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Advancing Social Change for Nonprofits Worldwide



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

# Media Advocacy Tool Kit:

## Tobacco Policy Change Grantees

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation  
January 2007

# How to Use This Tool Kit

As an RWJF Tobacco Policy grantee you have specific goals. To achieve those goals, you need policymakers and the public in your corner. A successful advocacy strategy that involves outreach to targeted audiences is one way to do that. This tool kit gives you the resources you need to be an effective communicator and a successful advocate.

The tool kit is divided into four sections:

\*Communications 101.....pages 2-8

\*Messaging for Media.....pages 9-12

\*Getting Your Message Out.....pages 13-27

\*Templates and Examples.....pages 28-41

# Communications 101

# The Golden Rules

•**Be clear:** A good message makes it clear to your audience that what you have to say is important to them.

•**Use succinct, “real-life” examples:** Use stories to illustrate how your work affects people’s lives. Providing anecdotes helps people better understand an issue.

•**Speak in plain English and avoid jargon:** Keep it simple. Don’t assume your audience is familiar with your topic. Use language that a wide audience can understand. By avoiding jargon and the issue’s nuances and complexities, you ensure that the explanation does not cloud your message.

•**Provide your audience with specific actions it can take:** Clearly tell your audience what you want them to do. If you believe a policymaker can take action to address a problem, then you need to say that and briefly lay out what the action should entail. A message is more powerful if you can briefly and concisely delineate what actions would make a difference to your cause.

# Define Your Audiences

- **Who needs to act for you to achieve your goal? Who influences that person or group?**
- **Are there specific groups that need to know more about your work than others?**
- **Are there audiences with natural interests in the messages you are trying to communicate?**
- **What audience will be most receptive to your message?**

# About “Message”

## **What is “message”?**

- Message is the crux of the matter – the reason why anyone should care about your study, initiative, or announcement.
- It must be clear, compelling, accurate – and short!
- It is the first and sometimes only information people will have about your issue.
- All spokespeople should deliver the same key message

## **What are some good examples of strong messages?**

- Too many Americans die alone, in pain, and attached to machines. (SUPPORT Study)
- Parents matter in the lives of their teens – even when they think they don’t. (Adolescent Health Study)
- Thousands of hospital patients die unnecessarily every year because of medical errors. (IOM Report on Medical Errors)

## **Why have a message?**

- To get YOUR point across, as opposed to that of someone else who may not agree with you.
- To get your point across ACCURATELY, reducing the chance that you’ll be misunderstood or misquoted.
- To help maintain control of the interview.
- To help you frame a broader issue. The IOM medical errors report, for example, transformed the debate on health care quality into a debate on patient safety.
- To help generate support for change. A strong message makes a case for new ideas and solutions to problems.

# Examples of Good Messages

*These are some strong messages taken from the  
“Templates and Examples” section found on pages 29-41.*

“Philip Morris’ decision to use Indianapolis as a test market for its new smokeless tobacco product, Taboka, should be a wake-up call for all Hoosiers that it is past time to improve Indiana’s health by reducing tobacco use.”

***-William V. Corr, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids***

“Given that half of Vermont’s smokers will die from a tobacco-related disease if they don’t stop, for thousands of Vermonters the failure to fully fund tobacco control and prevention is truly a life-or-death issue.”

***-John Hughes, M.D., Coalition for a Tobacco Free Vermont***

“Pennsylvania should follow Philadelphia’s lead and join the 16 states that have enacted strong, statewide laws that protect non-smokers from secondhand smoke.”

***-Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, M.D., M.B.A.,  
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation***

# Defining Your Message

*Determine the things you want to emphasize*

- What do you want reporters, policy makers, or community members to know? Do you want to raise awareness, call community members to action, or both?
- Use your own experience to create your message. When you talk about your work with family, friends, and colleagues, what part of it excites them and you most? Focus on the most exciting aspects when defining your message; don't bury your message in details or jargon.
- Does your message need to be framed in different ways to reach different audiences effectively? Make sure that you define why specific audiences need to know about your work and why it is important to them.



# Developing Your Message

- **Develop talking points that “speak in headlines” and convey vivid images.**
- **Avoid jargon that an average reader or listener won’t understand.**
- **Offer the conclusion first, then back up with supporting facts.**
- **Use carefully chosen national and local statistics to reinforce your points.**
- **Use succinct “real-life” examples to add texture to your comments.**
- **Narrow your message to no more than three points.**
- **Adapt your message to match the recipients’ focus.**

# Messaging for Media

# The Importance of Speaking with Media

You get a call from a reporter at your local newspaper or television station. She has heard a buzz in the community about your project and wants to know more about what you're working on, how it will benefit community members, and what it will cost. Are you prepared to answer her right now, clearly and concisely?

You should be. An article in your local newspaper or piece on your local news broadcast can have a greater effect than you ever imagined. Why? Your issue instantly reaches a much wider and influential audience. State and local government leaders, members of your congressional delegation, philanthropists or partners, and the community at large all learn about what your organization is doing.

What can happen as a result? The local policymaker better understands the effect your effort could have on the community and writes legislation supporting your issue. A local foundation or business group recognizes that your work aligns with its goals and offers you funding, thereby securing your sustainability. Other media see something in your research that piques their interest and forge a connection with you. Or, perhaps the loftiest of them all— consumers read an article or hear a story and go home at night to discuss your issue and the difference it can make in their lives.

Does it take work to get to this point? You bet. Is it worth it? Absolutely.

Learning how to communicate what you do and why you do it is one of the most important things your organization can do to raise and maintain visibility.

