

**COLE HARBOUR SOCCER CLUB
HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA**

TOBACCO FREE SOCCER INITIATIVE

Evaluation Findings
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Prepared By: Stephanie Heath, Research Power Incorporated
Darren Brown and Janet Rhymes, Logical Minds Consulting

Prepared For: Community-based Programming Working Group,
Capital Health Tobacco Reduction Strategy



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Tobacco-Free Soccer Initiative

The Cole Harbour Soccer Club (CHSC) in partnership with the Southeastern Community Health Board, the Capital Health Tobacco Reduction Strategy and the ACT Program (Action in your Community Against Tobacco) implemented a *Tobacco-Free Soccer Initiative* in the spring and summer of 2003.

A tobacco-free policy was created for the Cole Harbour Soccer Club (CHSC) (Appendix 1) with the intent of discouraging use of tobacco products, promoting tobacco-free soccer, supporting CHSC coaches to be tobacco-free role models, and creating an environment that de-normalizes tobacco use. Specifically, the objectives of the *Tobacco Free Soccer Initiative* were to:

- Promote the tobacco-free soccer message;
- Encourage CHSC coaches, officials, soccer camp leaders and elite players to become tobacco-free role models;
- Develop, implement and enforce the CHSC tobacco-free policy;
- Educate CHSC members and supporters about the policy.

A variety of promotional/awareness and education materials were developed to support the policy. These materials were targeted at a variety of audiences including coaches, soccer players, parents, summer camp leaders, spectators, and other team members. Specifically the initiative consisted of:

- The Tobacco Free Soccer message as a logo on all team uniforms to remind coaches, players, officials and spectators of the importance of being active, healthy and tobacco-free;
- Provision of education opportunities for coaches to enable them to become more effective role models and to uphold the CHSC new tobacco-free policy;
- Creation and distribution of Tobacco Free Soccer t-shirts and whistle straps; and
- An official media launch of the initiative.

1.2 Program Evaluation

The project partners including Capital Health Tobacco Reduction Strategy, the Southeastern Community Health Board, the ACT Initiative and the Cole Harbour Soccer Club undertook an evaluation of the Tobacco Free Soccer Initiative in December 2003. Funding for the evaluation was provided by the Nova Scotia Office of Health Promotion, and consisted of two components:

- a) a survey distributed to parents and coaches, and
- b) focus groups with players, coaches and the Cole Harbour Soccer Club Executive

This report presents the results of the two evaluation components. Part I summarizes the results of the parent and coach survey. Part II summarizes the results of the stakeholder focus groups.

2.0 PART I – Survey of Parents and Coaches

A survey was conducted to assess the level of awareness, understanding and acceptance of the tobacco-free message and policy among parents and coaches. The questionnaire was developed in January 2004, distributed in February and March 2004, with the final report produced in April 2004.

An independent Evaluation Consultant was contracted to conduct the evaluation including survey development, data entry and analysis, and writing of the final report.

2.1 Methodology

a) Survey Development

The Evaluation Consultant developed a draft of the survey based on program objectives. The survey was then reviewed by members of the Community-based Programming Working Group of the Capital Health Tobacco Strategy, including the Coordinator of the Southeastern Community Health Board and the Tobacco Strategy Coordinator at Capital Health. Modifications to the survey were completed based on feedback from these individuals.

The questionnaire was then pilot-tested with selected members of the Cole Harbour Soccer Club Executive for face and content validity. No further modifications were required and the survey was finalized at the end of January 2004 (Appendix 2 contains a copy of the survey).

b) Sample

It was estimated that approximately 962 families participated in the 2003 soccer season. Further, it was estimated that 80% of these families would be returning to participate in the 2004 season and one (or sometimes both) of the parents could therefore complete the survey.

Staff and volunteers from the Community-based Programming Working Group of the Capital Health Tobacco Reduction Strategy distributed the surveys at three 2004 soccer registration events in February and March 2004, where it was estimated that 80% of parents could be reached. The staff and volunteers determined if the parents and/or coaches had participated in the 2003 soccer season, and then distributed a survey to individuals who had participated in the 2003 season and volunteered to complete the questionnaire. The survey took approximately five to ten minutes to complete with respondents completing them as they waited in line to register their children. The completed surveys were then collected by the staff and volunteers at the events, or respondents placed them in predominantly displayed collection boxes. A total of 384 surveys were completed at the three events.

c) Data Analyses

The findings in this report summarize the results of the completed surveys. Using SAS, the data from close-ended questions was double entered to ensure accuracy, and frequencies and description statistics were calculated. For most analyses, missing data was removed from the calculations, however in a few instances this data was included in the analyses, and this is noted in the report. The results from the

close-ended questions are presented as frequencies in table format and/or bar graphs with accompanying text. The qualitative data from open-ended questions are summarized and reported.

