



# Tobacco-Free Parks & Recreation Presentation Outline: Discussing Tobacco-Free Policies with Community Officials

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## Introduction (Who?)

- Start by introducing yourself: name, grade, school. If you are a resident of this city, say so.
- Describe your group, what it does, and why you are concerned about tobacco.

## Make your request for a tobacco-free park policy (What & Where?)

- State that your group is asking the city to adopt a tobacco-free policy for all city parks.
- Say that you would like the policy to cover ALL tobacco products, including cigarettes, cigars, hookah, chewing tobacco and electronic cigarettes.
- Read the list of the parks, beaches, athletic fields, etc.
- **Handout:** If you did not give the "Policy Maker's Guide to Tobacco-Free Parks" packet and your policy request to the city officials before the meeting, hand out these packets now.
- Explain that the packets contain helpful information, including sample policies from other cities.

## Explain your reasons for wanting the policy (Why?)

1. **Parks are healthy places** to exercise, relax, and enjoy the beauty of the outdoors
  - Tobacco-free policies remind youth that tobacco use is an unhealthy behavior.
  - Describe other park policies that have similar meaning: no alcohol, clean up after your dog, etc.
2. Policies reduce harmful cigarette **litter** in parks, playgrounds, beaches, etc.
  - Litter can be swallowed by toddlers.
  - Pets, birds, fish may eat the litter.
  - Cigarette litter is the #1 source of litter in parks.
  - **Handout:** Pass around your collection of cigarette litter. Explain which park it came from and how long it took to collect.
3. Policies allow everyone using the parks to be positive **role models** for youth
  - Share a story (coach, parent, babysitting, etc.).
4. Policies keep people from being exposed to **secondhand smoke** and **secondhand e-cigarette aerosol**.
  - When you are near someone who is smoking—even outdoors--secondhand smoke is dangerous to breathe in
  - Share a story (beach, bleachers, huddle, playground, etc).

5. Policies for parks will be **consistent with policies for school grounds** and athletic facilities
  - School district grounds are tobacco free.
  - Having all athletic areas in our community tobacco free would be easier to understand.
  - Share a story (school games played on city fields or city games played on school fields).
  
6. Many **other Minnesota cities** have passed similar policies
  - **Visual Aid:** Show the map of Minnesota and/or the map of the Twin Cities metro area.
  - Ask city officials to turn to the map in their packet.
  - Point out the communities with policies closest to your city.
  - According to a 2004 University of Minnesota study, over 90% of MN cities with policies would recommend these policies to other cities (*Note: TFYR staff or another adult can explain more about this study*).
  
7. Other reasons of your own

### **Demonstrate community support (Who agrees with you?)**

1. Petitions
  - **Handout:** Hold them up or pass out copies to the city officials.
  - Describe where you collected them and what type of people signed them (adults, youth, etc.).
  
2. Letters of Support
  - **Handout:** Hand out photocopied packets of these letters.
  - Read off the list of organizations which signed the letters.

### **Discuss enforcement (How?)**

- Unlimited number of metal signs are free from the Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation program after the policy is adopted.
- **Visual Aid:** Show an example of the sign.
- Explain that most cities enforce their policies by posting these signs and educating community members about the policy.
- Other enforcement opportunities are for park staff and community members to remind violators of the policy.
- Offer to assist with any educational activities (news articles, letters to teams, etc).

### **Conclusion (Repeat what & why)**

- Repeat your request for a tobacco-free policy for all park areas.
- Thank the city officials for their time.
- Ask them if they have any questions.

# Playing Tobacco Free: Tobacco-Free Policies For Park & Recreation Areas

## Tobacco-Free Park and Recreation Areas Promote Health

- **Parks are established to promote healthy activities.** The purpose of park areas is to promote community wellness, and tobacco-free policies fit with this idea.
- **Tobacco-free environments promote positive community role modeling** and protect the health, safety, and welfare of community members.
- **Cigarette litter is dangerous.** Discarded cigarettes pollute the land and water and may be ingested by toddlers, pets, birds, or fish.
- **Tobacco-free policies help change community norms.** Tobacco-free policies establish the community norm that tobacco use is not an acceptable behavior for young people or adults within the entire community.
- **Secondhand smoke harms everyone, even outdoors.** The 2006 Surgeon General's report concludes that secondhand smoke is a human carcinogen for which there is no safe level of exposure. Exposure to secondhand smoke has immediate health consequences on the cardiovascular and respiratory systems.<sup>1</sup>
- **Youth electronic cigarette use is on the rise.** Youth use of e-cigarettes tripled between 2013 and 2014.<sup>2</sup> Eliminating e-cigarettes use from parks demonstrates that these devices are not safe for youth.
- **Policies provide consistency among community athletic facilities and groups.** The majority of community sporting events are held at either city or school athletic facilities, and nearly all school districts prohibit tobacco use on their entire grounds. Also, many local athletic associations have tobacco-free policies but use city facilities and would benefit from a city-wide policy.