## How Do People Get Their News?

<b>Local TV News</b> .....	55%
<b>Newspaper</b> .....	51%
<b>Radio</b> .....	39%
<b>Online</b> .....	22%

*Source: Gallup Polling (December 2006)*

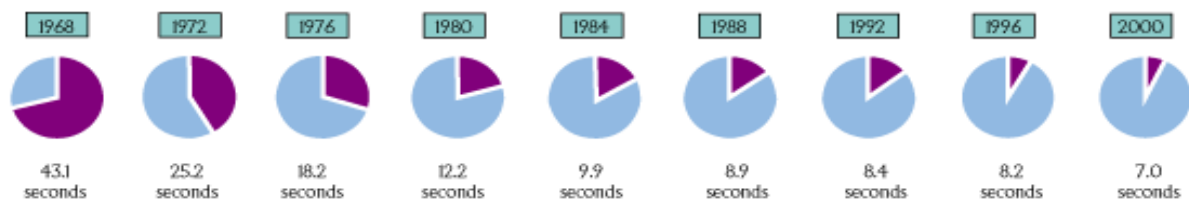
# Communicating Messages to the Media

- The fundamental problem with any media interview is that you typically have only a short time to communicate your point of view.
- The chart on page 12 shows the reality of news reporting today. Be concise without losing the power and substance of your messages.
- Practice being simple (not simplistic). Hone your messages down to their most powerful. President Woodrow Wilson said he could talk on any subject for an hour without much preparation, but he would want a week to prepare a five-minute talk on the same subject.

# So...

- Remember the limitations of the medium.
- Edit yourself rather than be edited.
- Be honest and direct.
- Include a carefully considered example or anecdote.
- Provide one strong statistic, not several.
- Eliminate jargon.
- Use memorable words and colorful phrasing.

The Incredible Shrinking Sound Bite



*Source: Harvard University Center for Media and Public Affairs*

# Getting Your Message Out

# Tools for Getting Your Message Out

- **News Release:** Good for releasing peer-reviewed studies, new reports, announcements of partnerships. See example on pages 36-37.
- **Feature Story:** Showcases your issue in-depth when there is little news.
- **One-on-One Meetings:** With reporter or editor, especially if you have an existing relationship.
- **Editorial Board Meetings:** To establish your organization as a solid source on your issues.
- **News Briefing:** To bring attention to an important issue and share interesting, though not necessarily earth-shaking, findings.
- **News Conference:** To release big news.
- **Reaction Statements:** To respond to breaking news and get your organization's message to reporters. See examples on pages 38-41.

# Tools for Getting Your Message Out

- **Fact Sheets, Issue Briefs:** Reporters would rather have an issue brief than a journal article; a fact sheet with statistics and key arguments rather than a book or brochure. The bottom line is that whether the message is spoken or written, it needs to be concise and kept to one or two pages.
- **Columnists:** To add value to your breaking news.
- **Op-eds:** To express your perspective, usually linked to something in the news. See example on pages 29-34.
- **Sponsor a series of town hall meetings:** Identify the key tobacco-related issues in your community that could be topics at town hall meetings throughout the year. Work with partners to jointly sponsor the events, open them to the community, and purposely invite key stakeholders in the community and the media.
- **Accept speaking invitations, or ask to speak:** Local women's or men's groups, health fairs, PTA and school board meetings, foundations, corporations...look for opportunities to get your message out.



# When a reporter calls... ... Ask Questions First!

*You'll be able to do a better interview if you know something about the reporter and the publication or broadcast. The more you prepare, the better the interview.*

**Who are you dealing with?** Find out about the reporter, media outlet, and audience. If the media outlet or reporter is unfamiliar to you, Google the name to find out more information about what they cover.

**What is the story about?** Most reporters won't give you their questions in advance, but they will tell you the broad outline of what they're working on and why they want to talk to you.

**What's the deadline?** The answer will help you determine how much time you have to prepare for the interview.

**What type of story is this?** Breaking news or a feature?

**Who else is the reporter interviewing for the story?** This information may help you better understand the reporter's angle on the story.

**For radio and TV, is this a live or a taped interview?** Where will the interview take place, and with whom? How long will the interview last? For radio, is this a call-in show?

## ***Remember!***

*You have the right to say "no" to an interview request if you are uncomfortable with the reporter or the media outlet that he or she represents.*

# The Interview: Talking with Reporters

- **Know your message and use concise, clear language to convey it.**
- **Be candid and honest, never say, “No comment.”**
- **Supply written background to support your point of view.**
- **Don’t argue with reporters.**
- **Don’t assume that anything is off the record.**
- **Suggest additional sources.**
- **Be sensitive to reporters’ deadlines.**
- **Develop relationships.**

# Preparing for a Press Conference

*Think of yourself as the audience.*

- What are the *demographics* (age, education, lifestyle, career status, etc.) of your audience and the implications of those demographics?
- What level of *knowledge* does the audience have about your topic?
- What will be your audience's general *attitude*?  
Friendly...receptive...neutral...unpredictable...hostile?
- What *information* may be new or surprising to the audience?

# Press Conference Tips

*The press conference can be one of the most useful tools for reaching media. While there is no way to guarantee coverage of your event, there are many ways to improve your chances. The most important aspect of your planning is making sure you cater to the media. Here is a simple check list:*

1. Make sure you are releasing compelling new information, also known as “hard news.” These are stories that newspaper editors might *care* about and, as a result, have the potential to appear in newspapers. Examples include information that is the first of its kind (e.g. the release of a new report), is being discussed in the community (e.g. a controversial statement by a new coalition of groups), or is actionable (e.g. an announcement of a new, community-wide program). Familiarize yourself with the kinds of stories that run in newspapers to improve your sense of hard news.
2. Be considerate of media deadlines. A press conference later than 2:00 p.m. will be an inconvenience to many reporters who must have their stories written by 5:00 or 6:00 in the afternoon.
3. Send out a one-page media announcement or “media advisory” about the press conference at least one to two weeks in advance. Include information on what will be announced, who will be speaking, and when and where the event will take place.
4. Follow up vigorously by contacting reporters by phone and letting them know that the press conference will take place. Most often, they have a stack of mail that they have not even thought about reading. Follow up phone calls with a fax of the media advisory.

