or the opportunity to spend time with friends.⁴⁴ Others may want the chance to add to their résumé or build experience for college applications.⁴⁵ Educating youth about the tobacco industry's tactics and the program's past successes may encourage youth to join efforts to make a difference in their communities.⁴⁶

Following up quickly with concrete ways to get involved can ensure youth act on their initial interest.²⁵ Reaching out through many channels, including email, text, letter, in person, and on social media, can also help engage potential new members.²⁵ Logistical challenges may keep even the most interested youth from joining tobacco control efforts. Offering transportation to and from meetings and holding meetings at times and places that are convenient to youth can reduce barriers to involvement.⁴⁷

Where to Find Youth

Successful recruitment strategies involve going where youth naturally gather.^{9,25} Groups working in tobacco control tend to recruit through the following avenues:

- Existing youth groups such as Future Farmers of America and the Future Business Leaders of America⁴⁸
- Schools (e.g., forming partnerships with school staff and recruiting students at lunch tables)²⁹
- Social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter²⁵
- Community events such as concerts, rallies, and festivals⁴⁹
- Community and faith-based organizations serving youth⁴⁹
- Youth hangouts such as parks and arcades⁵⁰
- Word of mouth, especially from peers⁵¹

Offering trainings can also encourage youth to get involved and helps prepare them to be effective leaders.³⁰ Programs can train youth on the following topics:⁴¹

- Health consequences of tobacco use
- Tobacco control strategies
- Public speaking skills
- Teamwork
- Action planning
- Media literacy

It can be challenging to continually offer relevant and up-to-date trainings to new youth members.⁵² **Taking Down Tobacco** is a free online youth training program developed by Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. It offers self-paced, interactive courses that can be taken online or in person.⁵³ During the training, youth learn about the toll of tobacco use and the tobacco industry's tactics.⁵³ Youth can also complete the advanced *Core 4* trainings to build additional skills in creating community change.^{52,53}

- **Messaging Matters**, developing effective messages that resonate with the community
- **Mastering the Media**, working with media outlets
- **Informing Decision Makers**, sharing personal stories with community leaders
- **Activities that Kick Butts**, planning effective events and activities

The program also offers a train-the-trainer course that teaches youth how to deliver the training to other youth in their community.

Defining Complementary Youth and Adult Roles

Clearly defining youth and adult roles is important to maintain a successful program where young people have a voice.^{7,39} Both youth and adults add unique perspectives and skill sets. The challenge is having enough adult input so that efforts are organized and intentional, yet enough youth contribution so that young people are engaged, challenged, and dedicated to the cause.

Youth Roles

As a group, young people bring energy, idealism, and new ideas to tobacco control. As individuals, they have varying interests and talents. While some young people may choose to be organizers, others may want to act as representatives at board meetings or share messages on social media. Youth can serve in the following roles:

- **Researchers**, collecting information about tobacco control issues and analyzing findings²³
- **Planners**, helping choose strategies²³
- **Organizers**, bringing together community members in support of tobacco control goals²³
- **Educators**, informing the public and decision makers about the importance of tobacco control¹⁴
- **Informants**, sharing feedback on program materials and strategies through focus groups, surveys, and interviews⁵⁴
- **Evaluators**, assessing progress toward goals²³
- **Specialists**, providing expertise in areas such as social media or technology²³

Figure 3. What is the Difference between Youth Participation and Youth Engagement?

PROGRAM FEATURE	YOUTH PARTICIPATION	YOUTH ENGAGEMENT
What is the role of youth?	Youth are invited take part in a specific activity or decision.	Youth decide how they want to be engaged.
Who makes decisions?	Program staff or other adult partners and community members make decisions.	Youth and adults make decisions.
How are activities selected?	Youth are informed about priorities and corresponding strategies already identified and may be asked their opinion.	Youth help set priorities and select strategies by researching issues and working with adults.
How is progress determined?	Adults measure progress and may or may not report it to youth, often with no follow-up about outcomes.	Youth measure and report progress and help decide if results are achieved.
How is information shared?	No information is shared about how youth input is used and whether youth participation made a difference.	Decision making is transparent and youth see their contributions reflected in results.

Source: Adapted from Center for the Study of Social Policy³⁰

The capacity of the program to engage youth and internal program support for involving youth determine which roles youth will fill.³¹ Programs can assess their readiness to involve youth by using the self-assessment tool included in the California Youth Advocacy Network's *Regional Youth Engagement Workshops Summary Report*. The assessment encourages users to think critically about their organization's readiness to work with youth, what barriers might exist, and potential partners for youth engagement efforts.

Adult Roles

Adults encourage youth engagement by creating a supportive environment in which young people can make meaningful contributions. By focusing on relationship building, an effective adult collaborator can help organize and mobilize a group of interested young people. Adults can support youth engagement by:

- Guiding youth in planning strategies⁵⁵
- Helping youth set priorities by offering choices and time for reflection⁵⁵
- Handling day-to-day logistical and administrative tasks, such as organizing transportation⁸
- Organizing training opportunities⁵⁶

The appropriate level of involvement for adult advisors may depend on the age of young people working with the program. Adults working with younger youth (ages 12–14) may take on more of the initial planning and then allow youth to choose which strategies to pursue.⁵⁷

Characteristics of Adult Advisors⁵⁸

The most effective adult collaborators:

- Relate well to youth
- Care about young people
- Are flexible and thrive in creative, sometimes chaotic environments
- Are comfortable talking about tough issues
- Are well informed about tobacco control issues



What Should Youth Be Working On?

Comprehensive approaches to change community environments and social norms about tobacco use work best to reduce youth tobacco use and prevent youth initiation.¹ Effective efforts are based on strong science and typically focus on:^{2,59}

- Raising awareness about the importance of tobacco-free environments
- Educating about the impact of tobacco product prices
- Reducing tobacco industry influence in retail stores
- Communicating the dangers of youth tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure
- Building community awareness of tobacco control efforts
- Monitoring and enforcing tobacco control policies

Creating Tobacco-Free Environments

Youth are especially vulnerable to secondhand smoke exposure.⁶⁰ The lungs are still growing during childhood and adolescence.⁶⁰ Exposure to secondhand smoke during this critical time is linked to ear infections, asthma, and poorer lung function.⁶⁰ Despite this risk, youth experience more secondhand smoke exposure than adults.⁶⁰

Tobacco-free environments protect youth who visit tobacco-free places as employees, customers, and students. Comprehensive smoke-free laws also prevent youth initiation, reduce smoking among youth and young adults, and make it easier for young tobacco users to quit smoking.^{2,61} By decreasing smoking among adult role models, these policies emphasize that tobacco use is not acceptable for youth or adults.³

The number of states and communities with smoke-free laws has increased rapidly in recent years.³ Comprehensive smoke-free laws are often implemented in places that affect young people, including schools and college campuses, parks, vehicles, and multi-unit

housing.³ Many families also choose to adopt tobacco-free rules in their homes.²

Many states and communities are addressing the recent increase in youth use of e-cigarettes by including these products in comprehensive smoke-free laws.⁶² The aerosol produced by e-cigarettes is not harmless.³⁴ It can contain harmful and potentially harmful chemicals, including nicotine.³⁴ Exposure to nicotine during adolescence can cause addiction and harm to youths' developing brains.³⁴ Because e-cigarettes often resemble cigarettes, including them in comprehensive smoke-free laws can also simplify policy enforcement and help communities maintain smoke-free norms.³⁴

Involving Youth in Tobacco-Free Strategies

Young people's energy and enthusiasm for tobacco-free strategies can help bring attention to the importance of protecting youth from exposure to secondhand smoke and e-cigarette aerosol. Their credibility with adults and other youth can also help engage the community in adopting comprehensive smoke-free laws. For instance, when youth conduct community assessments, they may be able to get responses from other youth who are reluctant to talk to adults about tobacco use.⁶³



Virginia youth posted informational signs to increase awareness of tobacco-free school policies Source: Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth

Lobbying Restrictions with Federal Funding

When tobacco control programs communicate with decision makers, it is critical that they understand special restrictions on programs that receive federal funding. While educating and raising public awareness about issues are important activities of a tobacco control program, lobbying efforts are not permitted.⁶⁴ Prohibited activities that are considered lobbying include directly communicating with decision makers about pending legislation or encouraging their constituents to ask them to support a specific bill.⁶⁴ It is important for programs to ensure that youth activities comply with all requirements. For more information about which activities are allowed, read the CDC resource, *Anti-lobbying Restrictions for CDC Grantees*.

- Are effective cessation resources available, and are these services used?⁶⁵

Raising Awareness about Tobacco-Free Strategies

Youth can call attention to tobacco control issues by raising awareness about tobacco's impact on health in their communities. They can educate the public on the burden of tobacco use and the impact of tobacco control strategies by writing letters to the editor and giving presentations at community meetings.⁶⁸

Other ways youth can increase awareness include:

- Organizing tobacco litter cleanups¹⁴
- Talking to community members about the importance of comprehensive smoke-free laws¹⁴
- Holding smoke-free pledge events where community members commit to make their homes and vehicles smoke-free⁶⁹
- Educating landlords and residents on the benefits of smoke-free housing⁷⁰
- Encouraging local businesses to go tobacco free¹⁴

After implementing tobacco-free strategies, it is critical that program staff and youth communicate the changes so that community members are aware of new policies.⁷¹ Youth can post signs in locations where tobacco use is prohibited, send letters or postcards to those affected, post about the changes on social media, and alert local news media.^{65,71} Since comprehensive smoke-free laws can make quitting tobacco easier, staff and youth can also educate the community on available cessation resources.⁷²

Assessing Tobacco-Free Environments

Youth interested in working on tobacco-free strategies can begin by assessing the community environment.¹⁴ Youth can interview community members, conduct surveys, and record observations.¹⁴ They can also gather information on the community's current policies, attitudes toward tobacco use, tobacco-related behaviors, and available cessation resources.^{14,65} Assessments can answer questions such as:

- Does the community have any comprehensive smoke-free laws, and are they enforced?⁶⁶
- Do existing policies prohibit all tobacco products, including e-cigarettes?¹⁴
- Can policies be strengthened or updated?⁶⁷
- What percentage of community members use tobacco products?⁶⁶
- Do community members support comprehensive smoke-free laws?⁶⁶

Increasing the Price of Tobacco Products

Increasing the price of tobacco products is one of the most effective ways to reduce tobacco use and prevent initiation.^{1,2,73} Increasing cigarette prices by 10% decreases adult consumption by 3%–5%.^{2,74} Youth consumption is even more responsive to price increases, declining by two to three times as much as adult consumption.² Minority youth may be even more sensitive to price increases.^{75,76}

To increase the price of tobacco products, youth can work to change store practices on accepting rebates, discounts, and coupons. Young people who are exposed to tobacco coupons are more likely to have tried cigarettes and are at greater risk of smoking cigarettes in the future.^{77,78} Learn more about pricing strategies in the resource, *Pricing Policy: A Tobacco Control Guide*.

Involving Youth in Pricing Strategies

Many young people see tobacco prices and discounts advertised on their way to school or in stores where they shop.² They can help tobacco control efforts by documenting what they see and sharing their experience with community members. When young

A CLOSER LOOK: Virginia Youth Help Schools Go Tobacco Free

Since 2004 the youth engagement program of the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth, known as *Y Street*, has trained more than 8,500 youth to be agents of change in their communities. Each year, a dedicated group of these youth, called Y-Sters, become members of the Y Street Leadership Team. Kit Harmon, a senior at Fauquier High School in Warrenton, Virginia, is one of the leadership team members who works toward Y Street's goal of creating a healthier Virginia.

Kit said, "The Y-Sters at my school work hard to make sure students have the best opportunity to be healthy." Through her work with an earlier Y Street campaign, 24/7, Kit became determined to help her public school become a tobacco- and e-cigarette-free campus.

