

Breaking News...

NYS TCP Lauded as National "Role Model," Future Funding Iffy

In November, national media sources recognized that, while the national smoking rate rose for the first time in 15 years, the smoking rate in New York State continued to drop to a record low of 16.8 percent. Credited for this feat are New York State's Comprehensive Tobacco Control Program (NYS TCP), clean air laws, and high cigarette taxes.

The NYS TCP uses a measured approach to save lives, reduce disease, save money, and protect kids. It is one of few New York State programs proven effective by an independent, external evaluation. In the 2008 Independent Evaluation Report, released in July 2009, RTI International concluded that "...the TCP's approach to reducing tobacco use and addiction and the resulting disease and premature death they cause is built on a solid foundation of evidence-based science...[and] have led to declines in youth and adult smoking rates that have outpaced national declines from 2003 through early 2008."

Funding for the NYS TCP is a wise investment. However, New York State is in the grips of a budgetary crisis, the likes of which we have never encountered. Lawmakers are faced with difficult decisions in the pursuit of bridging the \$3.2 billion deficit. Presently there is very real potential, given the high rate of effectiveness of the NYS TCP, for lawmakers to view tobacco control as a completed mission.

In reality, the NYS TCP experienced a \$16.4 million budget cut in 2008. The impact of that reduction was visible as early as Spring 2009 in service delivery cutbacks across the state, a 26% decline in anti-smoking message awareness among smokers, and elimination of enhanced NYS Smokers' Quitline services for uninsured callers and callers with Medicaid. The tobacco industry, meanwhile, has not reduced the \$34 million spent each and every day to persuade and encourage adults and children to use tobacco products.

The bottom line is that New York has more work to do. We have seen tremendous success from a model program, the New York State Tobacco Control Program. *And* there are still 2.5 million adult smokers in New York; most of whom want, need, and deserve the help of the NYS TCP. This mission is not over; we must continue to invest our dollars wisely by supporting a program that is proven to protect kids, save money and save lives.

Editor's Note: *Since this article was written, the NYS TCP budget was **slashed** an additional \$15 million, reducing the budget by 38% in just two years. (Dec. 1, 2009)*

Who are our Legislators and how do I reach them?

State Senator

Betty Little (R)

little@senate.state.ny.us

www.nysenate.gov/senator/elizabeth-little

Member of Assembly

Janet Duprey (R)

dupreyj@assembly.state.ny.us

www.assembly.state.ny.us/duprey

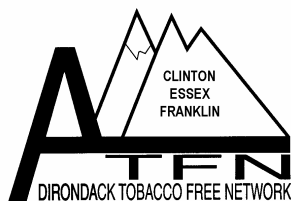
Member of Assembly

Teresa Sayward (R)

sayward@assembly.state.ny.us

www.assembly.state.ny.us/sayward

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NEWS



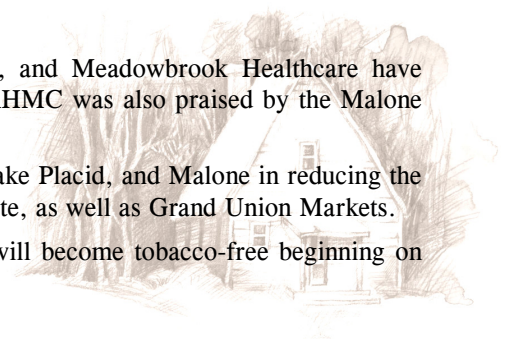
133 Margaret Street
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-565-4993
atfn@co.clinton.ny.us

In Your Backyard...

...Alice Hyde Medical Center, Adirondack Medical Center, CVPH Medical Center, and Meadowbrook Healthcare have marked the Second Anniversary of implementing their Tobacco-Free Grounds policies. AHMC was also praised by the Malone Telegram for their policy in an editorial about the 2009 Great American Smokeout.

...The Plattsburgh Price Chopper recently joined Price Chopper stores in Champlain, Lake Placid, and Malone in reducing the visibility of tobacco products. This has been done by Price Choppers across New York State, as well as Grand Union Markets.

...Inter-Lakes Health: Moses-Ludington Hospital announced that the facility grounds will become tobacco-free beginning on April 15, 2010. Congratulations, Ticonderoga!



Parents: Your Children Are In The Line Of Fire

A quick trip to the grocery store becomes an exercise in strategizing when children are in tow. With practiced skill, you maneuver your child past a barrage of advertising; alluring aisles of artfully packaged cookies, candies, chips, soda and sugared cereals. You scan your eyes over the items in your cart, making sure that no marshmallow-filled, sugar-coated, sprinkle-topped food items have crept past your defenses. The checkout register is in sight and you can breathe a sigh of relief. You and your child are home free, right? Wrong!

Advertising at the checkout area (also called the Point of Sale) is a powerful tool. By design, Point of Sale advertising attracts, informs, and persuades customers at a time

when they are vulnerable—at the moment they are poised to make a purchase. It has long been one of the most important advertising mediums for tobacco companies. Tobacco companies invest \$34 million each and every day to persuade people, adults and children, to want their products. Ninety percent of that \$34 million dollars is aimed directly at the checkout register.

Paying customers aren't the only ones susceptible to the charms of Point of Sale tobacco advertising. While adults focus on the checkout related tasks of turning in coupons, ensuring items ring up correctly, and providing payment, children's attentions are decidedly elsewhere. Research indicates 40% of children from non-smoking households can

name cigarette brands without prompting. Among teens who have never smoked, those who go to stores with Point of Sale tobacco advertising at least 2-3 times per week were twice as likely to say that they consider smoking in the future. Clearly the tobacco companies are hitting their mark.

As parents, it is important that we minimize the impact of Point of Sale tobacco advertising on our children by making sure our children know how harmful smoking is and that we don't want them to smoke. Ever. We can also speak up for our kids in our role as consumer by alerting our local retailer that we support the elimination of Point of Sale tobacco advertising.

Get Involved!

Many retailers across New York State, including **Price Chopper Supermarkets** and **Grand Union Family Markets**, have taken action to either reduce the visibility of tobacco products and eliminate tobacco advertising, or discontinue the sale of tobacco products entirely within their establishments.

- ★ If you shop at one of these retailers, **thank them for their efforts to protect your children.**
- ★ If your local store has not taken these actions, **ask them to eliminate their Point of Sale tobacco displays or to stop selling tobacco.**

www.gufamilymarkets.com www.hannaford.com www.pricechopper.com

Hard Winter Ahead for Smokers!

Tobacco users may be in for a rough winter. Smokers may be more likely to catch the flu because smoking suppresses the immune system. Once infected with the flu, smokers are also more susceptible to bronchitis and pneumonia. Influenza-related complications can have dire outcomes, including hospitalization and death.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has targeted individuals aged 25-64 with underlying medical conditions, like Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) or asthma, to be among the first to get the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine due to their higher risk for influenza-related complications. Smokers with these conditions are at serious risk.

Truly the best thing tobacco users can do to protect their health, both through the flu season and in the future, is to stop smoking. The New York State Smokers' Quitline has trained Quit Coaches ready to help. They also offer a free starter kit of nicotine replacement therapy to eligible callers.

All smokers are encouraged to make a plan, call the Quitline's toll free number (866-697-8487), get support, and stop smoking this winter.

Marie's Mental Moment

Use the leftover letters to reveal a secret message.

P S T P N E U M O N I A O P Q
 A H T S M D L A S T H M A O U
 T E A K I A C U S M O K E N I
 C A R B O N M O N O X I D E T
 H R G T O G P R U G U M E P L
 A T F I R E R E F G S O R F I
 D E A T H R L U S E H A S O N
 T O B A C C O N D I S E A S E

ASTHMA	HEART
CARBON MONOXIDE	LUNGS
COUGH	PATCH
DANGER	PNEUMONIA
DEATH	QUITLINE
DISEASE	SMOKE
FIRE	TAR
GUM	TOBACCO

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