5. “Advance” the room. Visit the location where you plan to hold the press conference and make sure all logistical aspects of the room are in order, such as whether the room can easily be found, seating, registration, public announcement systems, coffee service, etc.
6. Arrange for radio and television reporters to electronically tap into the public announcement system in your room.
7. Except in very unusual cases, don’t crowd the dais. The attention span of journalists is extremely limited. They can probably endure no more than about three speakers.
8. Make sure your spokespeople are scripted with talking points in advance. Don't let any two speakers cover the same ground.
9. Put strict limits on the length of spokespeople’s comments -- no more than 10 minutes each.
10. Stage manage your press conference by having a meeting with all parties who will be speaking in advance. Long delays, stumbling, or stammering will cause many reporters to leave the press conference.
11. Use placards with the names of each speaker.
12. Provide a concise media kit with supporting material to your announcement and one-paragraph biographies of each speaker. Supporting material constitutes the report being released, a press release, or a short backgrounder on the problem with new statistics. Bring more than enough press kits.
13. Start promptly and don’t let your press conference run beyond 60 minutes – including up to a half-hour for journalists’ questions. Remember, a press conference is not a seminar; it is for the benefit of journalists. Let them ask questions.

14. Make sure you have enough personnel to greet the media, hand out press kits, and facilitate interviews between reporters and your spokespeople on the scene.
15. Provide a sign-up sheet for press with a column for phone numbers. This is how you will begin to form your media list.
16. Use good visuals such as charts and blow-ups of photographs. Do not show multiple slides. Consider creating a banner for the podium with the name of the organization(s) sponsoring the press conference. But make sure that all visuals are hung or displayed securely. You don't want them to fall in the middle of the event.
17. Make sure at least one spokesperson is available after the press conference to take follow-up interviews.
18. Designate someone to be available to messenger press kits to those reporters who could not attend the press conference.

# Q&A Techniques

## Preparing for Q&A

- **Anticipate questions, concerns, objections, and challenges the audience may raise.**

- **Provide clear ground rules.**

- Interrupt anytime.
- Hold questions until the end.
- Interrupt when unclear.

- **Transition to Q&A.**

- Any questions at this point?
- Before you get to your summary, remind audiences that you will entertain questions.

## Handling Q&A

- **Listen.**

- Don't interrupt unless a questioner goes on and on.

- **Identify core issues.**

- Narrow the question if too broad.

- **Rephrase (don't just repeat) the question to frame it to your advantage.**

- **Answer the entire audience.**

- If desirable, bridge (transition) to your message.

*Courtesy of Zehren♦Friedman*

# Communicating with Policymakers

•**Build rapport and establish relationships before you need them:** Don't call officials or their staff with an urgent plea and expect them to pay attention. If they know what you're about and why you are an important source of information to them in calm times, they will be far more likely to pay attention to you and/or your organization when you really need them. This is true with any relationship – so remember to apply it in the political process.

•**You have three minutes to make your case:** A meeting may go 15 minutes or an hour, but the staffer or Member of Congress isn't interested in a speech. They want to know: Who you are, and what they can do for you? Be prepared to explain the context of your issue, why you requested the meeting, and what you need/want from them – all in three minutes. This is not that hard once you have practiced, and if you come prepared.

•**Staff matter:** In fact, staff members make most of the day-to-day decisions and are the ones with regular access to the Congressman or Senator. Don't be disappointed if you don't meet with the elected official. What's most important is getting your idea considered, and the Member of Congress will turn to the staffer in the end before making any decision.

•**Members of Congress are much more accessible when home in their districts or states:** Go through the district or state office to make an appointment, and cultivate a relationship with local staff, since they, too, are more accessible than staff in Washington. Likewise, think about inviting them to your site/facility/lab when they are in town for a lively, interactive 30 minutes, so that they can actually experience the issues you want to raise with them.



**•Be prepared to compromise:** When approaching Members of Congress, their staff or Executive Branch representatives, remember that they do things for reasons that go beyond good will and humanitarianism. Politics is not completely selfless. Understand where they are coming from, what their political needs are, and try to ensure that at least some of your policy objectives are met – realizing that you aren't the Czar of policy on your issue and that others are weighing in as well.

**•Pay attention to the politics around your issue and be opportunistic:**

Sometimes, you have to seize the right moment, being aware of the dynamics around your issue and the possibilities that are ripe from unrelated circumstances. The Schiavo case made the end-of-life debate more urgent and relevant. Hurricane Katrina gave license to consider a range of urban issues not on the table before the storm hit.

**•Don't feel that you are alone in your battles:** When appropriate, link yourself and your organization to another bigger than yours, one that may have access that you don't. The best place to start may be Voluntary Health Organizations like American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, local Public Health Departments, or your medical societies.

**•Sending a thank-you note is a must – and appreciated:** A hand-written note is the most personal, but security concerns can slow mail delivery. Particularly if you are using a thank you as a follow-up reminder, be prepared to fax a copy of the note, have it hand delivered, or send it via e-mail.

**•You are 100% responsible for follow-up:** Don't assume that an agreement for each of you (you and the person you're educating) to follow up in different ways means that they will hold up their end of the deal. It's all on you. They will likely need reminders, certainly a follow-up note immediately after the meeting. Always ask the staff member you are working with what their communication preference is as you go forward, be it phone or email.

**•There are high times and low times:** Your day will come, but it may take a while. Be patient. Victories happen, even if not immediately. If you raise an issue today that resonates with a Member of Congress, you may see action in three months or three years. In fact, three years is not a long time in the context of policy reform. Parties come and go in power, and so do issues. Stay in this game for the long haul, establish relationships across political parties, and some external circumstances) that you likely can't predict will catapult your issue to prominence at a time that it can be well received.

# Op-Ed Articles: How to Write and Place Them

David Jarmul  
Duke University

- **Track the news and jump at opportunities:** Timing is essential. As a former *New York Times* op-ed page editor wrote: “When people like Saddam Hussein and George Bush go on the warpath, op-ed editors don’t like to hang around waiting to see what next week’s mail will bring. And they can’t imagine that people will read an article, no matter how wonderful, that bemoans the perennial budget mess when all anybody can think is: ‘Does he have the bomb?’” Our experience at Duke reflects this; authors are most successful when they track the news.
- **Limit the article to 750 words:** Shorter is even better. Some academic authors insist they need more room to explain their argument. Unfortunately, newspapers have limited space to offer, and editors generally won’t take the time to cut a long article down to size.
- **Make a single point – well:** You cannot solve all of the world’s problems in 750 words. Be satisfied with making a single point clearly and persuasively. If you cannot explain your message in a sentence or two, you’re trying to cover too much.
- **Put your main point on top:** You have no more than 10 seconds to hook a busy reader, which means you shouldn’t “clear your throat” with a witticism or historical aside. Just get to the point and convince the reader that it’s worth his or her valuable time to continue.