2.2 Results

Results for the survey are presented in five sections as follows:

- a) Demographics
- b) Awareness
- c) Understanding
- d) Acceptance
- e) Effectiveness

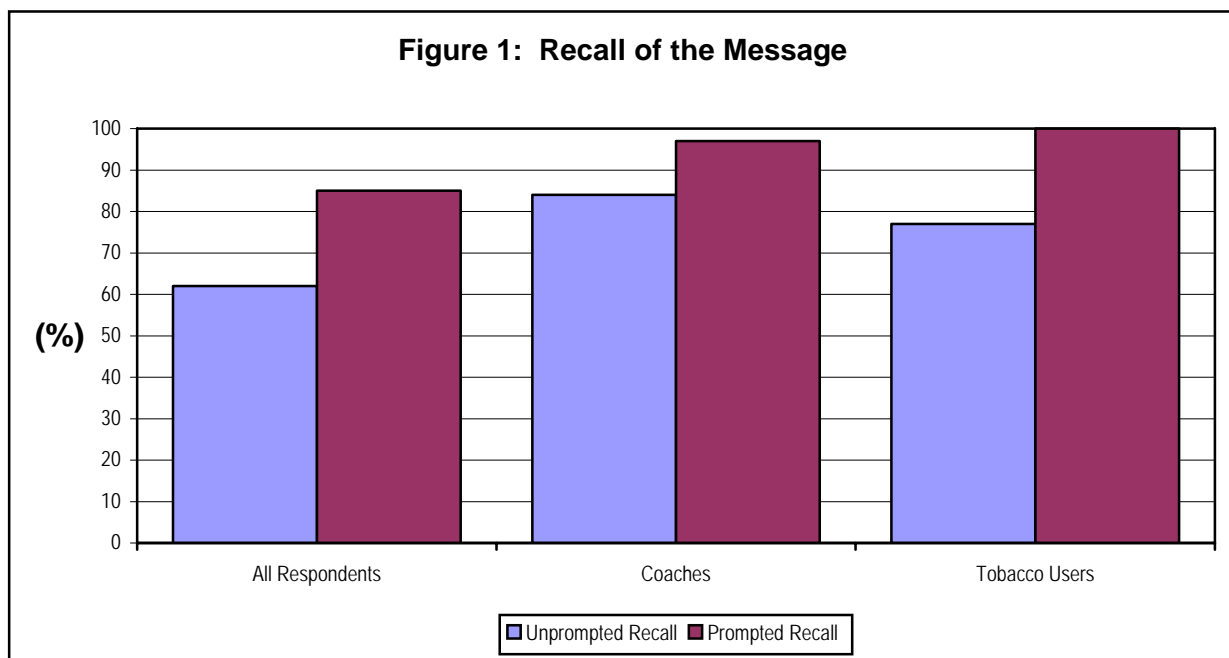
a) Demographics

Parents and coaches completed a total of 384 surveys. Seventeen percent of respondents (n=65) were coaches, with 6% (n=24) of respondents indicating that they currently use tobacco products.

b) Awareness

The Message

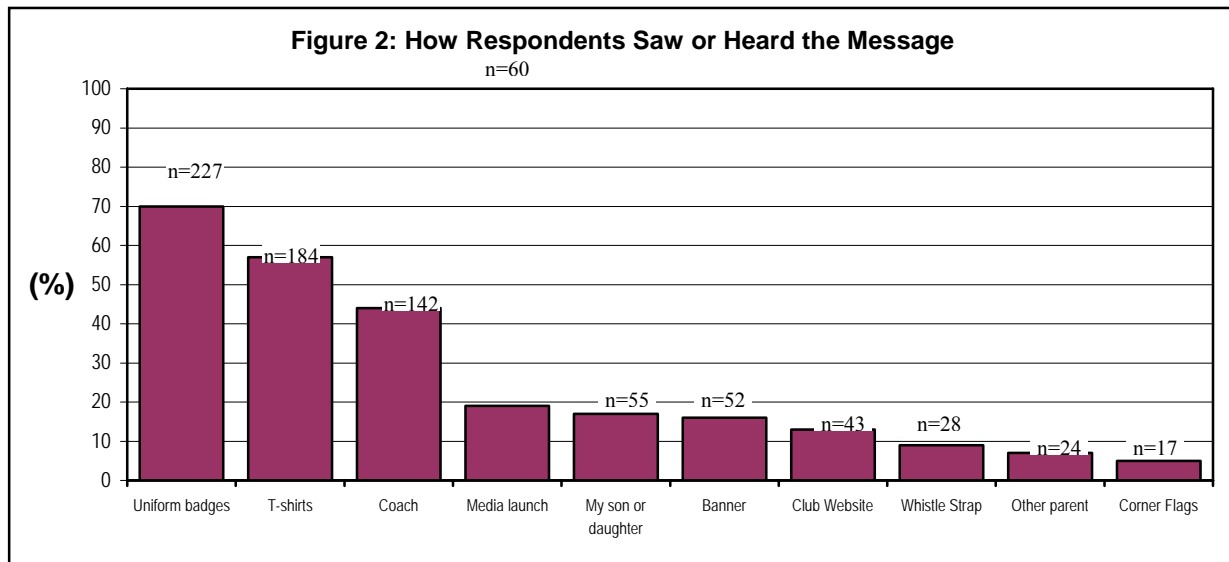
Respondents were asked if they had heard or seen any health messages at soccer games, practices or club events in 2003. Figure 1 illustrates that, unprompted, 62% (n=222) of all respondents were aware of a health message. More coaches and tobacco users were aware of seeing health messages with 84% of coaches (n=54) and 77% (n=17) of tobacco users indicating that they had seen or heard a health message.