First, Kit met with school officials, including principals and the assistant superintendent. After securing their support, she met with her county school board to describe the resources that the 24/7 campaign provides, including signs and a free toolkit to help schools implement, communicate, and enforce comprehensive tobacco-free campuses. In 2018, the school board adopted a comprehensive tobacco- and e-cigarette-free policy. Between 2015 and 2018, Y Street youth working on the 24/7 campaign statewide completed 110 principal meetings and helped 16 public school divisions become tobacco-free, covering 98,197 students.

Youth can take the following steps to help their schools become tobacco- and e-cigarette free:

- Meet with school-level officials such as principals and superintendents for initial buy-in.
- Attend school board meetings and communicate how the youth program can support tobacco-free schools in the community.
- Provide resources to help schools implement and enforce tobacco-free campuses.



Y Street Leadership Team members and Fauquier County school board officials pose after becoming creating a tobacco- and e-cigarette-free environment. Source: Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth

people speak out about how pricing affects youth tobacco use, they help make the case for strategies to increase the price of tobacco products.

Documenting Tobacco Prices and Discounts

Youth interested in gathering pricing information can start by planning a route that is safe, walkable, and located near school crosswalks or bus routes.⁷⁹ Working in small groups of four to six people, they can take photographs or videos of tobacco prices and promotions along the route. They can also look for signs with tobacco product branding or ads on functional items like gas pumps.⁷⁹

Strategies like Photovoice can help young people capture what they see. Photovoice combines photography and personal narratives to better understand and educate others about social issues. Program staff can support Photovoice activities by:⁸⁰

- Providing cameras for youth
- Training youth in basic photography techniques
- Educating youth about safety while in the community taking pictures
- Leading discussions about what issues the photos depict and what can be done about them
- Helping youth plan to share their photos by hosting exhibits, displaying them at public events, sending postcards or videos to community decision makers, or sharing photos on social media

Learn more about using Photovoice in the Community Tool Box resource, [Implementing Photovoice in Your Community](#).

Raising Awareness of Industry Pricing Strategies

Youth can raise awareness about tobacco pricing issues by educating the community on how the tobacco industry's pricing strategies attract youth. For example, in 2011, Tobacco-Free Providence launched the *Sweet Deceit* education campaign in Providence, Rhode Island. Youth and adults surveyed over 1,200 residents about their knowledge of tobacco pricing strategies.⁸¹ The surveys also created opportunities to talk about the problem of price discounts on tobacco products. Survey results helped show decision makers that most people

supported raising prices, and Providence became the first city in the U.S. to ban tobacco product price discounts and coupon redemption.⁸¹

To raise awareness about pricing issues, youth can:

- Survey community members about their knowledge of tobacco product pricing issues and support for raising prices⁸⁰
- Educate community members and decision makers about the industry's pricing strategies, such as coupons and multipack discounts⁸¹
- Share information about the dangers of cheap tobacco products and youth tobacco use⁸¹
- Inform decision makers about the importance of precise definitions to avoid loopholes that allow some products to be taxed at lower rates⁸²

Reducing Tobacco Industry Influence at the Point of Sale

Since the 1998 Master Settlement Agreement, tobacco product advertising targeting youth has been increasingly restricted. Today, youth primarily see tobacco ads and promotions in retail stores. The tobacco industry spends nearly \$1 million per hour to advertise and promote tobacco products at the point of sale.⁸³ These ads often feature colorful packaging that resembles candy or are placed at youth eye level



near the soda and candy aisles.² These industry tactics work; retail advertising and promotion cause youth to start using tobacco products and progress to regular use.² Strategies to reduce youth exposure to tobacco advertising are important to prevent initiation and prevent relapse among youth who quit tobacco.

As young people's tobacco use patterns change, retail strategies become increasingly important. In 2014, e-cigarettes became the most popular tobacco product among middle and high school students.⁸⁴ Students report seeing e-cigarette advertising most often in retail stores.⁸⁵ Like other tobacco products, e-cigarettes are often placed near products that appeal to youth, such as candy and slushie machines.⁸⁶ Youth e-cigarette

use is also strongly associated with use of other tobacco products, including cigarettes.³⁴ Easy access to e-cigarettes threatens to make tobacco use acceptable once again.

Programs can pursue a variety of retail strategies, including:⁸⁷

- Reducing or restricting the number, location, density, and types of tobacco retailers (e.g., limiting tobacco retailers near schools or banning tobacco product sales in pharmacies)
- Restricting point-of-sale advertising (e.g., banning advertising near schools or places youth visit)

A CLOSER LOOK: Youth Work to Raise the Age to Buy Tobacco in Cities Nationwide

Increasing the legal age to buy tobacco products to 21 is becoming a popular strategy to reduce youth tobacco use. As of September 2019, the Tobacco 21 movement included over 500 localities and 18 states: Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia and Washington.⁸⁸ The goal of Tobacco 21 policies is to reduce social sources of tobacco by making it more difficult for younger teens to get tobacco products from young adult friends and relatives, the main way that underage users get tobacco products.⁸⁹ Research suggests that raising the age to buy tobacco products to 21 will delay or prevent youth initiation, with the greatest impact among teens ages 15–17.⁸⁹ The results of Tobacco 21 policies have been dramatic: in Needham, Massachusetts, the first town to adopt Tobacco 21, youth smoking prevalence decreased by nearly 50 percent in just five years.⁹⁰



*Pennsylvania youth show their support for raising the age to buy tobacco to 21
Source: Pennsylvania TRU*

Around the country, youth have been important partners in adopting Tobacco 21. In Hawaii, youth made Tobacco 21 the focus of their 2015 Kick Butts Day rally and shared their message on social media with the hashtag #RaisetheAgeHI.¹⁹ On June 19, 2015, Hawaii became the first state to adopt Tobacco 21.

- Restricting product placement (e.g., banning self-service displays)
- Increasing the minimum sales age for tobacco products to 21
- Banning flavored tobacco product sales
- Implementing similar strategies for e-cigarettes (e.g., setting a minimum sales age for e-cigarettes or limiting e-cigarette sales near places youth visit)

Learn more about potential strategies in the resource, [Point-of-Sale Strategies: A Tobacco Control Guide](#).

Involving Youth in Point-of-Sale Strategies

Involving youth in retail efforts helps reveal advertising tactics aimed at young people and expose differences in tobacco advertising across communities. Youth involvement also helps programs develop relevant and effective policies. Youth can:

- Conduct store assessments and walking tobacco audits
- Map tobacco retailers
- Survey the community about tobacco control issues
- Share the results of their activities with community members

Conducting Store Assessments

Store assessments, sometimes called store audits or store observations, assess interior and exterior tobacco product advertising and availability, price, placement, and promotions.⁹¹ This information helps programs and partners stay up to date on the constantly changing retail environment, select strategies, and determine if strategies are successful. Store assessments are also a way to involve youth and keep them engaged over time.⁹²

Program staff can encourage youth involvement in store assessments by educating them about the importance of surveying tobacco retailers. Sharing examples of successful youth involvement can help generate interest.⁹² For example, nearly 300 youth helped conduct more than 7,000 store assessments across California that led to store makeovers and the adoption of local policies.⁹³

Staff can also give youth store lists and assessment tools like the Standardized Tobacco Assessment for Retail Settings (STARS).⁹⁴ The 20-item tool takes about 10 minutes to complete online or on paper. STARS does not require special training and has been used by youth and adults. After completing the assessment, programs can use the [STARS Policy Crosswalk](#) to select strategies.

By 2015, 31 states had used or were planning to use STARS.⁹⁵ Programs can also combine STARS with other assessments to gather more information. For example, the Oregon tobacco control program added questions about food, alcohol, lottery, and energy drinks sold in stores, and Vermont added questions about access to fresh fruits and vegetables.⁹⁶ Researchers have also adapted the tool to assess other aspects of the tobacco retail environment. The vSTARS tool was released in 2016 to assess vape shops (i.e., retailers that sell e-cigarettes).⁹⁷ More information and training materials for all of the STARS tools are available on the [Counter Tobacco](#) website.

Safety is a top priority when involving youth in store assessments. Program staff can ensure a safe and fun experience by obtaining parental consent, coordinating transportation, sending youth in pairs, and providing adult supervision.⁹⁸ Youth may also need training on how to collect data and talk with store employees. After data have been collected, staff can bring youth together to discuss the results and decide what action they want to take next. Learn more about how to conduct store assessments in the [Preventing Chronic Disease](#) article, [How to Conduct Store Observations of Tobacco Marketing and Products](#).

Mapping Tobacco Retailers

Maps can tell powerful stories about tobacco advertising in communities. Young people can help create maps that show how many tobacco retailers are located in a specific area or how close they are to schools, parks, or other places that youth visit. Maps can also demonstrate the potential impact of retail strategies. For example, mapping places that sell tobacco products can show how access to tobacco could be reduced by prohibiting sales in certain retailers, such as pharmacies.⁹⁹

To create a map, youth can start by choosing a geographic area to focus on, such as their neighborhood or the streets around their school. State tobacco control

programs can help youth get the latest information on which stores sell tobacco products, often available in state or local licensing lists. Youth can then use Geographic Information Systems software or free programs like Google’s *My Maps* to create maps and add other information like the locations of schools or parks.

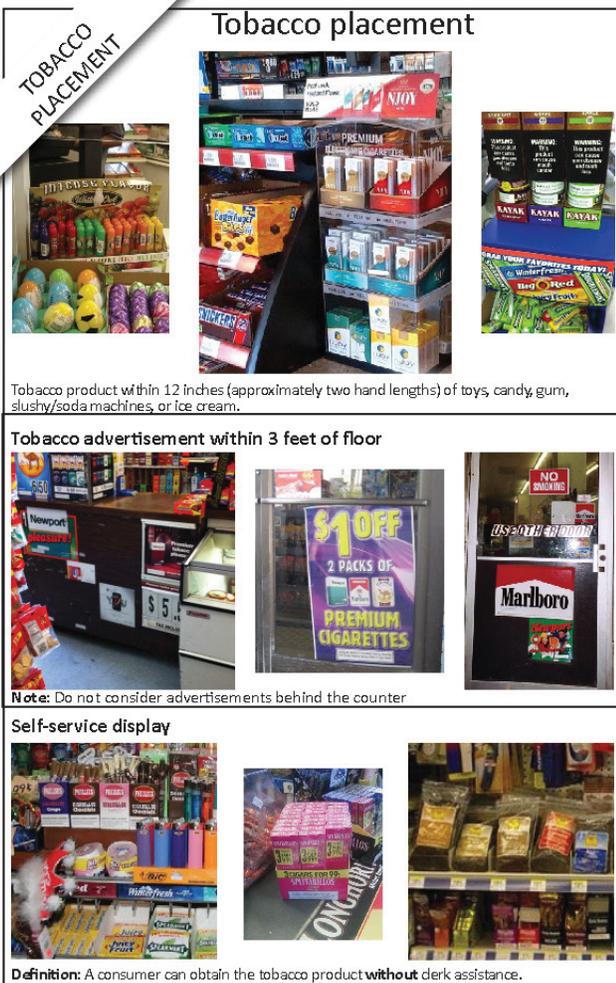
Sharing Results

When young people present information about tobacco advertising in their communities, adults listen. Youth can present store assessment reports, photos and videos of tobacco advertising, retailer maps, and community survey results. Inviting community leaders to take part in activities can leave a lasting impression. For instance,

youth in New York City asked decision makers to join them on walking tobacco audits to see tobacco advertising that youth are exposed to every day. The “Take a Walk in Our Shoes” tours got people talking about how easily New York City’s youth can access tobacco products.¹⁰⁰

Youth can also submit fact-based comments that share new scientific findings or experiences from the field when new tobacco regulations are proposed.¹⁰¹ In 2012, youth from Virginia’s *Y Street* presented information about the appeal of dissolvable tobacco products to the FDA’s Tobacco Products Scientific Advisory Committee. Dissolvable products, such as lozenges, strips, or sticks, melt in the mouth and do not require spitting tobacco waste.¹⁰² Y Street conducted over 8,000 surveys, finding that teens thought the products were actually candy, mints, or gum and would be interested in trying them based on their packaging.¹⁰³ FDA acknowledged that the Y Street testimony helped them conclude that dissolvable products may increase the number of tobacco product users.¹⁷

Youth can also extend the reach of retail activities by taking photos and videos during their events and sharing on social media. For instance, New York City youth shared videos of the walking tours on Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter and with community leaders.¹⁰⁰ Inviting press to cover events can also help generate news coverage of youth efforts.



Examples of tobacco placement shown in the *STARS Pocket Guide* used to complete store assessments

Communicating the Dangers of Youth Tobacco Use

Although federal regulations and court rulings have placed limits on tobacco product advertising, youth are still exposed to tobacco marketing in their communities, online, and in movies and video games.¹ The tobacco industry has also turned to other marketing strategies, such as in-store ads, direct mail, and digital marketing, to work around advertising restrictions.² Youth exposed to tobacco advertising and promotion are more likely to try and continue to use tobacco.² Communications strategies are critical to counter the influence of pro-tobacco media.¹⁰⁴

Communications campaigns share messages about the dangers of tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure. When part of a comprehensive program, campaigns prevent youth initiation, reduce youth tobacco use, and

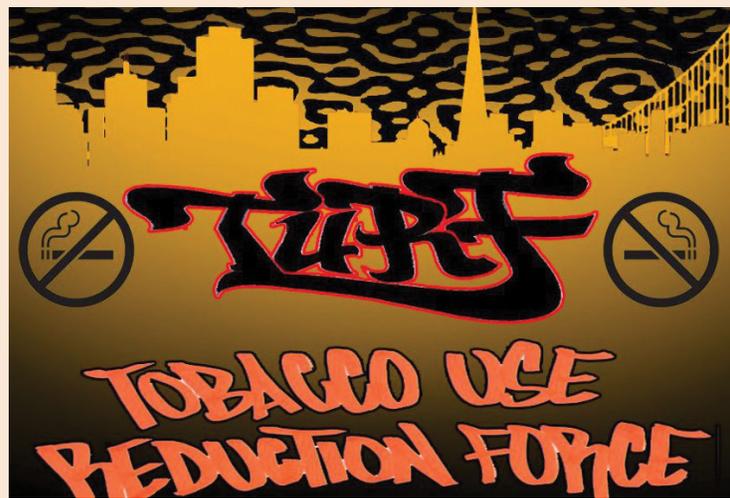
increase cessation.^{1,2} They can also shift social norms around tobacco use and increase acceptance of tobacco control strategies.³ Learn more about communications strategies in the CDC *Best Practices User Guide: Health Communications in Tobacco Prevention and Control*.

Involving Youth in Communications Campaigns

Although communications campaigns often involve specialized staff such as public relations specialists and media buyers, youth are also important partners. They can offer unique insight on the messages and

A CLOSER LOOK: San Francisco Youth Reduce Tobacco Retailer Density

In 2009, the Youth Leadership Institute, with funding from the San Francisco Department of Health, brought together a group of young people to explore tobacco control issues in the city. They called themselves the Tobacco Use Reduction Force (TURF) and began mapping the locations of tobacco retailers across the city. TURF was alarmed to find that stores selling tobacco were concentrated in neighborhoods with the lowest incomes, large minority populations, and close proximity to schools.¹⁰⁵ With this information, they created recommendations to reduce the number of tobacco retailers.



TURF's logo

To strengthen their recommendations, youth observed stores in different neighborhoods.¹⁰⁵ TURF updated their original map with new data and recommended limiting tobacco retailers near schools. They also worked to build a broad coalition of support. TURF youth met with businesses that sold tobacco to discuss their concerns, surveyed community members about their support for limits on tobacco retailers, and formed an advisory board of community leaders.¹⁰⁵ TURF also created videos and garnered news coverage in magazines and on the radio to educate the public and decision makers on reducing tobacco retailer density.¹⁰⁶

The youth's determination and willingness to learn from past failures paid off. In January 2015, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously passed a law to cap the number of retailers in each district, limit the number of stores in a single block, and restrict retailers from locating near schools. Supervisor Eric Mar credited the youth's research and door-to-door education efforts for the proposal's success.¹⁰⁷ The policy is expected to eventually reduce tobacco retailers in San Francisco by 50%, but immediate effects are already evident. Within the first year, the number of licensed tobacco retailers decreased by 8%.¹⁰⁵

Reducing Youth Access to Candy-Flavored Tobacco Products

Many tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, come in a variety of sweet flavors that appeal to youth and may play a role in youth initiation.¹⁰⁸ In 2014, more than 80% of youth reported that the first tobacco product they ever used was flavored, and more than 65% cited flavors as a major reason for using tobacco products.¹⁰⁸ The FDA recently proposed restrictions to limit youth access to flavored tobacco products in stores and online.¹⁰⁹ Youth are also taking action in their local communities. In Florida, Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) raised awareness about the dangers of candy-flavored tobacco products. As of 2014, all 67 Florida counties had passed resolutions urging tobacco retailers to restrict the sale and marketing of flavored products.⁹¹ Tobacco control programs can help reduce youth access to flavored tobacco products by:¹¹⁰

- Educating youth on the facts about candy-flavored tobacco products
- Training youth in presentation skills, media literacy, and generating news coverage
- Including flavored tobacco products in store assessments

Partnering with parent groups and other community organizations to build community awareness about the risks of candy-flavored tobacco products



Image raising awareness about candy-flavored tobacco products Source: Tobacco Free Florida

themes that will resonate best with youth. Youth also have credibility with community members, the news media, and their peers. They can use this influence to generate media coverage about tobacco control issues and efforts, share campaign messages on social media, and reduce exposure to tobacco products in movies and video games. Media literacy training can help youth better understand how tobacco advertising impacts viewers.

Pretesting Messages and Materials

Input from youth is important to ensure that campaign messages resonate with youth audiences. Youth can help

pretest campaign messages and ads, an important step in ad development during which a focus group or panel helps determine if messages will be effective. Youth can share their opinions on the following topics:¹¹¹

- What messages they take away
- What parts of the ad they like
- What parts of the ad they do not like or find confusing
- Whether the ad is believable
- Whether the ad is relevant to their lives
- Whether the ad motivates them to change

Promoting National Media Campaigns with Youth Audiences

Many high-quality national media campaigns have been developed in recent years to educate youth about the dangers of tobacco use. For instance, the Truth Initiative's *Finish It* campaign aims to empower youth and young adults to be the generation that ends smoking for good. The campaign exposes youth to the tactics of the tobacco industry, the truth about addiction, and the health effects and social consequences of smoking.¹¹²

FDA has also launched three national campaigns aimed at preventing and reducing tobacco use among youth.

The Real Cost campaign seeks to raise awareness about the health consequences of tobacco

use among youth who are open to smoking or are experimenting with tobacco. From 2014 to 2016, the campaign prevented an estimated 350,000 youth ages 11–18 from smoking.¹¹³ Building on this success, FDA added new ads designed for rural male youth at risk for smokeless tobacco use. FDA also launched the *Fresh Empire* campaign to reach multicultural youth who identify with hip-hop culture and are at risk for smoking, and *This Free Life*, a campaign to prevent and reduce smoking among LGBT young adults.

General audience campaigns that feature hard-hitting messages about the negative health consequences of tobacco use are effective with many different audiences.¹ Programs can save time and resources and avoid duplicating efforts by promoting existing media campaigns instead of creating new ones. Program staff can use the following low-cost strategies to promote existing campaigns:

- Run “Ads in Cycle,” ads available in the CDC’s Media Campaign Resource Center that are on air and can be circulated without added cost¹¹⁴
- Share messages on social media when a national campaign airs on TV¹¹⁴
- Distribute free campaign materials to youth, such as posters and postcards¹¹⁵
- Encourage youth to share campaign messages with their peers¹¹⁶
- Direct teens to campaign websites and social media channels¹¹⁶
- Share campaign resources with other organizations that work with youth¹¹⁶



Social media post from the “Finish It” campaign Source: Truth Initiative

Generating News Coverage

Youth voices can gain the attention of news media, generate coverage of tobacco control efforts, and extend campaign messages at little or no cost. Media coverage adds legitimacy and importance to tobacco control efforts. It can also boost participation in events and activities. To generate media coverage, youth can host press conferences, write Op-Eds (stand-alone pieces of writing that express strong opinions), and write letters to the editor (short pieces that express an opinion about a recent news item). Youth can write about their own experiences with tobacco, their tobacco control activities, or data they have collected.

Sharing Messages on Social Media

As of 2018, 97% of teens use at least one social media platform.¹¹⁷ Since social media is a major way that youth communicate with one another, it is an important tool for youth to get involved in tobacco control. Youth can use social media to share tobacco control messages and interact with community members. They can also create posts, select hashtags, and help select the best social media sites for sharing messages. Young people can use social media to recruit volunteers, organize events and activities, and monitor tobacco product marketing.

Reducing Onscreen Tobacco Use

Depictions of smoking in movies cause young people to start smoking.² Despite recent declines in the number of movies depicting tobacco use, incidences of onscreen tobacco use have actually increased.¹¹⁸ From 2010 to 2016, the number of tobacco incidents in top-grossing movies increased by 43% in movies rated PG-13.¹¹⁸

Smoking is not limited to the big screen; tobacco imagery is also found in streaming shows and video games popular among youth.^{119,120} Ninety-two percent of the most popular streaming and cable shows among youth contained tobacco imagery in 2018.¹¹⁹ Forty-two percent of video games include tobacco imagery.¹²⁰ These numbers are especially concerning because of the popularity of these channels among youth; in 2018, teens watched more than twice as



Image from Florida's Students Working Against Tobacco's (SWAT) #NotAReplacement social media campaign Source: Tobacco Free Florida

much Netflix as cable TV, and more than half of teens reported playing video games.^{121,122}

To reduce the impact of onscreen tobacco use on youth, young people can encourage the entertainment industry and decision makers to take the following steps:

- Rate onscreen media that depict tobacco use as “R” or “Mature”¹²³
- Reduce or ban identifiable tobacco brands in onscreen media¹²³
- Restrict the tobacco industry’s ability to pay for tobacco use in onscreen media¹²³
- Require onscreen media that depicts tobacco use to include tobacco control messages¹²³
- Limit state subsidies for onscreen media that depicts tobacco use¹¹⁹

Youth can also monitor tobacco depictions in onscreen media, including streaming and gaming.^{119,120} Learn more about how youth can work to reduce onscreen tobacco use in the Reality Check resource, [Smoke Free Media Guide](#).