•**Tell readers why they should care:** Put yourself in the place of the busy person looking at your article. At the end of every few paragraphs, ask out loud: “So what? Who cares?” You need to answer these questions. Will your suggestions help reduce readers’ taxes? Protect them from disease? Make their children happier? Explain why. Appeals to self-interest usually are more effective than abstract punditry.

•**Offer specific recommendations:** An op-ed is not a news story that simply describes a situation; it is your opinion about how to improve matters. Don’t be satisfied, as you might in a classroom, with mere analysis. In an op-ed article you need to offer recommendations. How exactly should the United States fight AIDS, or the White House promote better health care? You’ll need to do more than call for “more research!” or suggest that opposing parties work out their differences.

•**Showing is better than discussing:** You may remember the Pentagon’s overpriced toilet seat that became a symbol of profligate federal spending. You probably don’t recall the total Pentagon budget for that year (or for that matter, for the current year). That’s because we humans remember colorful details better than dry facts. When writing an op-ed article, therefore, look for great examples that will bring your argument to life.

•**Use short sentences and paragraphs:** Look at some stories in the *New York Times* or your local newspaper, and count the number of words per sentence. You’ll probably find the sentences to be quite short. You should use the same style, relying mainly on simple declarative sentences. Cut long paragraphs into two or more shorter ones.

•**Don’t be afraid of the personal voice:** Academics often avoid first-person exposition in professional journals, which rarely begin with phrases like “You won’t believe what I found when I was working in my lab last month.” When it comes to op-eds, however, it’s good to use the personal voice whenever possible. If you are a physician, describe the plight of one of your patients. If you’ve worked with anthrax, tell us what you worried about.

•**Avoid jargon:** If a technical detail is not essential to your argument, don’t use it. When in doubt, leave it out. Simple language doesn’t mean simple thinking; it means you are being considerate of readers who lack your expertise and are sitting half-awake at their breakfast table or computer screen.

•**Use the active voice:** Don't write: "It is hoped that [or: One would hope that] the government will . . ." Instead, say "I hope the government will . . ." Active voice is nearly always better than passive voice. It's easier to read, and it leaves no doubt about who is doing the hoping, recommending or other action.

•**Avoid tedious rebuttals:** If you've written your article in response to an earlier piece that made your blood boil, avoid the temptation to prepare a point-by-point rebuttal. It makes you look petty. It's likely that readers didn't see the earlier article and, if they did, they've probably forgotten it. So, just take a deep breath, mention the earlier article once and argue your own case.

•**Make your ending a winner:** You're probably familiar with the importance of a strong opening paragraph, or "lead," that hooks readers. But when writing for the op-ed page, it's also important to summarize your argument in a strong final paragraph. That's because many casual readers scan the headline, skim the opening column and then read only the final paragraph and byline. In fact, one trick many columnists use is to conclude with a phrase or thought that they used in the opening, thereby closing the circle.

•**Relax and have fun:** Many authors approach an op-ed article as an exercise in solemnity. Frankly, they'd improve their chances if they'd lighten up, have some fun and entertain the reader a bit. Newspaper editors despair of weighty articles – known in the trade as "thumb suckers" – and delight in an academic writer who chooses examples from "Entertainment Tonight" as well as from Lewis Thomas or E.O. Wilson.

•**Where to submit the article:** Here's a wild guess: You're hoping to publish your article in *The New York Times*, with *The Washington Post* and *The Wall Street Journal* as backups. Well, welcome to the club. These and other national publications, such as *Newsweek* and *USA Today*, receive a staggering number of submissions, the overwhelming majority of which are rejected. You have a better shot at regional newspapers and, especially, at local papers. Web sites such as "Slate" are also gaining in importance. Be sure to include your contact information, and say whether you have a photo of yourself available. Most papers now accept articles by e-mail.

*David Jarmul is Duke University's associate vice president for news and communications. He was the creator and director of a nationally syndicated op-ed article service at the National Academy of Sciences.*

# Templates and Examples

\*Sample Op-Eds .....pages 29-34

\*Sample Letter to the Editor .....page 35

\*Sample Research & Advocacy Press Releases.....pages 36-41

# Example Op-Ed

*Template Op-Ed from Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids urging adequate funding of tobacco prevention and cessation programs*

As the (STATE) Legislature convenes for its 2007 session, one of its priorities should be to combat tobacco use by adequately funding programs to prevent kids from smoking and help smokers quit.

This need is especially urgent in light of recent headlines reminding us that the tobacco industry continues to do everything it can to addict children and prevent smokers from quitting. Tobacco use continues to take a huge toll on our state in health, lives and health care costs, so it is imperative that our leaders counter the harmful actions of the tobacco industry by supporting effective measures to reduce smoking.

Recent months have brought headline after headline about the tobacco industry's continued wrongdoing:

-In August, U.S. District Judge Gladys Kessler found the major cigarette manufacturers guilty of violating the nation's civil racketeering laws. She found that the cigarette companies have defrauded the American people by lying for decades about the health risks of smoking and their marketing to children. Most alarmingly, she found that this wrongdoing continues today: "Their continuing conduct misleads consumers in order to maximize Defendants' revenues by recruiting new smokers (the majority of whom are under the age of 18), preventing current smokers from quitting, and thereby sustaining the industry."

-Later in August, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health released a study finding that cigarette manufacturers secretly and significantly increased the levels of nicotine in cigarette smoke between 1998 and 2004. This study is powerful evidence that the tobacco companies will stop at nothing to keep smokers addicted and addict a new generation of smokers.

-The tobacco companies spend a record \$15.4 billion a year – more than \$42 million a day – to market their deadly and addictive products in the United States, often in ways that appeal to kids. This represents a nearly 125 percent increase since 1998, when they agreed to stop targeting kids as part of the 1998 state tobacco settlement. One of their latest ploys to entice kids is the marketing of candy and fruit-flavored cigarettes. In STATE, the tobacco companies spend \$XXX MILLION/BILLION a year on marketing.