Eighty-seven percent (194 of 222) of all respondents who were aware of a health message indicated that they recalled a message related to tobacco control. The majority of these (90%, n=174) indicated that the message was a non-smoking/tobacco-free soccer message. Fewer described the message as anti-smoking (6%, n=11) or that smoking is unhealthy (5%, n=9). Six percent (n=13) described other health messages, including nutrition messages (n=4), healthy lifestyle (n=2), have enough water (n=2), play safe (n=2), drug and alcohol free (n=2), stretch/warm-up (n=2), active living (n=1), have fun/no aggression (n=1), and parents should be at every game (n=1).

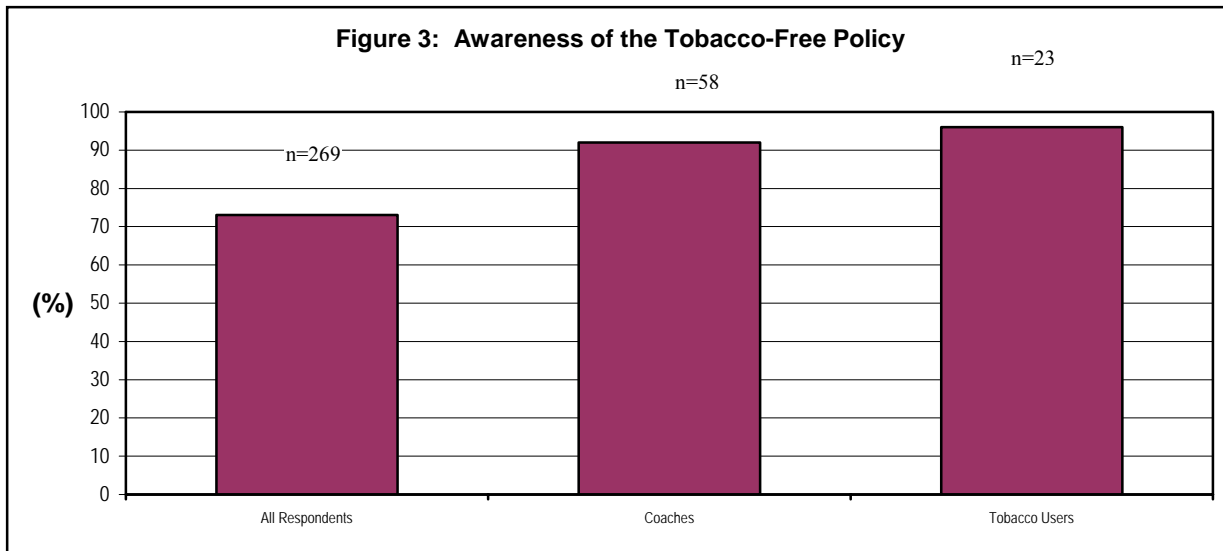
Figure 1 illustrates that when prompted (i.e., respondents were asked if they had seen or heard the “tobacco-free soccer” message), 85% (n=322) were aware of the tobacco-free soccer message. Both the majority of coaches (97%, n=62) and tobacco users (100%, n=24) indicated that they had seen or heard the “tobacco-free soccer” message during the 2003 soccer season.

Figure 2 illustrates that the most common method of hearing or seeing the message was from uniform badges (70%, n=227), T-shirts (57%, n=184) and the coach (44%, n=142).

