

Tobacco-Free Sport and Recreation Initiative
...Creating Healthy Environments
Speaking Notes

December 2007

Introduction

Thanks for the opportunity to be included on your meeting agenda today.

Purpose: I'm here to share some information about the provincial *Tobacco-Free Sport and Recreation Initiative* and some of the ways we have been working with community groups to create tobacco-free environments.

During the past two years, we have provided small amounts of project funding to both provincial and community-based sport and recreation organizations keen to promote the tobacco-free message among their members and supporters.

Part of our aim has been to help the build capacity of groups to address the tobacco issue, as an integral part of their current activities and programs.

We recognize the past efforts of local organizations and discuss any new plans to address the tobacco issue

I welcome any thoughts you may have about how we can best support local sport and recreation groups in your Municipality to become involved in the initiative.

Tobacco-Free Sport / Recreation

The Tobacco-Free Sport / Recreation approach is being successfully implemented in states and provinces throughout North America and other international regions including Australia, NZ and S. East Asia.

It has been endorsed by the CDC (US Centers of Disease Control & Prevention), the World Health Organization, the International Olympic Committee and other leading health and sport agencies.

The plan is for the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in British Columbia to be tobacco-free and a policy will extend to all indoor and outdoor venues. Formal policies were in place during the Salt Lake City Games in 2002 and in Sydney 2000.

There is no place for tobacco in sport and recreation.

Sport and recreation programs, including arts and culture, provide healthy alternatives to tobacco use through physical and social activities.

For young people, these activities are vital for their physical, mental, emotional and social development.

We know that physical activity can be a protective factor for preventing children and youth from starting to use tobacco.

Community sport & recreation is a natural place to reinforce positive health messages and behaviour while children and youth are engaged in programs and activities they enjoy.

Tobacco-Free Soccer – CHSC

In 2003, the **Tobacco-Free Sport and Recreation Initiative** began as a grass-roots community health project in collaboration with the Cole Harbour Soccer Club promoting the “*Tobacco-Free Soccer*” message and policy to their 1300+ members.

The project was formally evaluated (n=384 coach / parent surveys and series of five (5) focus groups). 84 % of survey respondents recommended that the project be expanded to other sport and recreation programs across the province.

The final evaluation results prompted further support from our provincial health partners with the;

- Production of our ***Tobacco-Free Youth Sport and Recreation: How To Get There Guide***, designed as a step-by-step reference for groups interested in following in Cole Harbour Soccer Club footsteps. (*Copies available*)
- Enabled us to provide small project funding to youth-focused sport and recreation organizations to promote the Tobacco-Free message and develop a policy.

To date, we have allocated just over \$25,000 in project funding to **15** sport and recreation organizations. Estimated program reach 50,000+ members across NS

Collaborative Effort

The *TFSR Initiative* is a collaborative effort with representatives on our working group from the;

ACT Initiative: *Action in your Community Against Tobacco*

- Co-Chaired by Cancer Care NS and Canadian Cancer Society – NS Division
- NS Dept. Health Promotion and Protection – Tobacco Control Unit
- Capital Health and South Shore District Health Authorities

Recreation NS

Sport NS

Provincial Tobacco Control Strategy

The provincial Tobacco Control Strategy has 7 key components.

Currently, the strategy is going through an extensive renewal and consultation process to clarify its strategic direction for the next 5 – 10 years.

Since 2001, significant reductions in smoking rates have been achieved through a combination of efforts within each of these strategy components. In 2001 smoking rates were 30% in 2007 they are 22%. .

Importantly, the smoking rates for youth ages 15-19 years have dropped from 25% down to 13% since 2001.

Tobacco-Free Sport & Recreation and the *ACT Initiative* have been most closely aligned to the **Community-Based Programming** component of the strategy along with youth smoking prevention and policy and legislation

Tobacco-related illness is still the number one cause of preventable death in our province.

Smoking and exposure to 2nd hand smoke kills 1748 NS each year (21%). On average 200 people die each year in NS as a result of exposure to second-hand smoke.

\$171 million direct health care costs (ambulatory care costs, family physician visits, acute care hospitalization and prescription drugs, direct costs of fires due to smoking

\$526 million indirect costs (loss of productivity due to premature death to the short and long-term disability, and morbidity costs

Slide 11 TFSR Goals:

Our main program goal is to:

1. Contribute to a reduction in the rate of tobacco use among young people in Nova Scotia as part of the comprehensive Provincial Strategy

Tobacco-Free Sport & Recreation is about promoting health and creating tobacco-free environments that aim to:

- **Prevent young people from starting to use tobacco**

Young people need to receive the same tobacco-free messages at their local sport or recreation activity, as they experience at school and in the wider community.