These actions show why it is so important that STATE adequately fund programs to prevent kids from smoking and help smokers quit, as our leaders promised to do at the time of the 1998 tobacco settlement. STATE collects \$XXX million/billion a year in tobacco-generated revenue from the tobacco settlement and tobacco taxes, but it only spends \$XX million a year on tobacco prevention and cessation programs. That amounts to only XX percent of the minimum amount of \$XXX million recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Our state already collects more than enough tobacco-generated revenue to fund a tobacco prevention and cessation program at CDC-recommended levels. But our leaders will have even fewer excuses beginning in 2008. That is when the states that were part of the 1998 tobacco settlement (called the Master Settlement Agreement, or MSA) will begin receiving annual bonus settlement payments totaling about \$900 million each year. The bonus payments are mandated by the terms of the settlement and will continue for at least 10 years. STATE's share of the bonus payments will be about \$XXX million a year.

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These payments will provide states with a critical second chance to do what the vast majority of them have failed to do so far – keep the promise of the tobacco settlement to fund tobacco prevention and cessation programs. Because these bonus payments start in April 2008 during the states' fiscal year 2008, legislators and governors will be making decisions regarding the expenditure of these additional funds in the 2007 legislative sessions.

It is important that STATE act this year to increase funding for tobacco prevention both because tobacco use continues to take a huge toll on our state. Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death in STATE, claiming more than XXXX lives and costing the state \$XXX MILLION/BILLION in health care bills each year. Government expenditures related to tobacco amount to a hidden tax of \$XXX on every STATE household. In addition, XX percent of STATE high school students smoke, and XXX more kids become regular smokers every year.

We know tobacco prevention works. The best state tobacco prevention programs have reduced youth smoking rates by 60 percent or more in just a few short years. The best programs have also been shown to save up to \$3 in health care costs for every dollar spent.

Protecting the health of our children and families against tobacco-caused addiction and disease is a worthwhile goal, and it's within our reach through proper use of tobacco settlement money. We hope STATE's leaders will agree.

# Example Op-Ed

*Op-ed from Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids urging Indiana leaders to use proven methods to reduce tobacco use*

## **Indiana Needs to Stand Up to Big Tobacco**

By William V. Corr  
July 2006

Philip Morris' decision to use Indianapolis as a test market for its new smokeless tobacco product, Taboka, should be a wake-up call for all Hoosiers that it is past time to improve Indiana's health by reducing tobacco use.

Indiana has the second highest adult smoking rate in the country after Kentucky. The latest surveys show that 27.3 percent of Indiana adults smoke, compared to 20.9 percent of all Americans. No wonder Philip Morris jumps at the chance to test new ways to addict Hoosiers.

It is imperative that Indiana leaders strike back by implementing scientifically proven solutions that reduce smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke. These solutions include well-funded programs to prevent kids from smoking and help smokers quit, higher tobacco taxes, and local smoke-free laws that protect all workers and the public from secondhand smoke.

These measures have worked in large and small states in every region of the country. Ohio, which set aside an endowment of more than \$300 million in tobacco settlement money to reduce tobacco use, has reduced high school smoking by 40 percent since 1999 and cut adult smoking by a remarkable 17 percent in just one year, from 2003 to 2004. California, the nation's pioneer in fighting tobacco use, has reduced lung cancer rates three times faster than other states.

It was not long ago that Indiana was also a national leader.

From 2000 to 2003, Indiana kept the promise of the 1998 state tobacco settlement and funded tobacco prevention and cessation programs near levels recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Because of these programs, run by the Indiana Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Agency (ITPC), Indiana reduced high school smoking by a third between 2000 and 2004 and adult smoking by 10 percent between 2002 and 2004.

Unfortunately, rather than reward success, Indiana leaders cut funding for ITPC by two-thirds in Fiscal 2004 and the program today is funded at just \$10.8 million a year, less than a third of the CDC's minimum recommendation. So it's not surprising that progress in reducing Indiana's adult smoking rate appears to have stalled.

While ITPC continues to be one of the nation's best-run tobacco prevention programs, its reach is limited by its budget. If Indiana is to get back on track, state leaders must restore funding to at least the \$34.8 million a year recommended by the CDC. This would require less than eight percent of the \$458 million a year in revenue Indiana collects from the tobacco settlement and tobacco taxes, leaving plenty for other needs. Better yet, it would take just six cents of a new cigarette tax increase.

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Indiana should significantly increase its cigarette tax, as Governor Daniels proposed last session. At just 55.5 cents a pack, Indiana's tax is well below the national average of nearly 96 cents a pack. Michigan and four other states now have cigarette taxes of \$2 or more a pack, and Chicago now has the highest in the country at a combined state and local total of \$3.66 a pack. We urge Governor Daniels to build on last year's effort by advocating for a cigarette tax increase of a dollar or more, with the revenue from the first six cents dedicated to restoring ITPC's programs.

Indiana and the rest of the nation must also resist the siren song of smokeless tobacco, which some companies advocate as a "safer" alternative to cigarette smoking. Smokeless tobacco is far from harmless – the Surgeon General has found that it causes oral cancer and other serious diseases – and there is no evidence that smokeless tobacco as used in the United States reduces the number of people who smoke.

The current marketing of smokeless tobacco points to a large missing piece in the fight to reduce tobacco's toll – federal legislation to grant the U.S. Food and Drug Administration authority over all tobacco products. Until Congress grants the FDA such authority, there's nothing to stop tobacco companies from marketing their products deceptively or in ways that encourage kids to start using tobacco or discourage smokers from quitting entirely. Indianapolis residents are guinea pigs in just such an industry experiment right now.

The silver lining in the recent announcements by Philip Morris and R.J. Reynolds, the nation's two largest tobacco companies, that they are entering the smokeless tobacco business is that they are doing so in response to the tremendous progress our nation has made in reducing smoking – and especially to the growing number of communities that require smoke-free workplaces and public places. Unfortunately, they still find a safe haven in the plentiful smokers in Indiana.