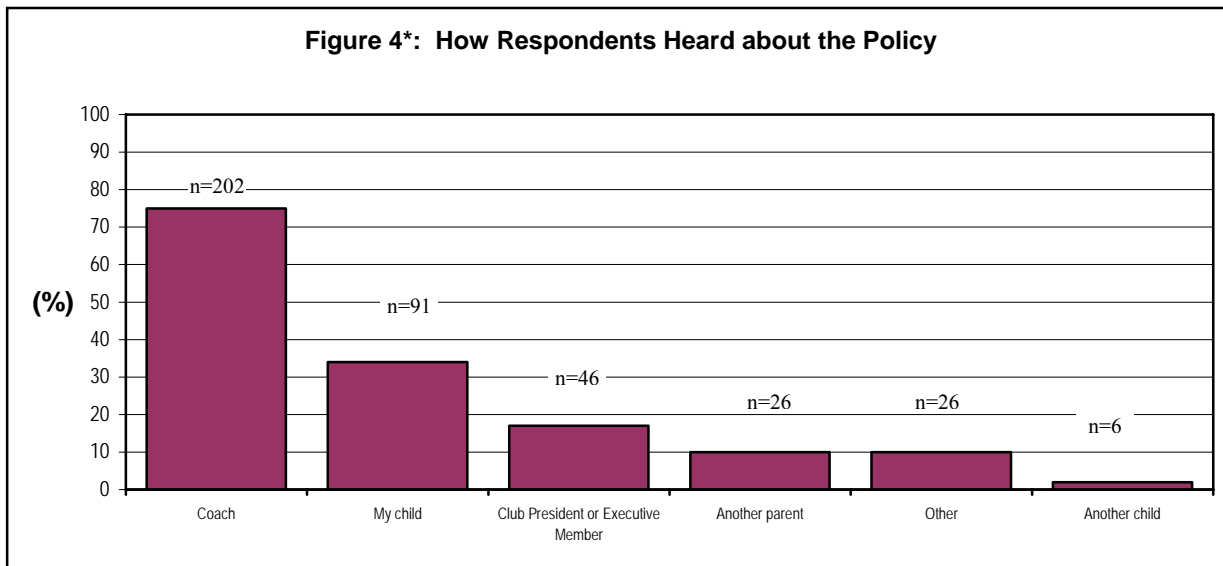


The Policy

When asked if they were aware of the Club’s tobacco-free policy, 73% (n=269) of all respondents indicated that they were aware of the policy. A higher number of both coaches and tobacco users were aware of the policy, with 92% (n=58) of coaches and 96% (n=23) of smokers aware of the policy. Figure 3 illustrate these results.



The most common method of hearing about the policy was from coaches with 75% (n=202) indicating that they had heard about the policy through the coach. Figure 4 illustrates other ways parents heard about the policy, however, as depicted, these were noted less frequently.



*There were 26 "other" responses and most often noted were T-shirt/ Uniform/Badge (n=7), media (n=5), website (n=2), launch (n=2)

c) Understanding

The Message

Respondents were asked what the tobacco-free soccer message meant to them. Seventy-two percent (n=277) of respondents provided answers, which were coded according to the themes presented in Table 1. As illustrated, for the majority of respondents, the message meant no smoking at games and practices, or on the field.

Table 1: The Meaning of Tobacco-Free Soccer*

Coded Responses	Percentage of those providing answers (i.e., of the 277)
No smoking at games, practices or on the field, non smoking environment	49% (n=135)
Encouraging a healthy lifestyle, to be healthy and active	13% (n=36)
Encouraging people not to smoke, promoting being a non-smoker, don't smoke	12% (n=33)
A positive message, good message for kids, important	9% (n=25)
Encouraging kids to stop smoking or not start	6% (n=16)
Soccer and smoking don't mix; you cannot be good at sports/soccer if you smoke	4% (n=11)
Smoking is bad, smoking is bad for your health	3% (n=8)
Sets a good example for kids	3% (n=8)

*Although most respondents provided just one meaning, some respondents provided two meanings, with both coded. In addition, eight responses were not coded as they did not relate to the meaning of the message. Therefore the number of responses does not add up to 277.

d) Acceptance

The Message

All respondents indicated acceptance of the tobacco-free soccer message, with 73% (n=280) indicating that they *really like it* and 12% (n=45) indicating that *it's o.k.*, with 15% (n=59) of responses missing. Coaches were equally as positive with 80% (n=52) indicating that they *really like it* and 17% (n=11) indicating that *it's o.k.*, and two missing responses (3%). Overall smokers also appeared to accept the message, although slightly less positive, with 67% (n=16) indicating that they *really like it* and 29% (n=7) indicating that *it's o.k.*, with one missing response (4%).

Respondents who did not like the message were asked to explain why they did not like it. Given that no one indicated that they did not like the message, there were very few responses. However a few individuals did respond and provided the following:

- Four indicated that they did not feel the message was targeted at the appropriate audience “*A bit over the top I feel, most people involved in soccer are not the ones who require a non-smoking message*”; “*My son who was only five last year doesn't even know what tobacco/smoking is*”; “*Probably a good place to start, but under 10 seems young*”; “*Targeting wrong audience.*”).
- Two other comments included: “*Great message, not sure it should take up the whole T-shirt for soccer coaches*” and “*I think you should be reducing cost*”.

The Policy

All but one respondent indicated acceptance of the tobacco-free policy, with 84% (n=324) indicating that they *really like it* and 10% indicating that *it's o.k.* (n= 39), with 5% (n=20) of responses missing. Coaches indicated the same high degree of acceptance of the policy with 88% (n=57) indicating they *really like it* and 9% (n=6) indicating *it's o.k.*, with two missing responses (3%). As with the acceptance of the message, tobacco users were slightly less positive, however the majority appeared to accept the message with 71% (n=17) indicating they *really like it* and 26% (n=6) indicating *it's o.k.*, with 1 (4%) missing response.

To further assess acceptance of the policy, respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement that parents support the policy, and spectators respect the policy and do not use tobacco products at practices, games or club events. As illustrated in Table 2, the majority of respondents (87%) agreed that parents supported the policy with close to three quarters indicating that they strongly agree. The majority of respondents (84%) also indicated that spectators respect the policy although fewer (56%) strongly agreed with this statement. Responses given by tobacco users and coaches were very similar to those provided in Table 2 (these tables are provided in Appendix 3).