- **Protect all persons from exposure to second hand smoke**

An effective tobacco-free policy sends a clear message that the health of all members and supporters of the organization is being taken seriously

- **Support people attempting to reduce or quit tobacco use**

Most tobacco users are supportive of tobacco-free policies because it helps with their attempts to quit by removing the prompts / cues to use tobacco. 70% of tobacco users want to quit.

For tobacco users that express a willingness to quit, we encourage groups to refer them to either Addiction Services (DHA's) and / or the Smokers Help-Line at 1877-513-5333

- **De-normalize tobacco in the community**

We need to limit "mixed messages" that young people receive about tobacco and to change the social and cultural norms in communities that may prompt use

The **TFSR initiative** also attempts to counteract Tobacco Industry marketing tactics by;

- Visibly promoting a **tobacco-free** message in communities and asking groups to say “no” to any form of tobacco industry sponsorship, incentives, or programs.

Slide 12 How To Get There

Keep things simple: Tobacco-free projects don’t need to be complicated.

Promote, Educate and Reinforce – and Evaluate

1. **Promote the Message** and explain the approach to executive members of sport and recreation organizations.
2. **Build capacity and educate** leaders as role models that engage youth
3. **Positively Reinforce the message and policy** using the tobacco-free logo as a friendly reminder
4. **Evaluate Results** – make necessary changes

Slide 13 Promote the Message

The Tobacco – Free logo can be readily adapted for particular sport and recreation activities...there’s no copyright on it.

The logo is ideally placed where people can see it on a regular basis. Used as a friendly reminder to members and supporters that a policy is in place

Here are just a few examples....

Signs / banners / posters:

- permanent signage
- corner flags (soccer and rugby)

Decals on equipment (Ski helmets, Equestrian tack boxes, Garbage cans)

Clothing / uniforms (Coaches and Players t-shirts)

- **Existing communication channels** are a cost effective way to promote the message / logo via schedules, registration forms, notices & newsletters, public announcements and websites.

Slide 14 Capacity Building and Education

1. Identify key “champions: *Find people that are keen to “champion” tobacco-free efforts and can motivate others to get involved*

2. TFYSR: How To Get There Guide: *step by step approach for planning and implementing tobacco-free projects and for policy development*

3. Information Sharing

- *Finding out what organizations have already done to address the tobacco issue...building on existing knowledge and experiences*
- *“Give space” to leaders to bring forward their own ideas about how best to communicate with their members*
- *Collaborate on shared goals and the communication plan*
- *Information packages / sessions for leaders, coaches, officials, staff and volunteers about tobacco-free approach*

4. Youth Engagement : *Encourage organizations to think about ways that young people can be involved in the planning projects*

5. Positive Role Modeling:

- *Informing leaders / coaches about the importance of being a positive role model to children and youth by refraining from tobacco use in their presence or view.*

6 . Project Funding and Support:

Slide 15 Tobacco-Free Policy - Positive Reinforcement

To avoid sending “mixed messages” and contradicting the message / logo, we encourage sport and recreation organizations to work toward developing a written tobacco-free policy.

Tobacco-free policy should be very clear and simply stated such as;

Tobacco - Free means no smoking, snuffing, dipping or chewing any tobacco products...

- **by all members and supporters...(including participants, players, coaches, leaders, officials, staff, volunteers and spectators)**
- **during all activities and events sanctioned by the organization**

Coaches / leaders are often in a good position to verbally reinforce the tobacco-free message and policy among members and supporters.

Slide 16 2007 National Soccer Championships –

Here is an example of a way to remind people to respect tobacco-free policy.

Soccer NS is hosting the 2007 National Soccer Championships in Halifax this week. They have a tobacco-free policy for all sanctioned events and venues.

This advertisement that will be on the back cover of 2,500 programs that will be distributed to all players, officials and patrons

The programs also include an insert promoting the Smoker’s Helpline

Slide 17 Sport and Recreation Organizations

Of the **15** sport and recreation organizations in Nova Scotia involved with our initiative, **13** now have a written tobacco-free policy in place.