It is time for Indiana to fight back by increasing tobacco taxes while providing enough funding to get successful prevention programs back on track. Indiana communities must also continue the recent progress in passing smoke-free laws, and the Indiana congressional delegation must help pass strong FDA regulation of tobacco. Together, these solutions will help us win the fight against Indiana's number one killer.

*William V. Corr is Executive Director of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, a national anti-tobacco advocacy group based in Washington, D.C.*

# Example Op-Ed

*Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Commentary*

*Philadelphia Inquirer*  
January 12, 2006  
Commentary

## **Smoke-free Philly: It's a Good Start**

Starting today, we can all breathe a little easier now that Philadelphia is no longer a smoke-filled exception in the northeast corridor. Mayor Street and the City Council have put the health of Philadelphians first, and the City of Brotherly Love has joined 16 states and hundreds of cities across the country with strong smoke-free workplace laws that include restaurants and bars.

As a physician and head of a philanthropy that's been out front in the fight against tobacco use and its devastating consequences for more than a generation, I can't imagine lighting up and doing that to myself—or the people around me. I have seen firsthand the terrible harm caused by exposure to the 4,000 chemicals and at least 69 carcinogens in secondhand smoke. At the same time, I've seen the health benefits of smoke-free laws that protect workers from breathing secondhand smoke.

This is why I am so pleased that practically all public places in Philadelphia finally are going to be smoke-free, thanks to the clean indoor air law that goes into effect today. I expect more people will be going out in Philadelphia, too. As jazz lovers, our family is thrilled that we no longer have to travel to Manhattan for a smoke-free dinner and night of music.

This is a huge victory for the health of our families and our communities. But I'm still holding my breath because much needs to be done to reduce tobacco's toll in Philadelphia and across Pennsylvania.

The evidence shows us that reducing death and disease from tobacco use and exposure works best when three forces are at play equally:

We need to tax cigarettes high enough to make smokers (especially kids) think twice about what it costs to smoke. Pennsylvania smokers are taxed about only half (\$1.35/pack) what their neighbors in New Jersey are (\$2.58/pack).

Pennsylvania should follow Philadelphia's lead and join the 16 states that have enacted strong, statewide laws that protect non-smokers from secondhand smoke.

Finally, we must spend enough on both tobacco prevention and programs to help smokers quit, so we are taking care of the health of our children and the parents and loved ones who mentor and nurture them.

Currently, Pennsylvania spends less than half the minimum recommended by the CDC for tobacco prevention and cessation. The CDC says Pennsylvania should be spending \$65 million on prevention; the state spends only \$30.3 million. That's only 2.2 percent of the \$1.4 billion in tobacco-generated revenue the state will collect this year in tobacco settlement payments and tobacco taxes.

As a result, we undermine many of our other gains. The numbers tell the story. About 24 percent of Pennsylvania adults and 23 percent of our high school students still smoke. Worse, more than 19,000 Pennsylvania kids under 18 become new daily smokers each year. If they don't quit soon, nearly one-third of them will die prematurely.

The fiscal bottom line is just as staggering: Smoking costs Pennsylvania more than \$5 billion a year in health care costs. With that \$5 billion a year we could cover all of Pennsylvania's uninsured, make health care affordable for everyone and dramatically improve the health and quality of life of all our communities.

With our new smoke-free law, Philadelphia is no longer a smoke-filled exception to the growing list of states and cities across the country with strong smoke-free workplace laws. Now Pennsylvania needs to follow suit. Smoke-free air, higher prices for tobacco products and funding prevention and quit smoking programs must become a top national priority...then we can all breathe a collective sigh of relief.

*Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, M.D., M.B.A., is president and CEO of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.*

# Example Letter to the Editor

*Letter to the Editor from Tobacco Policy Change Grantee*

## **My Turn: Tobacco funds used inappropriately**

By John Hughes, M.D.  
Burlington Free Press

December 29, 2006

The article, "Ideas for fortifying Vermont workforce praised," (Free Press, Dec. 17) said that the Next Generation Commission's report on work force development and education scholarships "won a mostly positive response." The story, however, ignored the commission's proposal to use \$2 million a year from Vermont's tobacco settlement funds to pay for health care workers' education loan repayment.

The Coalition for a Tobacco Free Vermont, which includes Vermont's chapters of the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association and the American Lung Association, doesn't oppose loan repayment but does think it is inappropriate to pay for it from tobacco settlement funds.

The tobacco settlement funds were awarded as compensation for damages caused by the tobacco industry to Vermont smokers. Thus, the coalition believes it is only right to use it to first fully fund Vermont's tobacco prevention and control programs before using it in other areas.

In fact, most Vermonters think the same thing. In a survey conducted earlier this year, an overwhelming majority of those polled -- and many smokers -- said most of the tobacco settlement funds should be spent on tobacco control and prevention programs.

Given that half of Vermont's smokers will die from a tobacco-related disease if they don't stop, for thousands of Vermonters the failure to fully fund tobacco control and prevention is truly a life-or-death issue.

Many uses for tobacco settlement funds have been proposed, including substance-abuse programs, Medicaid, and college scholarships (and each of these uses some convoluted logic to say that these programs will influence smoking). However, in its first five years the Vermont Tobacco Control Program has never been fully funded, or reached the minimum amount recommended by the Centers for Disease Control. Plus, Vermont has not set aside the recommended amount in the trust fund to sustain tobacco control efforts after these settlement dollars evaporate.

We fail to see the logic in underfunding tobacco control to pay for these other programs. The result of this underfunding is starting to show. Although Vermont's Tobacco Control Program has dramatically decreased smoking by Vermont youths (down from 38 percent to 16 percent), the program has been much less successful in getting Vermont adult smokers to stop and, thus, needs full funding to implement new programs.

In summary, the coalition believes that, until the Vermont Tobacco Control Program is fully funded for current and future efforts, using tobacco settlement monies for non-tobacco-related programs fails to respect the reason Vermont is receiving this money -- to alleviate the suffering caused by tobacco.