Table 2: Perceptions of Support for the Policy

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Parents support the policy (n=369)	8% (n=31)	2% (n=7)	14% (n=52)	73% (n=270)	2% (n=9)
Spectators respect the policy & do not use tobacco products at practices, games or club events (n=369)	7% (n=26)	7% (n=25)	28% (n=102)	56% (n=206)	3% (n=10)

The Overall Program

To assess the acceptance of the overall program, respondents were asked about the importance of the program, and whether it should be done again this year and in other sports and recreation programs. Table 3 illustrates the majority of respondents agree that the program is important (84% strongly agree), should be done again this year (85% strongly agree) and should be done in other sports and recreation programs (84% strongly agree). Responses provided by coaches and tobacco users were very similar to those provided in Table 3 (these tables are provided in Appendix 3).

Table 3: Acceptance of Overall Program

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
The tobacco-free soccer program is important (n=368)	10% (n=37)	1% (n=2)	5% (n=20)	84% (n=309)	
The tobacco-free soccer program should be done again this year – 2004 (n=367)	10% (n=38)	0% (n=0)	5% (n=17)	85% (n=312)	
The tobacco-free soccer program should be done in other sports and recreation programs (n=367)	10% (n=38)	0% (n=1)	5% (n=17)	84% (n=309)	1% (n=2)

e) Effectiveness

Perceptions of effectiveness of the program were assessed in terms of creating a smoke-free environment at soccer games and practices, encouraging kids to not smoke, encouraging tobacco users to quit and promoting a healthy lifestyle. As illustrated in Table 4, respondents generally agreed that the program had been effective in all areas except encouraging tobacco users to quit. Responses provided by coaches were very similar to those provided in Table 4 as were the responses of tobacco

users although more tobacco users (42%) indicated that the tobacco-free soccer program was *not very effective* at encouraging tobacco users to quit (these tables are provided in Appendix 3).

Table 4: Effectiveness of the Program

Statement	Not at all Effective	Not Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Very Effective	Don't Know
Creating a smoke-free environment at soccer games & practices (n=365)	1% (n=2)	1% (n=4)	34% (n=125)	59% (n=216)	5% (n=18)
Encouraging kids to not smoke (n=363)	1% (n=3)	1% (n=4)	36% (n=130)	54% (n=197)	8% (n=29)
Encouraging tobacco users to quit (n=364)	5% (n=18)	26% (n=94)	30% (n=108)	24% (n=86)	16% (n=58)
Promoting a healthy lifestyle (n=364)	1% (n=4)	1% (n=5)	29% (n=104)	65% (n=237)	4% (n=14)

Respondents were asked if the message had motivated them to do anything with 22% (n=83) of all respondents indicating that it had, and 88 missing responses (23%). The message motivated more smokers and coaches to do something with 42% (n=10) of smokers and 43% (n=28) of coaches indicating that it had.

Twenty-nine percent of all respondents provided written responses when asked what the message had motivated them to do, which were coded into nine categories as, presented in Table 5.

Table 5: What the Message Motivated Some Parents to Do

Coded Response	Percentage (of the 110 who answered the question)
Promote the message (e.g., generally, to friends and family, at soccer games by telling people not to smoke, by wearing the T-shirt)	26% (n=29)
Talk to own children about tobacco use	25% (n=27)
Indicated that they did not smoke anyway (therefore did not motivate them to do anything)	20% (n=22)
To not smoke at games/did not smoke	6% (n=7)
Educate players/kids in general	5% (n=5)
Quit smoking	3% (n=3)
Try to encourage husband to quit	3% (n=3)
Improve general lifestyle	2% (n=2)
Other (fund raise for the Canadian Cancer Society and more aware of smokers – one response each)	2 (2%)

*11 responses were not coded as they did not answer the question or could not be interpreted. Therefore the number of responses does not add up to 110.

The most common response among the nine smokers (included in the above table) was to not smoke/not smoke at games and practices (n=7). The most common response among the 31 responses from the coaches was that they promoted the message (n=17).

2.3 Key Observations from Survey Results

The *Tobacco-Free Soccer* initiative implemented through the Cole Harbour Soccer Club was successful in achieving a high level of awareness, comprehension and acceptance of the tobacco-free soccer message and policy among parents and coaches.

Although the number of parents and coaches who reported using tobacco products was relatively small (compared to the provincial average), these individuals also reported high levels of awareness, comprehension and acceptance of the tobacco-free soccer message and policy.

The uniform badges, T-shirts and coaches were the most effective means of communicating the message, with coaches the most effective for communicating the policy. Clearly the coaches were instrumental in promoting the message and policy, and appear to be advocates of the initiative.

More coaches and tobacco users, than parents in general, report that the message motivated them to do something. Coaches most often indicated that they were motivated to promote the message including to friends and family, and at soccer games, while tobacco users most often indicated that the message motivated them to not smoke at games and practices.

Parents agree that the program was effective in creating a smoke-free environment and encouraging kids not to smoke.

The initiative motivated one in five parents to do something, which was not an explicit program objective, but rather value added. The fact that the initiative motivated three parents to quit and 27 to talk to their children about tobacco use/smoking is noteworthy.

Parents appear to feel the program is worthwhile, and strong support was expressed among the parents to maintain the current initiative at the Cole Harbour Soccer Club, and also expand the program to other sports and recreation events.