### The Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation Initiative

Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation (TFYR) is a recreation-based tobacco prevention program that assists recreational groups in promoting healthy tobacco-free lifestyles. TFYR offers free assistance in tobacco-free policy development and implementation. Contact TFYR for policy assistance or more information!



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## Tobacco-Free Park and Recreation Policies Work

Over 150 Minnesota communities have adopted tobacco-free policies for their park and recreation areas. In 2004, the University of Minnesota surveyed Minnesota residents to learn about the level of support for tobacco-free park and recreation policies.<sup>3</sup> Minnesota park directors were also interviewed to ask how they felt about tobacco-free policies. Here are the study's key findings:

### What Minnesota residents say:

- **Most Minnesotans support tobacco-free park and recreation policies.** 70% of Minnesota residents support tobacco-free park and recreation areas. In addition, 66% of golfers and 73% of families with children support these policies.
- **Policies should prohibit all forms of tobacco.** 79% of residents supported tobacco-free policies that prohibit all forms of tobacco use, including spit tobacco.
- **Parks should be tobacco free at all times.** Just over half (53%) of respondents supported the prohibition of tobacco use in parks at all times.
- **Community members support policy enforcement.** 79% of Minnesotans felt that policies should be enforced by asking violators to leave park areas. 64% felt that violators should be fined.

### What Minnesota park directors say:

- **Park directors overwhelmingly recommend adopting tobacco-free policies.** 90% of park directors in cities with policies reported that they would recommend tobacco-free policies to other communities.
- **Nearly all park directors personally supported tobacco-free policies.** Out of 257 park directors,
  - 96% wanted to provide positive role models for youth.
  - 92% wanted to reduce youth opportunity to smoke.
  - 92% wanted to avoid litter from cigarette butts.
  - 89% wanted to promote community well-being.
- **Policies reduce litter and maintenance costs.** 58% of Minnesota park directors in cities with policies reported cleaner park areas.
- **Policy enforcement and violations are not issues.** In Minnesota communities with a policy, few park directors (26%) reported compliance issues and 74% reported no problems with park users violating the policy.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2006). The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the U.S. Surgeon General.

<sup>2</sup> 2014 National Youth Tobacco Survey

<sup>3</sup> Klein EG, Forster JL, Outley CW, McFadden B. (2007). "Minnesota Tobacco-Free Park Policies: Attitudes of the General Public and Park Officials." *Nicotine & Tobacco Research* 9, 51, pp.49-55.



# The 4'C's of a Presentation

## C1: Clear

## C2: Credible

## C3: Concise

## C4: Consistent

**Clear.** Define the issues by putting together strong talking points. Use scientific expertise to help publicly address why you care about what you're doing.

**Concise.** Your comments should be edited to between 5-15 seconds per thought or to very short sentences. Be creative! A key message should be an idea that can be explained in 1-2 sentences.

**Credible.** Use your own words to connect with people's life interests and life experience. Use your own personal stories. Tell it in your own way. Let your personality shine through.

**Consistent.** Report your key messages in a variety of ways. It takes on average 7 times to remember something. Say it at least 7 times throughout the presentation.

### Presentation Tips:

1. **Know the room.** Become familiar with the place you will speak. Arrive early and get a feel for the setting.
2. **Know the audience.** If possible, greet some of the audience members as they arrive. Look up policy makers' pictures on line, so you know who is who.
3. **Know your material.** Practice! Practice! Practice!
4. Learn how to **relax**...take deep, slow breaths.
5. **Visualize yourself speaking.** Imagine yourself speaking... your voice, loud, clear and confident. You are the expert! When you visualize yourself as successful, you are successful!
6. People want you to **succeed**...your audience is interested in what you are saying. They want you to succeed, not fail.
7. **Don't apologize for being nervous.** Most of the time your nervousness does not show at all. If you don't say anything, no one will know. Instead, turn nervousness into positive energy- the same nervous energy that causes stage fright can be turned into positive enthusiasm.
8. If you don't know the answer to a question, **admit you don't know the answer.** Tell them you will find out the answer and get back to them.
9. **Gain experience in public speaking.** Experience builds confidence, which is key to a good presentation. Most anxiety decreases as you give more speeches.
10. **Dress professionally.** If you want to be taken seriously, dress the part.
11. **Ask if you can approach the council bench** before you deliver materials. Example: "May I approach the bench to show you the petitions we gathered?"
12. **Always address policy makers** as "Councilmember," "Mayor," "Chair," or "Mr. /Ms." Example: "Mayor Smith, according to our clean up, we found 100 cigarettes in one-half hour."
13. Make sure to **turn off cell phones**- you don't want to be "the one" that interrupts the meeting.
14. If you need to bring a drink, **bring water.** We have had students spill coke on brand new carpet in council chambers... ouch!
15. **Dispose of gum.** Chewing gum while presenting is distracting and considered very unprofessional.