*John Hughes, M.D., is the medical director of the Coalition for a Tobacco Free Vermont, and a researcher in tobacco addiction at the University of Vermont College of Medicine.*

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# Example Research Press Release

*Recent RWJF-funded study press release*

For further information, contact:

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For Immediate Release

## **Tobacco Industry Prevention Ads Aimed at Teens Have No Effect on Youth Smoking**

*Study Finds that Some Tobacco Industry Sponsored Prevention Ads Targeted at Parents May Increase  
Likelihood of Teen Smoking*

WASHINGTON, DC, October 31 — Televised ads sponsored by tobacco companies and targeted at youth do not change teen smoking outcomes, according to a study published online today by the *American Journal of Public Health*. Results from the study also show that tobacco industry-sponsored prevention ads intended for parents may have harmful effects on older youth, lowering youth perceptions about the danger of smoking and increasing their likelihood of smoking.

Researchers from Bridging the Gap, a policy research program based at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) and the University of Michigan, examined youth exposure to tobacco company television advertising campaigns and how that exposure influenced several smoking-related belief and behavior outcomes. They found that across these outcomes, 8th, 10th and 12th graders were generally not influenced by exposure to tobacco industry youth-targeted ads.

This study is the first to examine how youth are affected by parent-targeted ads sponsored by the tobacco industry. Among 10th and 12th graders, higher exposure to parent-targeted ads was, on average, associated with lower perceived harm of smoking, stronger approval of smoking, stronger intentions to smoke in the future, and a greater likelihood of having smoked in the past 30 days. The National Cancer Institute, the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funded the study.

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“This research provides the clearest evidence to date that tobacco-sponsored ads don’t work,” said Melanie Wakefield, a UIC researcher and the study’s lead author. “Tobacco-sponsored ads targeted at youth have no impact and those targeted at parents seem to have an adverse effect on students who are in their middle and later teenage years.”

To arrive at their findings, Wakefield and her colleagues used Nielsen Media Research data on Targeted Ratings Points (TRPs) to measure the average reach and frequency of all smoking-related advertisements (tobacco company-sponsored ads, ads sponsored by state governments and American Legacy Foundation tobacco control ads) among 12-17 year olds. They focused on smoking-related ads that appeared on network and cable television in the largest 75 U.S. media markets from 1999 to 2002.

The researchers compared the extent of youth advertising exposure to survey data from samples of 8th, 10th and 12th graders in the contiguous 48 states collected during 1999-2002. The nationally representative youth data, collected by the University of Michigan Monitoring the Future study, measured student characteristics, smoking-related attitudes and beliefs, and self-reported tobacco use. The final sample size for the report was 103,172 students.

In analyzing the data, researchers adjusted their analysis for factors other than tobacco company prevention ads that might have had an effect on levels of youth smoking. Those additional factors include smoking laws, cigarette prices and other televised advertising about not smoking.

Bridging the Gap, which is funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, is a joint project of ImpacTeen, a program of the University of Illinois at Chicago's Institute for Health Research and Policy, and Youth Education and Society (YES!), a program of the University of Michigan’s Institute for Social Research. Bridging the Gap improves understanding of the role of policy and environmental factors in youth alcohol, illicit drug, and tobacco use, as well as diet and physical activity, to evaluate their effectiveness in reducing substance use and obesity among youth. For more information, visit [www.impactteen.org](http://www.impactteen.org) and [www.yesresearch.org](http://www.yesresearch.org).

The National Cancer Institute, part of the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is the federal government's principal agency for cancer research and training. For more information, visit [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov).

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) is a component of the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NIDA supports most of the world's research on the health aspects of drug abuse and addiction. The Institute carries out a large variety of programs to ensure the rapid dissemination of research information and its implementation in policy and practice. Fact sheets on the health effects of drugs of abuse and information on NIDA research and other activities can be found on the NIDA web site at [www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov).

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change. For more than 30 years the Foundation has brought experience, commitment, and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those it serves. Helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need—the Foundation expects to make a difference in our lifetime. For more information, visit [www.rwjf.org](http://www.rwjf.org).

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# Example Advocacy Press Release

*National advocacy statement regarding research press release on Page 37*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

October 31, 2006

**CONTACT:**

Joel Spivak  
(202) 296-5469

## **New Study Finds Tobacco Industry “Prevention” Ads Don’t Work and Encourage Kids to Smoke**

*Industry Should Pull Ads and States Should Fund Real Tobacco Prevention  
Statement of William V. Corr Executive Director,  
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids*

**Washington, DC** - A new study published online today by the American Journal of Public Health (AJPH) finds that the tobacco industry’s television ads purporting to discourage youth smoking are ineffective at best and that the industry’s ads targeted at parents actually encourage kids to smoke. Following a federal judge’s ruling in August that the tobacco companies have lied – and continue to lie – about the health risks of their products and their marketing to children, this study is another reminder that the tobacco companies have not changed and continue to mislead the public at every turn. These ads are clearly intended to clean up the industry’s image, not to reduce youth smoking.

This rigorous and carefully controlled study finds that the industry’s “prevention” ads targeted at youth are ineffective and do not change smoking outcomes, while industry ads targeted at parents increase the likelihood that kids will smoke. Among 10th and 12th graders, higher exposure to the parent-targeted ads was associated with lower perceived harm of smoking, stronger approval of smoking, stronger intentions to smoke in the future, and a greater likelihood of having smoked in the past 30 days.

In light of the study’s findings, the tobacco companies – and in particular Philip Morris, which has run the most ads – should immediately stop their phony prevention programs. Philip Morris and the other tobacco companies should just stay away from our children.

This study is also a wakeup call to the states that they need to fund real tobacco prevention programs rather than let the tobacco companies manipulate our kids with their phony ads. Most states have failed to adequately fund such programs despite the fact that they collect more than \$21 billion a year in revenue from the 1998 state tobacco settlement and tobacco taxes and there is conclusive evidence that real prevention programs work. In Fiscal Year 2006, only four states funded such programs at even minimum levels recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, while 35 states provided less than half the CDC minimum or no funding at all.

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In stark contrast to the findings of the new AJPH study, a July 2005 study using the same methodology and published in the journal Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine found that state-sponsored tobacco prevention media campaigns ARE effective at reducing smoking. This earlier study found that youth exposed to state campaigns are MORE likely to perceive harm from smoking, MORE likely to say they would NOT smoke in the future and LESS likely to have smoked in the past 30 days. States such as Maine and Washington that have adequately funded tobacco prevention programs have reduced smoking by more than 60 percent among some age groups. So the states lack excuses for their failure to better fund such programs.

The new AJPH study also sends a timely warning to voters in the seven states that will vote next Tuesday on ballot initiatives to increase tobacco taxes, fund tobacco prevention programs, and require smoke-free workplaces and public places. Just as they have sought to mislead the public with their fake prevention programs and other deceptive tactics, the tobacco companies are now spending tens of millions of dollars to mislead voters and defeat these ballot initiatives. Voters should reject their deception and approve these initiatives in Arizona, California, Florida, Missouri, Nevada, Ohio and South Dakota

[Click here for details on the ballot initiatives.](#)

The AJPH study analyzed data collected in the United States from 1999 to 2002, a period when Philip Morris and Lorillard were broadcasting youth-targeted “prevention” ads and Philip Morris was broadcasting parent-targeted ads. While the youth-targeted ads are no longer being aired in the U.S., Philip Morris has recently broadcast these ads in other countries, and Philip Morris continues to air parent-targeted ads in the U.S. The tobacco companies’ so-called “prevention” programs have also included radio and magazine ads and materials distributed to medical offices, schools and civic organizations. The tobacco companies should immediately terminate all of these programs, and schools and other organizations currently involved with these programs should cease their participation.

The new study is the first to examine how youth are affected by parent-targeted ads sponsored by the tobacco industry. The researchers used Nielsen Media Research television ratings data to measure youth exposure to the tobacco industry’s youth and parent-targeted television ads. They then compared these levels of exposure to youth smoking attitudes and behavior as measured by school surveys of 8th, 10th and 12th graders conducted as part of the federal government’s annual Monitoring the Future survey. The final sample size for the study was 103,172 students. The researchers adjusted their analysis for factors other than tobacco company prevention ads that might have had an effect on youth smoking, including smoke-free laws, cigarette prices and other TV advertising about not smoking.

The study was conducted by researchers at Bridging the Gap, a policy research program based at the University of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Michigan. The National Cancer Institute, the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funded the study. The study will also appear in the December print edition of the American Journal of Public Health.

[Click here to view more information on the study.](#)

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# Example Advocacy Press Release

*Local advocacy statement regarding research press release on Page 37*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

November 1, 2006

**CONTACT:**

David Ayers

(317) 554-6357 or (317) 502-8536

## **New Study Finds Tobacco Industry “Prevention” Ads Encourage Kids to Smoke**

### *Indiana Health Advocates Call on Industry to Pull Ads, Fund Real Tobacco Prevention Programs*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A new study published online Tuesday by the *American Journal of Public Health* (AJPH) finds that so-called “tobacco prevention” television ads sponsored by the tobacco companies are, at best, ineffective and that some of the ads actually encourage teens to smoke.

The study finds that the tobacco industry ads targeted at youth do not reduce smoking while tobacco industry ads targeted at parents may have harmful effects on teens. Specifically, 10th and 12th graders exposed to the tobacco industry’s parent-targeted ads were more likely to approve of smoking, more likely to say they planned to smoke in the future, and more likely to have smoked in the past 30 days.

Health advocates said this study is another reason why Indiana should fund an evidence-based tobacco prevention program.

“If Indiana does not have a well-funded tobacco prevention program, the tobacco industry will be the only voice speaking to our kids about smoking, and this study makes it clear that when the tobacco companies speak to kids, even in so-called prevention ads, teens are more likely to smoke,” said Karla Sneegas, executive director, Indiana Tobacco Prevention Cessation.

In Indiana, Sneegas said the state has funded a tobacco prevention program advertising campaign aimed at youth, known as VOICE, since 2001. Data from a 2005 youth survey showed that youth with a confirmed awareness of VOICE were 13 times more likely to think that smoking “is not cool”, thus reducing their likelihood to smoke.

“The ads run by the tobacco companies are a fraud and are just another attempt to make us their guinea pigs. Our VOICE campaign, designed by kids for Indiana kids really works,” added Julianna Eley, who recently attended a statewide ACTION SPEAKS 2006 conference.

In the new AJPH study, researchers used Nielsen Media Research television ratings data to measure youth exposure to the tobacco industry’s television ads from 1999 to 2002. They then compared these levels of ad exposure to youth smoking attitudes and behavior as measured by

school surveys of 8th, 10th and 12th graders conducted as part of the federal government’s annual Monitoring the Future survey. The final sample size was 103,172 students. The researchers adjusted their analysis for other factors that might have affected youth smoking, including smoke-free laws, cigarette prices and other TV advertising about not smoking.

The study involved youth-targeted ads by Philip Morris and the Lorillard Tobacco Company and parent-targeted ads by Philip Morris. While the youth-targeted ads are no longer running in the United States (some are still running in other countries), Philip Morris is still running parent-targeted ads in the U.S. In addition to the TV ads, tobacco companies continue to distribute their so-called “prevention” materials to schools and doctors’ offices and to run radio and magazine ads about their programs.

In stark contrast to the findings of this new study, a July 2005 study using the same methodology and published in the journal *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine* found that state-sponsored tobacco prevention media campaigns are effective at reducing smoking. This study found that youth exposed to these campaigns are more likely to perceive harm from smoking, more likely to say they would not smoke in the future and less likely to have smoked in the past 30 days. States such as Maine and Washington that have adequately funded tobacco prevention programs have reduced smoking by more than 60 percent among some age groups.

By contrast, in Indiana, per capita spending on the public education campaign has dropped dramatically from 86 cents in 2004 to just 27 cents in 2006. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that Indiana spend a minimum of one dollar in such campaigns. Overall, Indiana spends \$10.8 million each year in tobacco prevention; 69 percent below the CDC minimum recommended level of funding.

The new AJPH study was conducted by researchers at Bridging the Gap, a policy research program based at the University of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Michigan. The National Cancer Institute, the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funded the study.

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