A CLOSER LOOK: Iowa Youth Educate Dollar General about Tobacco Advertising

Youth can share an important perspective with decision makers about how tobacco use harms their communities. In 2016, members of the Audubon, Iowa, chapter of *Iowa Students for Tobacco Education and Prevention (ISTEP)* wrote a letter to the Dollar General Corporation after seeing large tobacco product ads outside their local chain store. As a result, Dollar General not only took down ads in Audubon but across the state.¹²⁴ The achievement was especially meaningful for the program because the idea came from youth. The chapter then focused on persuading local grocery stores to remove outdoor ads.¹²⁴

Although there are many ways to educate decision makers, meeting representatives in person is important.¹²⁵ Before sitting down with decision makers, it can be helpful to learn about their past work and organizational affiliations. It is also important for youth to know the facts about the tobacco control issue they will be speaking about. Beforehand, they can research the issue, prepare talking points, and practice sharing their message.¹²⁶ Using personal or local stories to convey a message is a particularly effective way to inform decision makers.¹²⁵ Decision makers are given lots of information and often have limited time to review, so youth can also prepare a fact sheet to share with their audience.¹²⁵ Youth can also educate decision makers about the dangers of tobacco use by:

- Submitting letters to the editor in local publications¹²⁵
- Speaking at city council meetings or hearings¹²⁵
- Hosting a letter-writing gathering with peers¹²⁷
- Arranging meetings with local or regional decision makers, such as local business owners¹²⁵
- Holding a town hall meeting with community leaders¹²⁸
- Sharing facts on Twitter, Facebook, or email¹²³

Training Youth in Media Literacy

Media literacy training teaches youth to analyze tobacco industry messages, understand how these messages impact them, and create effective communications.¹²⁹ Training often includes evaluating tobacco industry messages to learn about manipulative advertising practices and creating brief, educational public service announcements that can be placed for free by media outlets, shared with community partners, or posted online.¹²⁹

Building Community Awareness

Community-based activities help shape how the public views tobacco use. Programs or groups that involve youth can deepen community networks and pool resources by developing partnerships with local

organizations. As community interest groups join forces, public health concerns are communicated and shared by diverse groups, increasing awareness of tobacco control issues. Community engagement activities also help recruit new youth members and build momentum for tobacco control strategies.¹³⁰

Involving Youth in Community Engagement

Young people have access to other youth and are often savvy communicators on social media and in their communities. Youth can use their talents and connections to host community events that get people talking about tobacco control issues and encourage them to take action. Well-publicized events can also help grab the attention of the media, build partnerships, and recruit new youth members.¹³¹

The Role of School-Based Tobacco Prevention Programs

Schools are an important setting for tobacco control efforts. Youth spend much of their day at school, where students can experience peer pressure to try tobacco products.¹²⁷ Although school-based programs to prevent youth tobacco use were once thought to be ineffective, recent research suggests that when programs follow evidence-based best practices, school-based programs can prevent initiation in the short term and, in some cases, achieve longer-term outcomes.²



Effective school-based prevention programs span multiple years instead of hosting one-time speakers and special events.² Generally, they begin in middle school or earlier and end with reinforcement of learning during high school.¹³² These long-term programs work best when part of a comprehensive tobacco control program that includes tobacco-free school environments, community-wide strategies, and media literacy training.² School-based programs can also include these effective elements:

- Interactive role-playing and discussion about social influences²
- Life skills practice (*e.g.*, goal setting, refusal skills, and communication skills)²
- Information about the risks of other tobacco products, including e-cigarettes³⁴
- Education by peer leaders²
- Opportunities for youth involvement in activities outside the classroom¹²⁷
- Access to cessation services designed for youth, such as strategies that help both frequent and occasional tobacco users quit²

School administrators and teachers can access resources and learn more about school-based tobacco prevention in Stanford Medicine's [Tobacco Prevention Toolkit](#).

Events may include:¹⁴

- Demonstrations to educate people about the dangers of tobacco use and the industry's tactics
- Tobacco-free movie nights or litter cleanups to raise awareness about key tobacco control issues
- Rallies or tobacco-free days to build enthusiasm for tobacco control
- Tobacco exchanges where users trade tobacco accessories for promotional items like tobacco-free T-shirts or bumper stickers
- Community forums to share survey results or store assessment data
- Local events to coordinate with national days of significance, such as the Great American Smoke Out, Kick Butts Day, or Earth Day

Youth can also encourage leaders to make other community events tobacco free. At these events, youth can educate people about tobacco use or survey community members about their support for tobacco control strategies. More ideas for community events are available from the Massachusetts statewide youth program, *The 84 Movement*, and Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids' *Kick Butts Day* website.

Planning Community Events

Planning for events often begins weeks or even months ahead. Youth can start by organizing a planning team to bring together partners, get permits or permissions, gather supplies, and recruit volunteers. The planning team also assesses whether youth need training before the event, such as practice speaking in public. The week before, youth can promote the event on the radio, in school newsletters, and on social media.

Interacting with the public is an important part of community engagement. Some people may be open to learning about tobacco control; others may express



Members of *The 84 Movement* (a program of the Massachusetts Tobacco Cessation and Prevention Program) rally at the Massachusetts State Capitol to raise awareness of the tobacco industry's marketing tactics
Source: *the84.org* ©2017 Marilyn Humphries

opposition. Youth can effectively communicate their message by:¹³³

- Preparing ahead of time, including responses to potential opposition
- Relating tobacco control to topics that are important to the audience, such as the environment or youth
- Sharing their personal experiences with tobacco or tobacco-related illness
- Asking people to share how tobacco has affected their lives

Monitoring and Enforcing Tobacco Control Policies

Monitoring and enforcement activities communicate new policies and ensure they are followed. Past enforcement efforts have shown the importance of these activities. For example, federal enforcement efforts as part of the Synar Amendment reduced illegal tobacco sales to minors from over 40% in the late 1990s to just 9.8% in 2014.¹³⁴ When policies are fully and fairly enforced, they help avoid unintended consequences and achieve tobacco control goals.

Involving Youth in Monitoring and Enforcement

As students, employees, and residents of places covered by tobacco control policies, youth play an important role in monitoring and enforcing new policies. Students can report when they see other students or school staff violating tobacco-free policies. Underage youth may also conduct store compliance checks.¹³⁵ For example, through Arizona's *Counter Strike* program, youth volunteers and special investigators from the Attorney General's Office visit tobacco retailers where youth try to buy tobacco products. Stores that sell tobacco products to youth may be fined and offered more training. Businesses who refuse to sell to youth are celebrated for their work to limit youth access to tobacco.

Youth can also help monitor and enforce policies by:

- Monitoring tobacco product advertising at local stores¹⁴
- Writing letters to decision makers asking them to support enforcement of existing local and state policies¹⁴
- Speaking at public meetings in support of enforcing existing policies¹⁴
- Modeling healthy behaviors for other youth and community members¹³⁶
- Posting tobacco-free signs and other information about new policies⁶⁷
- Sharing information about local cessation resources¹³⁷

A CLOSER LOOK: Refocusing and Revitalizing Efforts in Oklahoma⁴¹

The Oklahoma State Department of Health founded *Students Working against Tobacco (SWAT)* in 1999 to engage youth in community action against tobacco and build state and local youth coalitions. Supported by a grant from the American Legacy Foundation, SWAT teams developed their own objectives and priorities. Many teams decided to focus on local, high-impact policy work. When the grant ended in 2004, the Department continued SWAT but shifted focus to other initiatives.

Over time, SWAT staff positions were dissolved and integrated into other programs. The activities, programs, and trainings of SWAT teams began to vary as the program's management decentralized. SWAT teams lacked structure and were using out-of-date materials. As a result, many teams shifted to lower-impact efforts such as peer education.

In 2010, SWAT refocused its efforts on high-impact strategies. The Department partnered with the Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust to launch three campaigns to reenergize the program: *24/7*, which engaged youth in creating tobacco-free schools; *In the Clear*, designed to reduce secondhand smoke exposure through local smoke-free laws; and *No Minor Issue*, focused on youth access at the point of sale. The Department created updated materials for each campaign and followed a coordinated program structure that included youth training, campaign objectives, and measures of progress. After the changes, youth reported greater confidence in their ability to implement a tobacco control campaign.



SWAT's logo

Implementing Youth Engagement Efforts

Youth can be valuable partners, but engaging youth effectively takes time and planning. To engage youth, program staff can use the strategies outlined in the following sections:

- Preparing to engage youth
- Developing an action plan
- Involving youth in reducing tobacco-related disparities
- Evaluating youth engagement
- Sustaining youth engagement

Preparing to Engage Youth

Strong youth engagement efforts are well-thought-out and intentional. Programs can ensure they are ready to engage youth in meaningful ways by assessing program readiness, securing organizational support, and planning multiple ways for youth to get involved.^{25,57,138}

Assessing Capacity to Engage Youth

Before engaging youth, it is critical to take time to assess the program's readiness to work with youth. Understanding the program's strengths and potential obstacles to engaging youth can help build a successful program and anticipate challenges. Program staff interested in engaging youth can start by asking:²⁵

- Why do we want to engage youth?
- How do we want to engage youth (e.g., one time or long-term)?
- What strengths do we have that can support youth engagement?
- What obstacles have we faced in the past?

- Who can help us engage youth?
- What can we offer these partners in return?

Equally important as why the program wants to engage youth is why youth might want to engage with the program. Gathering input from a small group of youth on what they would be interested in working on and what skills they want to learn can help develop a relevant program that youth want to join. To assess program readiness and begin developing a plan to engage youth, use the self-assessment tool included in the California Youth Advocacy Network's *Regional Youth Engagement Workshops Summary Report*.

Securing Organizational Support

It is critical not to underestimate the challenges that might arise during youth engagement efforts.⁸ For instance, program staff are sometimes faced with limited resources for youth engagement or an organizational culture that is unfriendly toward involving youth.^{139,140} Building support among program and agency leaders can help staff access critical resources and sustain youth engagement efforts.¹⁴⁰ To secure organizational support, program staff can share three key messages with leaders:⁸

- Why they want to involve youth
- How youth can get involved in program activities
- How involving youth will benefit the program



Offering Multiple Levels of Engagement

Programs can strengthen youth engagement by offering multiple ways for youth to take part in activities. Some youth may have the time and interest to commit to long-term activities. They may be best suited for high-intensity strategies that require significant planning and take months or even years to carry out.¹⁴ Although these kinds of activities take more time and resources, they can help communities mobilize to make a lasting impact.¹⁴

Other youth might want to get involved, but may not have time for a deeper level of commitment. Low-

intensity activities, such as one-time events or projects, can help engage youth until they are ready to take on greater responsibility.¹⁴ While these activities often require fewer resources, they may have a limited impact on tobacco control goals.¹⁴

Keeping Youth Safe

All programs that work with youth have a responsibility to minimize risk to the youth they serve.¹⁴² Conducting background checks of adults who work with youth is just one important step. A comprehensive screening process includes:¹⁴²

- National and state criminal background checks
- State and national public sex-offender website checks
- State child-abuse registry checks
- Interviews
- Reference checks
- Observations

Each element adds another layer of protection for youth.¹⁴² It is important that all adults who may work with youth are screened, including volunteers. Learn more about screening in the Department of Justice resource, [What You Need to Know about Background Screening](#).

Developing an Action Plan

An action plan guides how youth and staff will work together. The plan describes the problem to be addressed, lays out key strategies, and identifies important partners. It is important that the action plan is developed with input from both program staff and youth. Reserving time to reflect and evaluate after the plan is in place can help improve future youth engagement efforts.

Describing the Problem

Fully understanding the tobacco issues the community faces helps program staff and youth choose appropriate strategies.¹⁴ Community assessments are an important tool for building this understanding. Staff and youth can use community assessments to:¹⁴

Working with Youth

Adults who have not worked with young people before may not know how to effectively engage youth. Strong youth engagement efforts allow youth to take charge in planning and carrying out activities, with support from staff as needed.²⁷ Staff can offer technical assistance and expert advice and provide resources such as materials, event space, and training.^{27,141} It is also critical for program staff to listen to youth just as they would adults. Engaged youth are given an equal opportunity to share their ideas, knowledge, and perspectives.^{23,138} To work effectively with youth, program staff can also:

- Thoroughly screen adults by conducting background and reference checks, interviews, and observations¹⁴²
- Train adults who will be working with youth³¹
- Develop ground rules for youth-adult interactions⁷
- Recognize youth ideas and achievements²³
- Treat youth as equal partners²⁷
- Address power imbalances if they occur⁸

- Learn more about community members' tobacco-related attitudes and behaviors
- Identify the populations that are most affected by tobacco use
- Collect information about how tobacco is advertised and sold
- Document and research the tobacco control policies that already exist

Choosing Strategies

Allowing youth to take the lead in choosing strategies helps ensure that activities focus on issues important to them. Working on issues youth are passionate about and have personal connections to can keep them engaged.⁸ Program staff can help youth choose successful strategies by focusing on those that are visible to a wide audience, have a long-term impact, encourage collaboration between youth and adults, and produce meaningful results.

