SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUPPORT NEW MAINERS

Maine Tobacco Prevention Success Story

AT A GLANCE

Maine has welcomed many New Mainers who come from all over the world. Oftentimes folks are coming over with their families and need supports that will help the elderly, adults, and young kids. That is where the Intercultural Community Center (ICC) comes in. They work to support and improve the lives of immigrants by providing health, social and educational opportunities.

PUBLIC HEALTH CHALLENGE

Vaping and e-cigarette use continues to be high among Maine students. According to the 2021 Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey, 31% of Maine youth have “ever used” e-cigarettes, and 17% “currently use” e-cigarettes. E-cigarettes contain nicotine, an extremely addictive chemical that, according to the CDC, “can harm adolescent brain development” impacting: mood, learning, and impulse control. Tobacco companies advertise their products as a better alternative to traditional cigarettes but long-term health effects continue to be studied by professionals and remain largely unknown. With new immigrant students, it's important that public health experts support them and meet them where they are. The ICC is an important partner because they are utilized by all family members, and the youth are able to learn in a comfortable space and with folks who have similar cultural backgrounds.

APPROACH

While Portland District Tobacco Prevention Partners (DTPPs) were tabling at events this past summer, one event also had the Intercultural Community Center there. A DTPP was able to connect with them about resources and they were excited to collaborate. The ICC was also excited to know about the programs offered and that they were increasingly accessible to the diverse populations they serve. With the ICC community being made up of New Mainers, it was beneficial to use the translated materials that the Portland DTPPs had created in the spring after working with students who are English Language Learners.

Photo from the Intercultural Community Center

RESULTS

Along with passing a policy, they were also excited to include us in their academic schedule for their youth. The DTPPs will be giving E-Cigarette Prevention presentations and Sidekicks trainings to the youth in ages ranging from third to eighth grade. They are also interested in potentially including our adult presentations for their other community members.

"We look forward to working with you on empowering people to make tobacco-free choices. We'll take any youth presentations you can offer."
Emily Loder, Intercultural Community Center's Special Projects Manager

public health

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MAINE PREVENTION SERVICES
Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention
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