Our children have a healthy environment with the positive non-smoking message to play in.

3.0 Part II – Focus Group Results

The summary material contained in this section represents qualitative evaluation data collected from a series of focus group discussions conducted in February, 2004. The focus groups represent five constituencies of the Cole Harbour Soccer Club:

- 3.1 Under 16 year-old Girls
- 3.2 Under 18 year-old Boys
- 3.3 Soccer Coaches
- 3.4 Cole Harbour Soccer Club Executive
- 3.5 Champions

Note: Where appropriate, participant responses have been quoted in italics.

3.1 Under 16 Year-Old Girls (U16Gs)

a) The Journey: What can you tell me about Tobacco-Free Soccer?

The under sixteen year old girls' team understood that Tobacco Free Soccer (TFS) promotes non-tobacco use to players, coaches and others involved in watching the game.

“It reminds us to stay healthy. It is better to be involved in a sport, we shouldn't be ruining our lungs.”

b) Awareness and Education: The Tobacco Free message.

The U16Gs confidently stated that the message means don't smoke, don't chew tobacco nor use tobacco products. The message was simple, obvious and clear. The players received the message through a poster distributed to each player, because of the Smoke Free Soccer logo sewed on their jerseys and from the coaches' t-shirt emblazoned with the logo.

The U16Gs made several recommendations to promoting the message. These included finding a poster depicting a role model of their age group. *“For like, young athletes, there should be a younger nicer looking man. That will make people pay attention to him more than an old man.”*

The players also mentioned that they never knew where the logo and message originated. They would have benefited from a discussion or presentation from their coach. *“Get somebody to come in and talk to us about it so that we would be able to understand what it is about and everything instead of just wearing it on our jerseys because we never got to talk about it.”*

The logo and message could be promoted in schools, on the bus, on water bottles, in the mall, on the radio and on television. *“And, like, in the malls, when we walk through the malls, it would be, like, I belong to that!”*

Players did not recall hearing others comment on the message. *“My mother asked me what it was all about, but I could not really answer it because I did not know.”* However, players were confident that the message and logo did reduce the incidents of people smoking around them; *“I don't think it really changed the way I thought. I think it just changed that parents realized that they should not be smoking around us.”*

c) Policy

None of the players recalled seeing or reviewing the Cole Harbour Soccer Club Policy on Tobacco Free Soccer. Having read the policy, they positively remarked that the policy addressed second hand smoke. *“I think it is pretty good how it talks about promoting no second hand smoke, promoting people not to smoke.”*

The U16Gs said that the policy should be discussed amongst the team and community. *“They should improve publicity by coming in and talking to the players, promoting it at games and stuff. Getting the community more involved in it, not just the soccer people. If they go to a soccer game, they should not be smoking.”*

d) Transferability

The players were confident that the tobacco-free message could be transferred to other sports and leisure activities. They also suggested that schools could establish clubs that promoted a tobacco free message.

Baseball should be a targeted sport. *“Just get more sports involved in it, especially baseball because all the baseball players are chewing tobacco. All the players chew it and there are a lot our age that do it and they think maybe if they do it, it will be OK. So get them involved”*

In closing, the players remarked that the project was indeed successful but would profit from more publicity and organized promotion. *“More publicity and talk about it more. Find a way to get it that it actually influences more people and don’t get somebody that is going to come in and just be dragging on about tobacco and that stuff. Maybe just get statistics and pictures of what happens, that will get people’s attention.”*

3.2 Under 18 Year-Old Boys (U18Bs)

a) The Journey: What can you tell me about Tobacco Free Soccer?

The U18Bs stated that Tobacco Free Soccer promotes not smoking, but were quick to distinguish not smoking at soccer. They perceived that Tobacco Free Soccer provided uniforms and jerseys and in return they wore the Tobacco Free badge.

b) Awareness and Education: The Tobacco Free message

The U18Bs stated that the message was simplistically clear. *“Don’t chew, smoke, eh, anything related to tobacco. Don’t even do it, don’t think about it. Nothing good will come of it if you do it, especially if you are involved in sports. It isn’t healthy.”*

None of the players commented positively on the aesthetics of the logo. *“Tobacco free logo, a real ugly tobacco free logo. It makes you read it, the big one on the t-shirt too, on the corner flag, the t-shirts, on the sleeve, all the coaches have t-shirts and stuff.”*

Players did not recall any discussion of the message or project. Nor did they remember any significant impact the message had on parents or spectators. *“My dad wanted to know what I knew about it, but I didn’t know much, couldn’t tell him much, so he was impressed when he found out what it was about.”*

One player thought he remembered the coach introducing the message; *“Ya, he talked about the message, the jersey and about what it would mean. Don’t smoke. It goes without saying ... really.”*

“Everyone knows not to use tobacco, but it just kind of brings it up more so you know like it’s even less cool. It’s like a constant reminder, too, when you see it, wherever you go. So if you have a sweatshirt on or a jersey, you see it on t-shirts and stuff, so you can’t forget it really. It’s always there. You are putting yourself in the situation that, for younger people, it is stuck in their mind so they always remember it, like, don’t smoke, that’s the message.”

c) **Policy**

The U18Bs group had two responses as to whether or not they had seen or read the policy. Those who coach the younger players were aware of the policy. *“We teach young kids how to play soccer, we had to read the policy and we explained to the kids and stuff and they were made aware of it basically.”* Those who were not involved in coaching the younger players were not aware of the policy.