Brainstorming generates fresh ideas. *FACT*, Wisconsin's youth-led tobacco prevention movement, uses brainstorming to develop *FACTivisms*, activities to spread the truth about tobacco. In 2016, *FACT* held a contest for youth chapters to brainstorm ideas for new *FACTivisms*.¹⁴³ The winning activities were professionally developed and shared statewide. To learn more about brainstorming, see the *FACT* resource, *Facilitation Techniques: Get the Most Out of Brainstorming*.

Other tobacco control programs may also be able to offer suggestions and share resources and materials.³¹ Staff and youth may decide to adapt strategies that have worked well for other programs to save time and resources.

Developing Partnerships

Strong partnerships help integrate youth engagement efforts into the community.¹³⁸ Partnerships bring together people and organizations with diverse skills and experiences to reach a common goal. Many different partners can contribute to youth engagement efforts by speaking in support of tobacco control strategies, providing time and expertise, and helping access key audiences.¹⁴⁴ Partners can also share their success stories with other potential partners and encourage them to join youth engagement efforts.

Key partners could include:¹⁴

- Local tobacco control coalitions
- Parent-teacher organizations
- K-12 schools and colleges
- Organizations that work with youth, such as Boys & Girls Clubs of America or the YMCA
- Public health organizations, such as the American Cancer Society, American Lung Association, and American Heart Association

If youth engagement efforts reach across counties, program staff may consider forming a regional partnership. This can allow youth and their partners to pool resources, publicize events to a broader audience, and leverage the power of youth groups in each county.¹³⁹

Writing the Plan

Once youth have selected strategies and identified key partners, they can put everything together in a detailed action plan. Action plans outline the goals, objectives, activities, and available resources for youth engagement efforts.¹⁴⁵

An action plan begins with the goals that program staff and youth want to accomplish.¹⁴⁵ For example, they might aim to educate the community about the importance of limiting tobacco retailers near schools. Objectives are the smaller successes that help staff and youth reach their goals.¹⁴⁵ For instance, objectives might include completing 30 store assessments and creating a map that shows all of the community's tobacco retailers. Strong, clear objectives use the *SMART* approach (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time Bound).¹⁴⁶

The action plan also outlines what program staff and youth will do to achieve goals and objectives.¹⁴⁵ This section of the action plan describes:¹⁴⁵

- Who is responsible for specific activities
- When the activity will occur or be completed
- What resources are needed (*e.g.*, funding, people, and supplies)
- Potential barriers

Including as many details as possible in the action plan helps identify resource gaps and potential roadblocks. If youth find that they are missing critical resources, they can create plans to pursue new sources of support or ask partners for help.

Implementing the Plan

Focusing first on short-term objectives can help show youth that they are making progress and keep them motivated.⁴⁷ For example, West Virginia's youth-led tobacco prevention initiative, *Raze*, plans and implements activities called Commotions. These short-term activities are meant to keep youth efforts visible in the community and maintain youth enthusiasm.¹⁴⁶

Meetings are important times for youth and staff to plan and prepare for upcoming activities. Youth can have busy schedules, so it is important for program staff to schedule meetings at convenient times for youth, such as evenings or weekends.⁷ Learning the schedules of activities that youth are involved with can help programs plan meeting times that fit with their other commitments.²⁵ Meetings can be led by adults, jointly directed by adults and youth, or completely youth led.¹⁴⁷ During meetings, it is critical that youth feel welcome, valued, and heard.¹⁴⁷ To create a fun and inviting environment, program staff can incorporate icebreakers or team-building activities, provide food and snacks, and allow time for socializing.¹⁴⁷

Reflecting and Evaluating

Community change can take a long time, so it is important that youth reflect on and evaluate their progress often.¹⁴ Reflecting on efforts as a group can help identify challenges, reveal new opportunities, and celebrate successes.¹⁴⁸ Looking back collectively can also help identify ways to enable staff and youth to work together more effectively.⁸ Depending on the time and resources available, staff and youth may decide to hold informal check-ins or conduct a more thorough evaluation of their efforts.⁸ Learn more about how to evaluate youth engagement efforts on [page 31](#).

Involving Youth in Reducing Disparities

Tobacco-related disparities are differences in tobacco-related health outcomes between population groups. These differences can be based on characteristics like age, disability, education, income, occupation, geographic location, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental health status, substance use, and military status.¹ For example, groups such as American Indians and people living in poverty have higher tobacco use prevalence, lower cessation rates, and poorer health outcomes.¹⁴⁹ Reducing tobacco-related disparities protects youth at high risk of trying and using tobacco products.

As members of communities affected by tobacco-related disparities, young people want to work to

counter pro-tobacco influences. For example, lower-income and African-American neighborhoods have more tobacco product marketing, exposing young people in these communities to pro-tobacco messages.¹⁵⁰ Youth can help assess tobacco retailers in these communities and survey people about their support



for tobacco control strategies.¹⁵¹ They can use this information to design health communications campaigns and other strategies to reduce tobacco use. For more information on how programs can reduce tobacco-related disparities, see the CDC *Best Practices User Guide: Health Equity in Tobacco Prevention and Control*.

Recruiting and Involving Diverse Youth

Youth from groups most affected by tobacco use are often not involved in tobacco control.^{30,151} They may face barriers that make engagement more difficult, such as family obligations, economic pressures, or transportation challenges, or have different interests and skills than youth involved in the program.⁵⁶

Involving these youth takes strategy and care, but it ensures that activities are relevant to their communities. Developing interest among young people with varied backgrounds can also draw other diverse youth to the program and develop the next generation of leaders.¹⁵²

To recruit diverse youth, it can help to develop relationships with their family members and reach out to partner organizations that work with priority populations.^{140,153} Youth from the community can also help recruit their peers. Program staff can reduce barriers to youth engagement by providing transportation and planning convenient meeting locations and activities. Matching activities to youth's skills and cultural experiences and offering training can help generate interest.¹⁵⁴

Youth from diverse backgrounds may require

different kinds of support than other youth. For example, youth who are affected by violence, hunger, or other community issues may have priorities other than tobacco control. To support diverse youth, programs can:

- Ask youth about the relevance of activities to their communities²³
- Notice how youth with different backgrounds express themselves and behave¹⁵³
- Offer leadership opportunities and recognize that youth may be unfamiliar or uncomfortable with leading at first⁵⁶
- Pair youth with adults of similar backgrounds to nurture understanding¹⁵¹
- Celebrate differences when opportunities arise, such as National Hispanic Heritage Month, Black History Month, or LGBT Pride¹⁵⁵
- Treat youth as equals and be willing to learn from them¹⁵⁶
- Connect tobacco control to other issues youth care about, like social justice or the environment⁷²



Screenshot from the truth® "#STOPPROFILING" campaign Source: Truth Initiative

Evaluating Youth Engagement

Evaluating youth activities helps program staff understand and improve the effectiveness of youth engagement efforts. Evaluation results tell programs, partners, and young people if youth engagement activities are going as planned and achieving goals.⁵⁶ Sharing evaluation results with community leaders and youth builds continued support for youth engagement.⁵⁶

- Do the youth involved reflect the diversity of the community?⁵⁴

Simple data collection activities such as sign-in sheets and event and activity logs can track progress.⁵⁶ Youth can also create logs to document media coverage of their activities and use surveys to measure youth and adult attitudes about youth engagement.⁵⁶ See **Table 1** below for sample evaluation measures.

Evaluating Youth Engagement Progress

Evaluating the progress of youth activities as they are happening allows program staff to quickly change strategies. It can also help staff understand what activities work best to develop the skills for youth to achieve tobacco control goals.⁵⁶ Evaluating youth engagement progress answers questions such as:

- How many youth are engaged?⁵⁶
- What kinds of activities are youth involved in, and how many?⁵⁶
- How long do youth stay engaged?⁵⁶
- Which activities are successful, which are not, and why?¹⁴

Evaluating Youth Engagement Outcomes

Evaluating outcomes helps programs assess whether youth engagement contributed to goals such as preventing initiation among youth and young adults. Evaluating youth engagement outcomes answers questions such as:

- Did knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors toward tobacco use change among youth or community members?⁴¹
- Did youth increase their self-esteem or confidence in their ability to achieve goals?²⁷
- Were new tobacco control strategies adopted?⁴¹
- Did any unintended consequences occur?¹⁴
- Did tobacco use prevalence decline?

Table 1. Sample Measures for Evaluating Youth Engagement

EVALUATION TYPE	SAMPLE MEASURES
Measuring progress	<p>Progress toward tobacco control goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantity of activities conducted • Quantity and quality of media coverage • Extent to which activities are conducted according to plans <p>Quality of youth engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and types of recruitment activities conducted • Number of youth engaged • Quality of youth involvement (e.g., youth leadership in decision making) • Number, type, and quality of youth trainings <p>Youth skills, ability, and confidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased confidence in ability to achieve tobacco control goals • Heightened knowledge about the dangers of tobacco use • Improved skills for tobacco control activities
Measuring outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of youth engaged • Improved youth knowledge and skills • Implementation of tobacco control strategies • Reduced youth smoking initiation • Reduced youth tobacco use

Involving Youth in Evaluation

Youth bring valuable perspectives to evaluation. For instance, they can help recruit youth participants and design evaluation questions that reflect youth priorities.⁴⁹ Youth can also contribute to evaluation by:³¹

- Developing criteria for success
- Developing youth-friendly surveys and interview questions
- Collecting data
- Analyzing and interpreting results
- Sharing results with peers, decision makers, and other community members

Involving youth in evaluation will be most successful if youth are prepared to take part in evaluation activities.⁴⁹ Youth may need training in technical skills, such as collecting data, and interpersonal skills, such as talking with survey participants.⁸ Staff may supervise youth until they are comfortable conducting evaluations on their own.⁴⁹ Youth may also need help understanding materials, staying engaged, and telling their stories.

Sharing Results

Evaluation results show stakeholders the value of youth engagement. Sharing ensures that results get used and helps secure future support for youth engagement.⁵⁶ Results can be shared through formal reports, success stories, short briefs, or presentations. Effective reports:⁵⁶

- Explain how the evaluation was conducted
- Use data to demonstrate major findings about youth engagement
- Summarize the successes and outcomes of youth engagement activities
- Describe the challenges of involving youth
- Include lessons learned for future youth engagement efforts

Collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data takes time, and evaluation results may not be ready to share until well after an effort has ended. For this reason, it is important to make time to celebrate successes throughout youth engagement efforts. For instance, programs can host events where youth can share videos

and presentations about their hard work and successes with stakeholders and the media. Learn more about sharing results in the CDC resource, *Developing an Effective Evaluation Report*.

Sustaining Youth Engagement

Sustained youth engagement efforts give program staff and youth time to achieve goals and create long-lasting change.¹⁵⁷ A strong program infrastructure, strategies to retain youth, and ongoing recruitment help sustain youth engagement.

Developing Infrastructure for Youth Engagement

Infrastructure is the basic underlying framework of policies, financial and human resources, and organizational structures that help programs develop and grow.¹⁵⁸ A strong infrastructure for youth engagement efforts can help support program capacity and implementation, achieve goals, and sustain programs.^{1,39} Developing strong infrastructure for youth engagement involves:¹⁴⁶

- Creating a sustainability plan
- Developing youth leaders
- Maintaining partnerships
- Managing staff and funding resources
- Using data to improve efforts

Creating a Sustainability Plan

A sustainability plan outlines what resources the program has for youth engagement, which activities will be sustained, and how resources and funding will be acquired.¹⁴⁴ Integrating youth involvement into the program's sustainability plan ensures that youth engagement is considered throughout program planning and creates a culture of youth inclusion within the overall program. The best time to incorporate youth engagement into the sustainability plan is before those efforts begin.¹⁵⁷ It is also important to regularly update the plan to incorporate new evidence, respond to changes in tobacco prevention and control, and better meet program needs.¹⁴⁴ Learn more about creating a sustainability plan at sustaintool.org.