# Role Playing Game

## Park Board or City Council meeting



**Intro:** This role-play activity will enable you to practice what you have learned, and help anticipate some of the conditions and questions of our presentation. This will also teach the group to solve tough questions before they are asked.

**Directions:** Divide up into teams and choose a person/role to play. Use the information about the City of Yourtown on the back of this sheet to play your role.

### Team 1- Supporters

**Tom:** You are the youth representative requesting the policy. You are here tonight representing the group. You will: a. Briefly summarize your group's policy request to the policy-making body.  
b. Be prepared to address many of the questions raised by the policy makers.

**Molly:** You are a parent of two young children, one who has asthma. You support the idea of tobacco-free parks, and know this policy will make the parks a better place to play.

**Mike:** You are the representative from the Yourtown Youth Soccer Association. Your association supports this policy since they have a similar tobacco-free policy for their own players and coaches. The problem with your policy is that you have no way of ensuring that spectators won't expose players to secondhand smoke since the city owns the fields the soccer association uses.

### Team 2- Policy Makers

**Kim:** You believe that this would help coaches and adults be positive role models for youth. You are tired of seeing the litter caused by tobacco that diminishes the beauty of your parks. You support the idea of a tobacco-free policy but only for youth recreational facilities. You will ask a question about whether the policy should just cover youth events and not all property.

**Scott:** You do not use tobacco, but feel that a tobacco-free policy is another example of government enacting a useless regulation. You have raised two tobacco-free children and believe it is the parents' role to keep their kids tobacco free. You will ask a question about how these policies impact youth smoking.

**Dave:** You are a parent of young children who use the city's playgrounds and beaches. You are concerned about your child's repeated exposure to secondhand smoke and the risk of ingesting cigarette butts. You do have concerns about how this policy will be enforced. You will ask how this policy is enforced and how it is working in different communities.

**Sherri:** You are a tobacco user, and believe the city shouldn't restrict smokers from using the cities recreation facilities. You believe the park board should focus its energy on bigger problems such as skateboarding on city sidewalks. You will ask if this policy discriminates against smokers by not letting smokers use the parks.

**Jim:** You serve on the countywide drug taskforce to reduce drug use. You think this policy is a nice idea, but believe that smokers know they are role models and they won't smoke when people are around. You will ask a question re: one more policy that people have to follow.

# **Yourtown, MN**

## **Community Profile**

Population: 1,200

### Existing Tobacco-Free Policies:

- All school property, including athletic facilities, are tobacco free
- Yourtown Youth Soccer Association has a policy for its players and coaches
- Most of the surrounding communities have some sort of tobacco-free parks policy.

### City-owned Park & Recreation Facilities:

- Johnson Athletic Complex (adult & youth softball, baseball, and soccer fields)
- Rampriders Skate Park
- Lake Ida Public Beach & Fishing Pier
- Anderson Memorial Indoor/Outdoor Ice Center
- 8 neighborhood parks that include playgrounds, courts, and picnic areas
- 16 tot lot play areas
- Yourtown Municipal Golf Course
- Lake Ida walking/biking trail
- Yourtown Community Center with outdoor aquatic facility and athletic complex

### Policy-Making Process:

- Park & Recreation Department operates the City-owned park & recreation facilities
- Park-related issues must be first addressed through the Park & Recreation Board
- The Park & Recreation Board does not have the authority to pass their own policies, but instead serves in an advisory capacity to the City Council
- The Yourtown City Council considers the Park & Recreation Board's recommendations and makes final decisions on all pending park policies

## Policy Adoption Assistance

# Free Signs Available



TFYR offers community park and recreation agencies technical assistance in tobacco-free policy development. TFYR also provides 12" X 18" metal tobacco-free signs for **FREE** to Minnesota communities that adopt comprehensive tobacco-free policies for their outdoor park and recreation areas. These signs are **FREE**, but all orders **require a copy of tobacco-free policy that includes electronic cigarettes on the policy and was adopted in 2014 or later.**

To qualify for the signs, the tobacco-free policy must include:

- A list of all the facilities the policy covers
- A statement that all forms of tobacco use are prohibited
- An enforcement plan that includes **both** community and staff notification **and** signage





# Tips for Talking with Reporters

If you are asked to do an interview with a reporter, you will likely be asked to do an interview on the spot. Some times you may have a few days advance notice of a reporter who wants to do a story on your group and your cause. Other times you may even find yourself pitching a story to a reporter to ask them to cover your cause.