All agreed that the policy was reasonable.

d) **Transferability**

Concerning further promotion of the message and logo, the players said that the logo could easily be transferred to water bottles, soccer socks, shorts, sneakers and hats. The logo could be displayed on billboards, in newspapers and on television. The message could be effectively transferred from older players to younger ones.

U18Bs stated that the tobacco free initiative should be targeted at baseball. *“Because you look up to all the best baseball players, they all have chewing tobacco, they are putting it in, spitting it up. Ya, like the big ones too, even like the big names, they use chewing tobacco. Oh for sure. Kids are going to look up to them, they are, and these are the best baseball players ever. It makes mixed signals to them, mixed signals to the child.”*

3.2 **Coaches**

a) **The Journey: What can you tell me about your involvement in developing and implementing Tobacco Free Soccer?**

Coaches had no involvement in developing the Tobacco Free Soccer initiative. They are very comfortable with this. From an implementation perspective, coaches perceived that they were responsible for “rolling out the program”. They found that the “simplicity” of the Tobacco Free Soccer initiative allowed them to easily fill this responsibility.

“I can speak from the development side, I didn’t have any involvement as a coach. However from implementing the project, I would have been responsible for the roll out, the exchange of information and just promotion at the beginning of the year. So you wear your t-shirt, you wear you little tag that carried your whistle and that was fundamentally it. You know the manager, as well, took a significant role in making sure the information was shared with all parents.”

“My understanding is that we were there to support a smoke free environment during sports events wearing t-shirts and handouts, basically encouraging people, at least, not to smoke.”

b) Awareness and education of the Tobacco Free message

Coaches found the message simple and clear.

“I think it means exactly what it says, ‘Stay free of the drug’. It’s an addiction once you start it, I mean, I know first hand it’s not an easy habit to break. It’s umm, out there now, the word’s out there. It’s dangerous--the second-hand smoke is more dangerous and the more we can keep it away from my kids the better they are, the better we all are.”

“I think you are right. I didn’t take this as a real education tool to come out to the kids but it was more supporting the message they do get in school. It was just following through with that to say, “Listen, you talk about these things, you should be active, you shouldn’t smoke. Guess what? When you are active with us in the club, there is no smoking. It’s clear, so it was really just reinforcing that message.”

Coaches were convinced of the positive impact from launching the Tobacco Free initiative during ‘picture day’. *“That’s where we are all at the same field all day long and every team comes and has their photo taken. So basically this year all the coaches arrived with their t-shirts, so it was a great display.”*

c) Policy

The Cole Harbour Soccer Club policy was clear to coaches. They recommended no changes. For coaches who chose to distribute the policy to players and have it available for parents, the club provided photocopying. *“I don’t think I would [make any changes to the policy]. It was pretty self-explanatory. I’m an average guy and I understood everything.”*

d) Transferability

Coaches agreed their participation in implementing the project is at a comfortable and manageable level. They did not wish to be involved in further in-depth educational experiences for players or parents.

“I don’t know if that [educational supplement] would be required. I don’t know if I want to teach it, teach tobacco free issues. My focus is on soccer; it’s giving them the message, right? I think they get it through school and we sit and reinforce it, right? So at the beginning of the year I say we explain it to parents, explain it to the kids, they got the patch all year, and the coaches have their t-shirts all year.”

The simplicity of the initiative is the key to its transferability. The Tobacco Free message could easily be transferred to other sports and leisure activities including Girl Guides and Boy Scouts.

“I think what I liked about it [was that] it was pretty simple, and there wasn’t a lot I had to worry about. I got a whole year ahead of me of things to do and it made it easy for me--here’s some information for the parents, here’s a patch for the kids, you give them the message, here’s your shirt to wear, done. Right, wear your shirt when you get your picture taken. Like you said, it shows up on everybody’s mantel, the same thing. I didn’t have to worry about anything else. It was easy for me to do, and all I had to do was support it.”

3.4 Cole Harbour Soccer Club Executive

a) **The Journey: What can you tell me about developing and implementing Tobacco Free Soccer?**

The club's Administrator introduced the Cole Harbour Soccer Club Executive to the Tobacco Free Soccer concept when she became aware of a funding opportunity from the Southeastern Community Health Board (SECHB). The SECHB manages a Community Development Fund, which is available for community clubs and organizations interested in promoting health initiatives in their communities. The Coordinator of the SECHB suggested that the Club consider the Tobacco Free project as a potential submission for funding.