Developing Youth Leaders

Youth leaders are committed to the program and drive progress. Developing leadership skills among youth of all ages helps prepare new, younger leaders to assume the responsibilities of older youth who leave for college or begin careers. To cultivate new youth leaders, staff can:

- Have older youth leaders train and mentor the next generation of leaders¹⁰
- Delegate smaller tasks such as leading meetings and team building exercises to “leaders in training” to help boost their confidence¹⁴⁶
- Enable and support youth to take the lead in planning and carrying out activities¹⁵⁹

Maintaining Partnerships

Partnerships help sustain youth engagement by providing resources like space, equipment, volunteers, supplies, and funding.¹⁶⁰ They also help garner community support.¹⁴⁰ Program staff can maintain strong youth engagement partnerships by:

- Clearly defining the purpose of the partnership¹³⁸
- Creating a sense of ownership among partners¹³⁸
- Regularly communicating with partners about activities¹⁶¹
- Evaluating and improving how programs work with partners¹⁶¹

Managing Staff and Funding Resources

Securing the resources to carry out activities is critical to sustain youth engagement efforts. Staff and volunteers provide ongoing support and training to youth. Hiring skilled staff, offering ongoing training and professional development, and offering competitive salaries and career advancement help recruit and keep qualified staff.¹⁴⁶

Youth engagement programs will also want to conduct thorough staff background screenings, which may require additional resources. Including these costs in program budgets and funding plans is important to ensure a consistent screening process for all staff and volunteers.

A funding plan that outlines the steps to secure long-term support can help sustain youth engagement and lessen the impact of funding changes.¹⁴⁶ Responding to funding opportunities takes time and resources, so it is critical that program staff and youth identify future sources before current funding ends and focus on opportunities that fit with youth engagement goals.¹⁴⁶ A plan for collaborating across departments (e.g., sharing communications materials, administrative support, and staff with special skills like grant writing) can also be useful when resources are scarce.¹⁴⁶ Learn more about managing staff and funding resources in the CDC *Best Practices User Guide: Program Infrastructure in Tobacco Prevention and Control*.

Using Data

Data can help determine if youth engagement efforts are working, refine activities and strategies, and make decisions about future efforts.¹⁴⁶ Information about the effectiveness of youth engagement efforts can be shared with partners and decision makers to secure future funding and continued support.¹⁴⁴ Learn more about how to evaluate youth engagement efforts on [page 31](#).

Keeping Youth Engaged During the Summer¹⁶²

Take advantage of young people’s more flexible schedules during the summer by:

- Inviting youth to meetings, conferences, or trainings
- Planning field tips to tobacco control coalition or city council meetings
- Holding focus groups to gather youth feedback
- Having youth hand out information at summer festivals or farmer’s markets
- Creating summer internship opportunities
- Hosting a “kick-off” event for the coming school year

Strategies for Retaining Youth

School, extracurricular activities, jobs, and other interests often demand young people's time and attention.¹⁶³ Because community change can take a long time, keeping youth involved can pose a significant

Keeping Younger and Older Youth Engaged

Keeping youth engaged can be a special challenge for programs that work with youth of different ages, such as middle and high school youth. Recognizing the different developmental needs of younger and older youth can help keep involvement high among all youth.

To keep younger youth engaged, programs can:

- Build in time to socialize¹⁰
- Offer chances to try many different activities¹⁰
- Focus on making youth feel comfortable and safe¹⁰
- Emphasize the immediate outcomes of youth's contributions²⁵

To engage older youth, programs can:¹⁰

- Help youth explore issues in greater depth
- Emphasize how activities help youth prepare for job opportunities and college applications
- Offer opportunities to mentor younger youth or complete internships
- Focus less on attendance requirements and more on the quality of engagement

challenge.³¹ Staff can keep youth interested by clearly defining objectives and roles so youth can see the impact of their contributions. Allowing youth to lead meetings and activities can also build their sense of ownership.²⁵

Programs can also keep youth engaged by:

- Removing participation barriers such as transportation or inconvenient meeting times¹³⁸
- Offering a variety of activities that connect with young people's talents and concerns⁴⁴
- Creating leadership and skill-building opportunities³⁰
- Checking on progress and updating youth through email, texts, and social media²⁵
- Brainstorming ways to keep youth busy and involved during slow periods¹²⁸
- Recognizing youth for their efforts by awarding certificates or writing thank-you notes¹⁶⁴

Cultivating relationships between youth and adults that are built on respect, support, and trust can also be an effective way to keep youth engaged.^{10,44} Staying connected with youth's lives and interests within and outside the program can help build meaningful relationships.¹⁰ For example, staff may plan activities when school is not in session.⁴⁵

Conducting Ongoing Recruitment

Older youth may eventually move away for college, begin careers, or age out of youth efforts. Programs can keep engagement steady by developing a plan to regularly recruit youth.¹³⁸ This helps to ensure that progress toward goals continues even as the youth involved change. To recruit new youth, program staff can repeat many of the strategies described on [page 7](#). Ongoing recruitment plans can also focus on:

- Identifying gaps in youth leadership and skills¹⁴⁶
- Examining what has worked in past recruitment efforts and what has not¹⁶⁵
- Empowering current youth leaders to recruit and train upcoming leaders¹³⁸

How Can Tobacco Control Programs Support Youth Engagement?

Engaging youth requires thoughtful preparation and ongoing support from program staff. Although youth engagement efforts will vary by program, staff can take the following actions to support youth engagement:

Coordination & Collaboration

- ▶ Act as the convener. Bring all partners, including youth members and organizations, to the table on a regular basis.
- ▶ Involve youth in brainstorming ideas, selecting strategies, and carrying out activities.
- ▶ Make youth engagement a priority during strategic planning and incorporate youth engagement into the program's comprehensive statewide tobacco control plan.

Administrative Support

- ▶ Share tobacco use and other surveillance data with local partners to design youth programs.
- ▶ Share results of successful youth engagement initiatives with partners.
- ▶ Develop and share materials that can be used locally.
- ▶ Provide a forum for youth to interact (*e.g.*, website, conference calls, or blog).

Training & Technical Assistance

- ▶ Ensure adults who work with youth have been thoroughly screened and trained on how to work with youth.
- ▶ Sponsor local, regional, and statewide trainings and conferences that involve youth.
- ▶ Provide ongoing technical assistance to youth partners.

Case Study #1: Indiana

Indiana creates meaningful opportunities for youth to reduce tobacco use

Indiana forms partnership to create youth empowerment movement

Indiana recognized the importance of youth engagement early in its tobacco control efforts. In 2002, as part of its tobacco health communications work, the Indiana Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Agency partnered with the Indiana Teen Institute to host a summer youth capacity-building summit. During the summit, the teens created **VOICE**, Indiana's statewide youth empowerment movement against tobacco use. Although the teen summits are no longer held, the Institute continues to partner with the tobacco control program, which now operates within the Indiana Department of Health as the Indiana Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Commission.

VOICE is not a youth organization but a brand that provides resources and opportunities for engaging, empowering, and educating teens to promote a tobacco-free lifestyle.¹⁶⁶ The Commission supports VOICE in developing initiatives, responding to emerging opportunities to reduce tobacco use, and educating the public about the tobacco industry's marketing tactics. To further its goal of lowering Indiana's youth tobacco use prevalence, the Commission also supports VOICE through funding and strategic planning, and by sharing VOICE messages with local programs.

VOICE offers opportunities for all teens

VOICE activities include campaigns to expose the tobacco industry's influence in popular culture, clean up cigarette waste, and promote tobacco-free lifestyles on social media. Many of these initiatives are organized locally or even individually; VOICE reaches out to youth groups of all sizes, ranging from national youth organizations to high school clubs.

The VOICE website and digital communications help the program reach youth who may not be affiliated with an existing organization or club. "It could be that

lone teen who's in an unfunded county [without a local tobacco control coalition] somewhere in rural Indiana or it could be a group of young people in one of the funded counties that have a coalition and a whole group of people working to support them," said Mark R. Kaser, VOICE's state coordinator and director of the Institute. "Our goal is that we make the resources available to anyone."

Reaching today's technologically savvy teens can also present challenges. As the number of ways to communicate continues to grow, a flood of information competes for teens' attention through many different channels. To break through the noise, VOICE focuses on continually finding out how youth prefer to communicate by asking for the best way to reach them on every sign-up form and application. Kaser notes that it is important not to expect youth to communicate in the same way as adult colleagues. Instead, VOICE's goal is to be flexible, engaging with youth through many different and often evolving channels.

Core youth leadership team keeps VOICE authentic and relevant

VOICE offers many ways for youth to get involved, such as following the movement on social media, attending single events, or taking on local leadership roles at their schools or community groups. A small number of youth become part of the core leadership team that helps keep VOICE authentic to the youth brand and culturally relevant. Known as the VOICE Action Squad, these youth serve as speakers, social marketers, brand ambassadors, and influencers to help share VOICE's tobacco-free message.¹⁶⁶ They share messages on social media and travel throughout the state, attending events like fairs, festivals, and summer camps to raise awareness about tobacco control issues and engage other youth.



VOICE Action Squad visiting the Clark County Fair during their 2017 Maximum Velocity Tour
Source: Indiana State Department of Health, Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Commission

VOICE sustains youth engagement through meaningful opportunities

Providing meaningful opportunities for youth to develop skills or take action is central to VOICE’s approach. For example, VOICE holds “meet-ups,” or capacity-building events, where youth work on skills like public speaking, Tobacco 101, and social media content creation. “If you are asking young people to do too much without effectively preparing them, that leads to problems. If you’re not giving them meaningful opportunities to act but you’re investing in capacity building, they’re going to go find another cause where they can use those skills,” Kaser said.

When young people make meaningful connections to the program by identifying with the topic or forming relationships with other like-minded youth, their participation can snowball from a single event to a longer commitment. VOICE has found that the most effective way to create meaningful opportunities is to find adult champions who understand the importance of involving youth. These champions may already work for youth-serving organizations or may hold other roles in law enforcement, government, or business.

Indiana tobacco control leaders see youth as one of its greatest assets

Youth involvement is vital for a successful tobacco control program, said Miranda Spitznagle, director of Indiana’s Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Commission. “Engaging young people is critical to the sustainability of state and local programs. It’s a way to train up the next generation of your work force. It’s a way to get them exposed to this critical public health issue,” said Spitznagle.

Indiana continues to look for ways to strengthen youth engagement, such as enhancing outreach through local tobacco control programs and involving youth in emerging tobacco control issues. E-cigarettes are now the most commonly used tobacco product among Indiana youth.¹⁶⁷ To meet an increased demand for e-cigarette resources and education, VOICE is preparing educational materials on e-cigarettes for teens to present at school and to other youth groups. VOICE youth are actively involved in creating the materials, making sure that the language, format, and content are relevant to youth. VOICE also plans to introduce new materials to raise awareness of the tobacco industry’s changing use of popular media to normalize tobacco use.

“Engaging young people is critical to the sustainability of state and local programs.”

– Miranda Spitznagle

Case Study #2: Vermont

Youth use STARS tool to assess Vermont's tobacco retailers

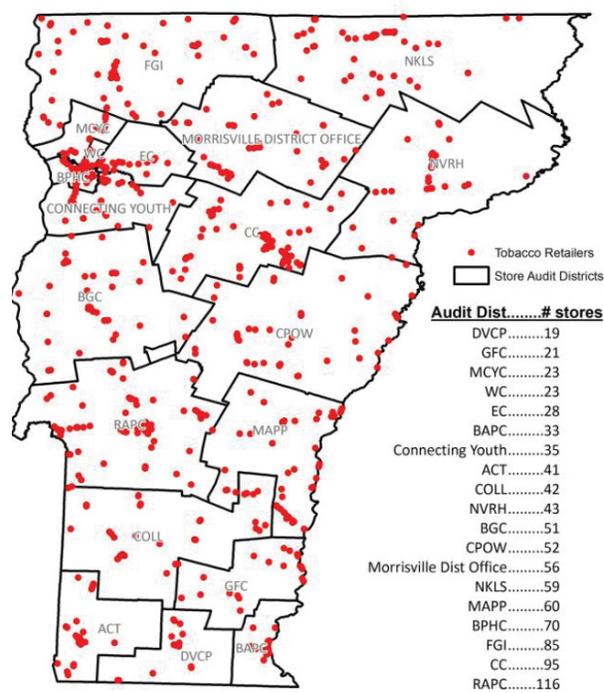
State program expands youth efforts to assess tobacco retailers in Vermont

Since 1995, the Vermont Tobacco Control Program has engaged young people in efforts to reduce youth tobacco use. The state program developed the middle school youth group Vermont Kids Against Tobacco (VKAT), in 1995, and the high school youth group Our Voices Xposed (OVX), in 2001. Partnering with these groups to assess tobacco retailers throughout the state has always been a central activity of the state program. However, data collected from earlier local assessments did not give a complete picture of Vermont's tobacco retail environment. With the introduction of Counter Tools' Standardized Tobacco Assessment for Retail Settings (STARS), the state program saw an opportunity to expand its efforts. Eoana Sturges, Vermont's Tobacco Control Manager, said, "These assessments came about because we knew we needed more data. Getting a tool like STARS allowed us to expand and use the data on a more statewide level." In 2014, OVX and VKAT groups partnered with state-funded community coalitions to assess all of Vermont's nearly 900 tobacco retailers using STARS.

Coalition used mock store to train youth

One community coalition, located in Windsor County, was particularly successful at involving youth in tobacco retail assessments: the Mt. Ascutney Prevention Partnership (MAPP). To get Windsor youth excited about the state effort, staff from the Partnership focused on engaging high school students from OVX. MAPP's Youth Outreach Coordinator, Rachel Williams, noted that the older youth were more passionate about conducting the store assessments because they knew people their age who used tobacco products. MAPP also generated enthusiasm among youth by creating a mock store where older youth practiced conducting store assessments. The high school students then trained younger students in the mock setup. This peer-to-peer education model gave students an opportunity to lead and develop ownership over the assessments.

Vermont Tobacco Store Audit Districts
Store Audit Census 2014



Map created by Counter Tools on September 29, 2014.

Map of tobacco retail stores assessed by youth groups

Following the trainings, youth began the store assessments. After conducting the first few assessments with Williams, the youth were able to introduce themselves to the store owners and complete the assessments on their own. Williams said, "At first it was so out of their comfort zone to approach store owners and managers and tell them that they wanted to assess their store. But they came to really enjoy it. They saw the community buy-in and wanted to look at the data themselves." Williams added, "The kids went beyond what was requested of them because they really enjoyed getting into the stores."



Youth gather at the Vermont State House to raise awareness of the dangers of flavored tobacco products Source: Vermont Tobacco Control Program

Youth shared results with local decision makers

Between November and December 2014, community coalitions, Windsor county youth, and other OVX and VKAT groups across the state assessed 767 stores.¹⁶⁸ The state program compiled all of the data into a comprehensive report, which revealed that 85% of tobacco retailers in Vermont sold flavored tobacco products and 82% of tobacco retailers within 1,000 feet of a school sold these products.¹⁶⁸ These results, coupled with the knowledge that flavored tobacco products can attract new youth users, led the state, youth groups, and coalitions to focus their efforts on reducing the availability of flavored tobacco products.^{2,34}

Youth groups from Windsor County shared the data and their personal stories about the availability of flavored tobacco in their community with state legislators. Legislators shared the youths' stories later in town hall meetings they held across the state. Williams reflected on the experience. "Taking that data and working with the youth to develop their narratives about what they saw enabled them to go talk to decision makers," she said. "Knowing that their legislators used the data was so empowering for the youth."

Gaining youth buy-in is critical for statewide initiatives

When state tobacco control programs choose the direction for youth engagement efforts, it can be challenging to get youth invested. Local coalitions like MAPP engaged youth and built trust by giving them support, recognition, and opportunities to lead. Some youth groups chose to shift their focus and pursue other strategies unrelated to the assessment results because the youth did not feel connected to the topic. The coordinators for these groups stressed the importance of selecting activities that align with the youths' interests and ensuring that youth's goals are reflected throughout the process. When discussing how to engage youth, Sturges noted, "It is critical to ensure that youth have an opportunity to be heard, are supported, and are respected."

Why Invest in Youth Engagement?

Youth play a critical role in achieving tobacco control goals. Young people bring enthusiasm, creativity, and a powerful voice to tobacco control efforts. Youth input and involvement help communicate the impact of tobacco use on young people, implement effective strategies to reduce youth tobacco use, and shift social norms.⁵ This case for investment gives information to educate decision makers and leadership about the important role of youth engagement in a comprehensive tobacco control program.

History and Adoption

For over 25 years, public health experts have agreed that it is critical to prevent young people from trying and using tobacco.¹⁶⁹ Early efforts focused on health education, but by the 1990s, new strategies began to engage youth as important partners in combatting the tobacco industry.¹² The youth-led *truth*[®] media campaign in Florida encouraged youth to take an active role in exposing the industry's manipulative tactics.¹³ The campaign and complementary youth engagement efforts greatly reduced teen smoking.¹⁷⁰ Following this success, the American Legacy Foundation (now the Truth Initiative) funded efforts to empower youth in 19 states.¹⁵

Youth engagement is now a common practice in coordinated tobacco control strategies.¹⁶ Many states and localities have involved youth in tobacco control efforts in some way.¹⁴ In recent years, youth have helped inform the public about the dangers of secondhand smoke, the influence of the tobacco industry in stores, and the importance of increasing the sales age to 21.¹⁷⁻¹⁹

Scientific Evidence

Evidence linking the involvement of youth in tobacco control to positive health outcomes is still emerging, due to limited evaluation of youth engagement.³ But this does not mean that engaging youth is not important or that it is not considered an important tobacco control strategy. Research has shown that involving youth in implementing communications campaigns, creating tobacco-free environments, and reducing the influence of tobacco product advertising and promotion are effective when there is sustained funding and commitment from partners.¹⁷¹⁻¹⁷⁴ Other research has noted that the popularity of youth engagement as a practice far outpaces the research on its effectiveness.¹⁷⁵ Supporting youth engagement research is critical to grow the evidence for involving youth in tobacco control.

Examples of successful youth engagement continue to grow as programs involve youth in strategies proven to reduce youth tobacco use and prevent initiation. These strategies include creating tobacco-free environments, increasing the price of tobacco products, reducing youth exposure to tobacco advertising, and communicating the dangers of youth tobacco use through hard-hitting media campaigns.^{1,2,59,61,73,176} For instance, youth have helped ban tobacco price discounts in Providence, Rhode Island, restrict sales of flavored tobacco products in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and increase the legal age to buy tobacco products to 21 in Hawaii.^{1,19,63,81} Even youth engagement efforts with limited resources have impacted tobacco control. Despite a significantly reduced budget, the North Carolina youth engagement program helped create tobacco-free environments throughout the state, protecting youth and others from tobacco smoke in parks, colleges, and multi-unit housing.^{14,139}

Cost

Tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the U.S.³ Cigarette smoking resulted in \$170 billion in direct health care costs in 2013 and \$156 billion in annual productivity losses.^{3,177} The burden of tobacco use is particularly high for young people. If smoking prevalence continues to follow current trends, an estimated 5.6 million youth will die early from a smoking-related illness.³ By reducing the impact of tobacco use and exposure on young people, youth engagement efforts help decrease both the health and financial burdens of tobacco use.

The cost of engaging youth varies depending on the level of youth involvement and the type of funding. Many programs operate with only the help of youth volunteers and in-kind donations. With available funds, others have invested in an adult staff person who specializes in working with youth. While the latter approach requires funding, the return on investment can be great when that adult effectively engages youth. Involving youth in existing efforts is more cost-effective than building youth engagement from the ground up. Programs that involve youth in environmental and social norm change, rather than individual change, can provide a better return on investment. Past experiences in Florida suggest that the large and immediate gains made by comprehensive tobacco control efforts with strong youth engagement are in danger of being reversed if funding is reduced.¹⁷¹

Sustainability

Youth can make meaningful contributions that build the capacity and sustainability of tobacco control programs. Young people infuse programs with energy and creativity. They can offer new perspectives and ensure that activities will resonate with youth.⁷ Youth engagement can help achieve better outcomes for the young people and adults involved with the program, for young people served by the program, and for the community as a whole.¹⁷⁵ When youth get involved in tobacco control programs, they are forming the next generation of tobacco control leadership.¹⁰ Youth who see the impact of their efforts may even choose to devote their careers to building tobacco-free communities.⁸

Involving young people also helps spread messages to a wider audience. Youth use their influence with peers and community leaders to change social norms around tobacco use and build support for tobacco control strategies.⁵ Their messages can also help sustain programs by educating people about the importance of long-term, adequately funded comprehensive tobacco control programs.

Tobacco Prevention and Control

Anti-lobbying Restrictions for CDC Grantees

Publisher: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Summary: What lobbying activities are allowed and not allowed for grantees receiving CDC funding

http://bit.ly/cdc_lobbyingrestrictions

Assessing Retail Environments with STARS: Standardized Tobacco Assessment for Retail Settings (2015)

Publisher: Center for Public Health Systems Science

Summary: States' experiences using the STARS tool to survey retail stores

http://bit.ly/cphss_stars

Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs (2014)

Publisher: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Summary: Strategies and funding recommendations to plan and implement state tobacco control programs

http://bit.ly/bp_2014

Best Practices User Guide: Health Communications in Tobacco Prevention and Control (2018)

Publisher: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Summary: Steps that state tobacco control staff and partners can take to develop effective health communications

http://bit.ly/cdc_communications

Best Practices User Guide: Health Equity in Tobacco Prevention and Control (2015)

Publisher: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Summary: Steps that state tobacco control staff and partners can take to promote health equity and reduce tobacco-related disparities

http://bit.ly/cdc_healthequity

Best Practices User Guide: Program Infrastructure in Tobacco Prevention and Control (2017)

Publisher: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Summary: Steps that state tobacco control staff and partners can take to build strong program infrastructure

http://bit.ly/cdc_programinfrastructure

Create Change: A Student Toolkit

Publisher: Tobacco-Free College Campus Initiative

Summary: Toolkit for college students interested in promoting smoke-free or tobacco-free campuses

http://bit.ly/tfcci_studenttoolkit

Developing an Effective Evaluation Report: Setting the Course for Effective Program Evaluation (2013)

Publisher: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Summary: Workbook to develop a final evaluation report

http://bit.ly/cdc_evalreport

E-cigarette Use among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General (2016)

Publisher: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Summary: Comprehensive review of the public health issue of e-cigarettes and their impact on U.S. youth and young adults

http://bit.ly/cdc_sgr2016

E-cigarettes Shaped like USB Flash Drives: Information for Parents, Educators, and Health Care Providers

Publisher: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Summary: Infographic about the health risks and rise in popularity of e-cigarettes shaped like USB flash drives

http://bit.ly/cdc_ecigarettesUSB

Evaluation Guide: Writing SMART Objectives

Publisher: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Summary: Workbook on using the SMART approach to create realistic and measurable program objectives

http://bit.ly/cdc_smartobjectives

Fresh Empire

Publisher: U.S. Food and Drug Administration

Summary: Public education campaign designed to prevent and reduce tobacco use among at-risk multicultural youth who identify with hip-hop culture

http://bit.ly/fda_freshempirecampaign

Health Care Professionals: Educate Your Young Patients about the Risks of E-cigarettes

