

# Great American Smokeout 2020

The Great American Smokeout (GASO) is an annual event sponsored by the American Cancer Society (ACS) that encourages people to try quitting smoking for at least 24 hours with the hope that their quit attempt will last longer. Portland Public Health (PPH) celebrated this year's event by distributing GASO Quit Bags to support community partner participation.



About 32.4 million American adults still smoke cigarettes and nearly 70% say they want to quit, according to the 2020 Surgeon General's Report. Addiction to nicotine is one of the strongest and most deadly addictions one can have. Quitting is hard, often takes more than one quit attempt, and requires a lot of support.

Source: American Cancer Society



Smoking cessation support bags help people quit smoking. They are great conversation starters, deliver a variety of information & resources in a fun way, and provide support from the beginning of the quitting process. PPH celebrated this year's GASO by creating cessation support bags for their partners. Quit Bags included a stress ball, hand sanitizer, chap stick, gum, and mints, all of which had the Maine QuitLink logo. For informational material, bags included Maine QuitLink magnets, tobacco cessation resources that were both local to Maine and nationally available, free mobile apps and online resources, and a Quitting Conversations postcard with information on Non-Clinical Outreach trainings. A press release and several social media posts also went out to spread awareness of the event.

*"Our outreach team with Amistad was so happy to receive the packets. Our lead outreach worker is personally utilizing the information in the midst of a smoking cessation attempt, so this was timely for him!"*

*-Amy Geren,*

*Program Director at Portland Downtown*



A total of 271 bags were given to community partners who wanted to support their staff and tenants in their quit journeys: this included worksites, behavioral health settings, a healthcare site, and multi-unit housing companies. The City of Portland staff who wanted to participate also were provided the bags. PPH partnered with CityFit, the City of Portland's worksite wellness partner, to get Maine QuitLink information posted on the internal website. 24 City of Portland human resource staff were provided the NCO training.

The goals of this project were to recognize and champion the Great American Smokeout, support City of Portland staff and community partners in their quit journeys, build rapport with partners and CityFit, and create the opportunity for sustainability by raising awareness around tobacco treatment resources that PPH can provide to their Cumberland County partners. This also served as a successful way to approach partners with a partnership form.

## For More Information Contact Us At:

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