- ★ Make sure the reporter has contact information for Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation (651-646-3005) and encourage him/her to call TFYR with additional questions.

## **If you are contacted by a reporter with no prior warning:**

- ★ Don't feel pressured to give answers right away! So that you can gather your thoughts, it's best if you ask the reporter if they're on a deadline, what it is, and tell them you will call back before their deadline. In the meantime, call your advisor and/or TFYR to talk through what you will say.
- ★ Relax and plan three or four points you want the reporter to remember and practice them.
- ★ Call the reporter back as soon as possible.

## **If you know ahead of time that you will be interviewed:**

- ★ Prepare what you want to say. Decide on three or four main points you want the reporter to remember.
- ★ Review the Frequently Asked Questions page in this section.
- ★ Practice your main points out loud and in front of someone else.
- ★ Ask your advisor to help you fill out the Media Interview Prep Sheet found in this section. Think of some tough questions the reporter may ask you and practice how you would answer the questions.



## **To pitch a story to a reporter in order to get media coverage:**

- ★ Talk with your adult advisor or TFYR first.
- ★ Research who you want to pitch the story to. Look at the newspaper or TV news station's web site and decide which reporter—who covers relevant topics such as community events, recreation, and health—would be best to cover the story.
- ★ Decide what it is you are asking the reporter to do. Do you want him/her to do an interview with your group? Do you want them to attend a presentation? When you talk to the reporter, tell him/her clearly what you are asking.
- ★ If you call the reporter, explain who you are, what group you are from, and that you'd like to give a story idea. Ask if the reporter is on a deadline. If s/he is on a deadline (the reporter may be trying to finish a story within the next few hours), schedule a time that you can call back. Typically reporters are more available in the morning. Be sure to call back!
- ★ A press release is also a good way to pitch a story to a reporter. A press release should be written only if there is no need for immediate action (ie, write a press release if a city council has passed a policy, you will be holding a publicity event in the city, etc.). Give the reporter a few days notice before an event takes place. Think of a press release as you writing your own story to get the reporter's attention. The press release should be written with the expectation that a reporter may simply take the press release and print it as though it was his/her story. See "Promoting the Policy" section for a sample press release.



### **When speaking with a reporter:**

- ★ If a reporter attends your event, try to find him/her, thank him/her for coming and ask if s/he would like to do a short interview.
- ★ Speak clearly and concisely. Be able to explain your story in two or three short sentences.
- ★ Present your conclusion first. This also applies if you are writing something for a reporter. Your time with the reporter is limited, so get your main points and conclusion across first. Reporters usually write stories by giving the conclusion first (in case their readers only read the first paragraph or two), so make your quote easy for the reporter to re-write.
- ★ After you give your conclusion and main points, revisit them with supporting points.
- ★ Give the reporter background information. Provide him/her with fact sheets and materials that will help support your story. Be sure to include things that have numbers and details that you may not remember (the tobacco-free parks study by the University of Minnesota, the tobacco-free parks FAQ sheet, etc.).
- ★ Be honest. If you don't know the answer to a question, don't guess! It's better to tell a reporter that you don't know the answer than to have a reporter print the wrong information. Simply say "I don't have the answer to that question, but I'd be happy to find the answer for you." Write yourself a reminder and let the reporter know that you will get back to him/her before the deadline.
- ★ At the end of the interview, thank the reporter for his/her time and make sure s/he has your phone number. Encourage him/her to contact you if s/he has further questions. Make sure the reporter has contact information for Katie Engman or Brittany McFadden at Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation (651-646-3005) and encourage him/her to call TFYR with additional questions. Let TFYR staff know that the reporter may be contacting them.

### **After the interview:**

- ★ Research any questions you left unanswered. Go through your materials and/or talk to your advisor. Call or email the reporter with the answer. Refer the reporter to Katie Engman at Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation at 651-646-3005 and let her know that the reporter may be contacting her.
- ★ You may wish to send an email or letter to the reporter to thank them for their time and ask them when the story will be printed or aired.

### **General etiquette:**

- ★ If a reporter calls you, call him/her back promptly. Even if you're not ready to give an interview, let him/her know that you got the message and that you will call back before his/her deadline.
- ★ Dress nicely for a face-to-face interview.
- ★ Do not chew gum or do anything else that distracts the reporter from what you're saying.
- ★ Stick to your talking points. Do not speak badly about any elected officials or community members who oppose your cause. Be positive!!
- ★ Assume that everything you say is "on the record." Don't say anything you wouldn't want reported in the final story.
- ★ Remember: Reporters want to know how young leaders are working toward a safe, healthy community!