Publisher: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Summary: Healthcare provider card with guided discussion points for talking with young patients about e-cigarettes

http://bit.ly/surgeongeneral_providers

The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General (2014)

Publisher: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Summary: Overview of the progress made to reduce tobacco use over the last 50 years and the continued burden of tobacco-related death and disease

http://bit.ly/cdc_sgr2014

How to Conduct Store Observations of Tobacco Marketing and Products (2016)

Publisher: Preventing Chronic Disease

Authors: Feld A, Johnson T, Byerly K, Ribisl K

Summary: Detailed steps for conducting store observations of tobacco marketing and products

http://bit.ly/feld_storeobservations

Implementing Photovoice in Your Community

Publisher: Community Tool Box

Summary: Guide to the Photovoice process of using photos and videos to share one's environment and experiences with others

http://bit.ly/ctb_photovoice

Kick Butts Day Activities

Publisher: Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids

Summary: Featured activities for the annual Kick Butts Day national day of youth activism

http://bit.ly/tfk_kickbutts

Know the Risks: A Youth Guide to E-cigarettes

Publisher: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Summary: Presentation for youth on the dangers of e-cigarettes

http://bit.ly/cdc_knowtherisks

Media Campaign Resource Center

Publisher: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Summary: Searchable archive of CDC-licensed tobacco control ads

http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/media_campaigns

MyMaps

Publisher: Google

Summary: Free tool to create and share custom maps

<https://www.google.com/maps/about/mymaps>

Oklahoma's Youth-Driven Tobacco Policy Campaigns: Assessment of Impacts and Lessons Learned (2015)

Publisher: American Journal of Preventive Medicine

Authors: Ross H, Dearing J, Rollins A

Summary: Lessons learned from the realignment of Oklahoma's Students Working Against Tobacco initiative to focus on high-impact activities

http://bit.ly/ross_okyouthcampaign

Playing Tobacco Free: Making Your Community's Outdoor Recreational Facilities Tobacco Free

Publisher: Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation, Association for Nonsmokers-Minnesota

Summary: Steps for adults and youth interested in promoting tobacco-free outdoor recreational facilities

http://bit.ly/tfyr_playtobaccofree

Point-of-Sale Strategies: A Tobacco Control Guide (2014)

Publisher: Center for Public Health Systems Science and the Tobacco Control Legal Consortium

Summary: Strategies to reduce marketing and promotion of tobacco products in retail stores

http://bit.ly/cphss_pointofsale

Policy Strategies: A Tobacco Control Guide (2014)

Publisher: Center for Public Health Systems Science and the Tobacco Control Legal Consortium

Summary: Strategies to implement evidence-based tobacco control policies

http://bit.ly/cphss_policystrategies

Preventing Tobacco Use among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General (2012)

Publisher: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Summary: Comprehensive review of the health effects of tobacco use among youth and young adults in the U.S.

http://bit.ly/cdc_sgr2012

Pricing Policy: A Tobacco Control Guide (2014)

Publisher: Center for Public Health Systems Science and the Tobacco Control Legal Consortium

Summary: Information on implementing pricing policies

http://bit.ly/cphss_policypricing

Program Sustainability Assessment Tool

Publisher: Center for Public Health Systems Science

Summary: Free 40-question self-assessment to evaluate the sustainability capacity of a program

<https://sustaintool.org>

The Real Cost Campaign

Publisher: U.S. Food and Drug Administration

Summary: Public education campaign designed to educate youth on the dangers of tobacco use

http://bit.ly/fda_therealcost

Smoke Free Media Guide (2014)

Publisher: Reality Check

Summary: Information and strategies for working with youth interested in reducing onscreen tobacco use

http://bit.ly/realitycheck_mediaguide

Spark Advocacy Guide (2014)

Publisher: Spark

Summary: Action guide for young adults interested in promoting tobacco-free college campuses

http://bit.ly/spark_advocacy

STARS Policy Crosswalk (2015)

Publisher: Center for Public Health Systems Science

Summary: Table of STARS assessment items and related tobacco retail policies

http://bit.ly/cphss_starscrosswalk

Store Assessment Tools

Publisher: Counter Tobacco

Summary: Tools and resources to collect data about tobacco product marketing and promotion in stores

http://bit.ly/ct_tools

Strategies for the Long-Term Sustainability of an Initiative

Publisher: Community Tool Box

Summary: Eight steps to plan for program sustainability

http://bit.ly/ctb_sustainability

Taking Down Tobacco

Publisher: Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids

Summary: Free online and in-person training program for middle and high school youth

<http://www.takingdowntobacco.org>

Talk with Your Teen about E-cigarettes: A Tip Sheet for Parents

Publisher: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Summary: Tips and guided discussion points for parents to talk with their teens about e-cigarettes

http://bit.ly/cdc_teentalk

This Free Life

Publisher: U.S. Food and Drug Administration

Summary: Public education campaign designed to prevent and reduce tobacco use among LGBT young adults

http://bit.ly/fda_thisfreelife

Tobacco Prevention Toolkit

Publisher: Stanford Medicine

Summary: Adaptable toolkit of lessons, presentations, worksheets, and activities designed for schools and other organizations to prevent student initiation of tobacco use

http://bit.ly/stanford_preventiontoolkit

Truth®

Publisher: Truth Initiative

Summary: Tobacco control information for youth and ways to get involved in reducing tobacco use

<https://www.thetruth.com>

Walking Tobacco Audit

Publisher: Counter Tobacco

Summary: Guide for youth to assess tobacco retailers and advertisements visible on their walk to school

http://bit.ly/ct_walkingaudit

Youth Participation in a Community Campaign to Pass a Clean Indoor Air Ordinance (2010)

Publisher: Health Promotion Practice

Authors: Bozlak C, Kelley M

Summary: Lessons learned from involving youth in a clean indoor air campaign

http://bit.ly/bozlak_youthcampaign

Youth Engagement

ACT for Youth

Publisher: ACT for Youth Center of Excellence

Summary: Information and resources for promoting positive youth development

<http://www.actforyouth.net>

Being Y-AP Savvy: A Primer on Creating and Sustaining Youth-Adult Partnerships (2010)

Publisher: ACT for Youth Center of Excellence

Author: Zeldin S, Collura J

Summary: Manual to strengthen youth-adult partnerships within organizations and communities

http://bit.ly/zeldin_yapartnerships

Engaging Older Youth: Program and City-Level Strategies to Support Sustained Participation in Out-of-School Time (2010)

Publisher: Harvard Family Research Project

Summary: Strategies from out-of-school time programs that keep middle and high school youth engaged

http://bit.ly/hfrp_engagingolderyouth

Engaging Youth in Community Decision Making (2007)

Publisher: Center for the Study of Social Policy

Summary: Toolkit for creating strong youth-adult partnerships to change communities

http://bit.ly/cssp_youthcommunity

Engaging Youth in Partnership: A Resource Document for Youth Serving Agencies and Programs (2011)

Publisher: National Initiative to Improve Adolescent Health

Summary: Youth engagement best practices and resources

http://bit.ly/niiiah_youthpartnership

Equipping Public Health Professionals for Youth Engagement: Lessons Learned from a 2-Year Pilot Study (2012)

Publisher: Health Promotion Practice

Authors: Sahay T, Rempel B, Lodge J

Summary: Insights from a pilot project to build the capacity of public health professionals to engage youth

http://bit.ly/sahay_youthengagement

Facilitation Techniques: Get the Most Out of Brainstorming (2015)

Publisher: FACT

Summary: Techniques to involve youth in decision making

http://bit.ly/fact_facilitationtechniques

Involving Youth

Publisher: Youth.gov

Summary: Strategies and resources to meaningfully involve youth in program development

http://bit.ly/youthgov_involvingyouth

New Generation Initiative: Community Engagement Guide (2012)

Publisher: Rural Economic Development Center

Summary: Workbook for engaging young people in rural communities

http://bit.ly/redc_communityengagement

Regional Youth Engagement Workshops: Summary Report - June 2016

Publisher: California Youth Advocacy Network

Summary: Challenges and solutions to recruit and retain youth shared during regional workshops with youth engagement partners

http://bit.ly/CYAN_report

Sustaining Youth Engagement Initiatives: Challenges and Opportunities (2009)

Publisher: The Finance Project

Summary: Framework for sustaining youth engagement initiatives

http://bit.ly/fp_sustaininginitiatives

What You Need to Know about Background Screening (2013)

Publisher: U.S. Department of Justice, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

Summary: Guidebook for youth-serving organizations on screening potential employees and volunteers that will work with youth

http://bit.ly/usdoj_backgroundscreening

Youth Engagement Alliance

Publisher: Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids

Summary: Resource network supporting adult program coordinators who work with youth in tobacco control

http://bit.ly/tfk_youthalliance

Youth Engagement Toolkit

Publisher: Texas School Safety Center

Summary: Toolkit of strategies to recruit and involve youth in tobacco control efforts

http://bit.ly/txssc_youthtoolkit

Youth Engagement Toolkit

Publisher: Tobwis

Summary: Toolkit for recruiting, working with, and retaining youth involvement in tobacco control efforts

<http://tobwis.org/youth-engagement>

Featured Youth Engagement Programs

The 84

Sponsor: Massachusetts Tobacco Cessation and Prevention Program

Summary: Massachusetts's statewide youth movement to educate peers and reduce the influence of tobacco in their communities

<http://the84.org>

Counter Strike

Publisher: Arizona STAND

Summary: Program in which teens work with local law enforcement to identify stores that sell tobacco to minors

<http://www.counterstrikeaz.com>

FACT

Summary: Wisconsin youth-led movement to spread the truth about tobacco throughout the state

<https://factmovement.org>

Iowa Students for Tobacco Education and Prevention

Sponsor: Iowa Division of Tobacco Use Prevention and Control

Summary: Iowa's youth-led movement focused on ending tobacco in the state through education and awareness events

<https://www.iowastep.org>

Raze

Sponsor: West Virginia Division of Tobacco Prevention

Summary: West Virginia's youth-led antitobacco movement dedicated to educating communities about tobacco use

<https://www.razewv.com>

Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT)

Sponsor: Oklahoma State Department of Health

Summary: Oklahoma's movement to empower youth to resist tobacco

<https://www.ok.gov/okswat>

Youth Council

Sponsor: Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Summary: High school and college leaders who deliver peer-to-peer presentations and organize local awareness activities

<https://hiphi.org/youth>

Y Street

Sponsor: Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth

Summary: Virginia volunteer initiative for high school students to promote healthy, tobacco-free lifestyles

<http://ystreet.org>

Vermont Tobacco Control Program: 2014 Counter Tools Store Audit Report (2015)

Publisher: Vermont Tobacco Control Program

Summary: Results from the Counter Balance campaign's store audit of more than 750 Vermont tobacco retailers

http://bit.ly/vttcp_countertoolsaudit

Case Studies

Indiana

Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Commission

Publisher: Indiana Department of Health

Summary: Resources and information about state tobacco prevention and cessation efforts in Indiana

<https://www.in.gov/isdh/tpc/index.htm>

VOICE Indiana

Sponsor: Indiana Teen Institute

Summary: Indiana's statewide youth empowerment brand designed to engage, educate, and empower teens to celebrate a tobacco-free lifestyle

<https://www.voiceindiana.org>

Vermont

CounterBalance

Summary: Vermont program focused on countering the tobacco industry's influence in retail stores

<http://counterbalancevt.com>

Tobacco Control Program

Publisher: Vermont Department of Health

Summary: Information, resources, and data from the Vermont Tobacco Control Program

<http://healthvermont.gov/wellness/tobacco>

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