Provincial Organizations (7) including;

- Alpine Ski NS (550 provincial members)
- NS Equestrian Federation (2,300 members – 80% girls and young women)
- Girl Guides of Canada (7,500 members – 5,500 girls and 1800 leaders)
- NS School Athletics Federation (NSSAF)
- Rugby NS
- Soccer NS
- Tennis NS

Community Clubs / Associations (8);

- First Nations (3) Eskasoni, Indian Brook and Paq'tnkek
- Soccer (4) Barrington, CHSC, DUSC, Northside
- Tennis (1)

Slide 18: Girl Guides of Canada

From a national perspective, I want to take this opportunity to mention that the Girl Guides of Canada has just announced it now has an official

Tobacco-free policy for all Provincial Councils across Canada in effect as of Sept. 2007

We understand that this has resulted partly from our work with the NS Council with the creation of a **Tobacco-Free Challenge**

Girls of all ages and their leaders earned a ***Tobacco-Free Challenge*** crest for engaging in discussions about the tobacco issue. They also creatively expressed their understanding of the tobacco-free message, using chosen art, culture and presentation activities.

A clear tobacco-free statement from the NS Council to all leaders was issued via their provincial membership newsletter along with the Challenge. (Leaders 1,800)

The GGC - Ontario Council is also looking at offering the ***Tobacco-Free Challenge*** to their members (approx. 50,000 girls and young women). GGC is also considering making the ***Challenge*** available Nationally.

Slide 19: Barrington Soccer Association (Slide Photo of Permanent Sign)

Barrington Recreation and the Soccer Association collaborated on project

\$620 funding allocated based on \$1.50 per member

Policy statement

20 t-shirts

2 - 5 x 3 ft banners

Permanent Signage featuring the Tobacco - Free logo and fair play policy

Decals on garbage cans on fields

Public announcement(s) printed in local paper

Plan for spring season kick-off event to reinforce the message and policy

Slide 20: Municipal Outdoor Policy

There are a growing number of municipalities, both in Canada and the US, that have adopted outdoor tobacco-free policies such as for;

- Recreation and sport facilities / grounds and fields
- Beaches, Parks, Playgrounds, Trails and other Outdoor Event Venues

For example, in Minnesota there are more than 100 cities / towns with tobacco-free policies for outdoor recreation spaces and sport facilities

In Canada, there are several Municipalities in BC, Alberta and Ontario that have adopted tobacco-free play zones around playgrounds (between 10 – 25 metres)

Raising community awareness with signage and educational activities is the preferred approach. Encourages self-enforcement by community members

In NS, the Municipal Govt. Act Part 7 section 172.1 would enable such municipal policies or by-laws to be developed (refer to Bridgewater report and Wolfville)

- Promote community health and safety

Parks and recreational spaces are designed for the health and well-being all community members.

- Air Quality

There is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke...it is carcinogenic. Exposure can cause immediate effects on health such as asthma and other respiratory diseases. The long-term effects can include cancer and CHD.

- Reduce Cigarette Litter

Discarded cigarette butts are form of pollution, non- biodegradable and are toxic if ingested by small children.

Communities that have implemented tobacco-free parks and recreation spaces report having cleaner environments (Minnesota)

- De-normalize tobacco *and change community norms so that tobacco use is no longer associated with sport and other events.*

That children and youth come to understand that the majority of community members do not use tobacco and that it is not accepted in society.

- Positive role modeling in community: *demonstrate positive health behaviour choices in the presence of children and youth*
- Support local clubs / associations with tobacco-free policy *A municipal tobacco-free policy benefits local community sport and recreation associations that already have policies in place for their membership. The onus would not be entirely on such groups to protect the health and well-being of community members (as participant or spectator).*

The majority of community recreation and sporting events are held at either municipal or school district facilities. Tobacco use is prohibited on all school grounds. Provide consistency and limit “mixed messages” about where tobacco use can / cannot take place.

Slide 21: How We Can Help

- Project funding youth-focused sport and recreation clubs / associations

The funding can be used for visible promotion of the tobacco-free message / logo

Copies of our information resources and application forms can also be downloaded from the Health Promotion Clearinghouse website

www.hpclearinghouse.ca/act/tfsr.htm

- Project Planning, resources and support

My role as the TFSR project coordinator is to guide and support groups in the planning, implementation and evaluation of tobacco-free projects

- Policy development (*draft statements and develop communication plans*)
- Provincial tobacco control strategy: (*Comprehensive and collaborative*)

District Tobacco Reduction Strategy Coordinators

TFSR Project Coordinator

Slide 22 Conclusions

TFSR:

1. Can contribute to the achievement of the goals and objectives of comprehensive tobacco control strategies.
2. Reaches into communities and provides opportunities for innovative partnerships
3. Motivates community leaders to take action on tobacco within their own sphere of influence ...and can build upon their prior efforts and experience
4. Can lead to health policy change particularly if organizations recognize their responsibility to improve the health and well being of their members and supporters.
5. Hopefully this approach will inspire a new tobacco-free culture in community sport and recreation settings

Slide 23: Contact Us: