

Still A Good Cause for Celebration!

Maine Tobacco Prevention Success Story

AT A GLANCE

This September, the Portland Public Health's (PPH) Tobacco Prevention Team worked with the management team at Still A Good Cause Thrift Store (SAGC) to combat the ongoing challenge of keeping their storefront smoke-free. Our District Tobacco Prevention Partners (DTPPs) assisted SAGC to implement a comprehensive tobacco policy and explore strategies to communicate the policy.

PUBLIC HEALTH CHALLENGE

There is no safe amount of secondhand smoke exposure. Secondhand smoke is when smoke is being inhaled involuntarily by an individual within the vicinity of someone smoking. According to the Center for Disease Control, tobacco smoke contains more than 7,000 chemicals and hundreds of these are toxic and many are cancerous. Sticky, highly toxic particulates, like nicotine, can cling to walls and ceilings. The smoke coming into the building also created a risk of thirdhand smoke. Thirdhand smoke consists of the tobacco residue from cigarettes, cigars, and other tobacco products that is left behind after smoking and builds up on surfaces and furnishings. Gases can be absorbed into dust in a room, carpets, draperies, and other fabrics or upholsteries. A 2002 study from the American Nonsmokers Rights Foundation (ANRF) found that these toxic brews can then re-emit back into the air and recombine to form harmful compounds that remain at high levels long after smoking has stopped occurring.

APPROACH

Our DTPPs took advantage of being back in the community by collectively making an effort to be visible throughout communities in Cumberland County. These efforts included attending in-person meetings and events organized by our community partners, visiting farmers markets, and embarking to greet local businesses on foot. Visiting businesses in person allowed our DTPPs to identify areas that would benefit from tobacco prevention services. DTPPs noticed that SAGC posted handmade "no smoking signs" on their storefront, and offered to assist in reducing the secondhand and thirdhand smoke that was surrounding their entryway. On September 21st, SAGC adopted a more comprehensive tobacco policy and posted new signage to communicate the new policy. SAGC also posted their tobacco policy publicly for patrons and visitors to observe.



RESULTS

After SAGC posted signage and their tobacco policy, DTPPs followed up with store staff to gather feedback on the impact the signage and policy had on the levels of secondhand smoke in their entryway. According to the staff at SAGC, the levels of secondhand smoke outside their storefront has dramatically decreased since posting their signage and expressed gratitude for the services our DTPPs provided.

***"The signs have been working wonderfully!
[The exposure to secondhand smoke] has
been a night and day difference!"***

Kathleen Guzman, Store Manager of Still A Good Cause



For More information contact us at
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