At first the CHSC recognized the opportunity for funding. *"It became clear that it was an opportunity to assist with our equipment. It can get our rates down or our fees down for the club members if we do that. Kind of figure out a way to have a program that would deliver a positive message to the kids, [not] smoking was obvious as one of them."* The CHSC executive's role in implementation was to discuss different ideas. *"How we could implement the program so that the message that we wanted to convey was as positive and thorough as we could. It wouldn't make sense to put the message on the soccer balls that were kicked off two months later. How can we get it out there so that it is seen and understood?"*

The executive added that the timing was ripe to initiate the project; *"I think the timing was opportune as well because I think that January 1 they passed a non-smoking law and my understanding was that it was actually against the bylaw to be smoking at or around the school or fields. So it was sort of a good time to roll this out anyway and we did certainly use it as a springboard too, and I think maybe influence some of the parents who have been at games before and smoking. I think there was a subtle influence and subtle message for them that maybe they should rethink it."*

b) **Awareness and Education: The Tobacco Free Message**

The executive agreed that their objective was to *"premiere a positive message"* that the CHSC promotes tobacco-free sports. It was of further importance to the executive that *"nobody was preaching to them [coaches, players, parents, spectators] either. I mean it was a subtle, but effective message. And we were tying it to a physical activity where if you are going to smoke you are going to hurt your ability to be as good as you can in that activity. And, like I said, it wasn't forced on anybody. I didn't see anybody smoking this year at all, not at any games, period, which was great."*

The message was clear to the executive. *"The only challenge I can think of was the biggest challenge we had... getting the badges sewed on the uniforms. So if that was the worst thing we had as a challenge. I say it was pretty successful from an implementation perspective."*

The executive stated that mid-season media coverage of the Tobacco Free initiative would assist in promoting the message. *"That's what I was thinking, a little bit of media coverage later on in the year. Where the focus was early on but after that it just sort of peters away, so a little bit of focus. I know feedback I got from coaches from other clubs is they thought not only the program very progressive, the club was being very progressive in taking on something like that."*

The CHSC website could have links to tobacco related educational material.

c) **Policy**

The CHSC Tobacco Free Soccer policy was drafted from within the executive. All executive members had an opportunity to make changes or revisions to the draft. The members had 100% agreement on the contents of the policy and agreed that it required no modifications.

d) **Transferability**

The CHSC Executive stated that the initiative was transferable to other sporting and leisure activities. They made several recommendations for transferring the initiative:

1. Start early in the season. Plan well. Try to get most of the work accomplished during the off season.
2. It would be encouraging if players had something to exchange with other teams who are not participating in the Tobacco Free initiative. Pins displaying the Tobacco Free logo were recommended.
3. A club or organization must commit to sustaining the message over three to five years otherwise the message becomes marginalized. Plan for the succession of the message.

3.5 **Champions (Champs)**

‘Champs’ denotes the three members of the Cole Harbour Soccer Club Executive who ‘championed’ the Tobacco Free initiative.

a) **The Journey: What can you tell me about developing and implementing Tobacco Free Soccer?**

“It was a much more positive experience than I would have imagined, a much simpler experience than I ever imagined.”

The Southeastern Community Health Board (SECHB) invited a representative of the Cole Harbour Soccer Club (CHSC) to attend a meeting addressing the health of children in the Cole Harbour area. The CHSC agreed to participate in a community based initiative to address healthy living. With support from the SECHB Coordinator, the CHSC further refined their idea and decided to launch a Tobacco Free Soccer initiative. *“She [the Coordinator] helped us focus.”*

The CHSC faced no challenge to the development of the policy or the Tobacco Free Soccer initiative, but did comment on issues related to time-lines and the logistics of getting the patches sewn on the jerseys.

“We were struggling to get the patches on the shirts. These two ladies sewed all the patches on in five days for 1400 uniforms.”

“First of all you need three months. We did it in just over 6 weeks. It was almost too huge an undertaking. It was just not reasonable. So you want three to four months to work with.”

The executive presented the policy and the initiative to the coaches. *“So they [coaches] were presented with information within our club--what the policy was, how to handle parents, what to do on the field, what to do on the field which isn’t covered by the smoking policy and stuff like that. But the actual information about statistics and stuff like that, we weren’t able to get them out and cover the community real well.”*

“Everybody was happy about it, they liked us more for doing it. And I guess it was far more far-reaching than I would have ever thought. I never thought we would be asked to go to a national conference and do a presentation. It just exceeds all your expectations.”

b) Awareness and Education: The Tobacco Free Message

“At Christmas time I went to [the] Lord of the Rings movie and my husband sat next to me and he said, “There’s a tobacco free shirt.” At Christmas time, Lord of the Rings! It was like, wow that’s great. Why would you wear that? I mean there’s lots of reasons but...you know, people are proud to wear them.”

The ‘Champs’ stated that the simplicity of the Tobacco Free Soccer logo is its greatest strength. It is bold, it is clear and it delivers the message.

“Someone in Belgium wanted one, someone in Holland, and [someone in] Cold Lake, Alberta. And these people weren’t just [saying], “Look, if you have a shirt, can I have one?” They were, like, I have to have one of those shirts. And I was thinking, darn, I thought they were pretty ugly. And they loved them.”

“This whole thing has sent messages going right through the soccer community because no matter where we went, what teams, what tournaments we were in, people were chatting about it.”

In the future, the CHSC would like to have a Canadian-oriented fact sheet with tobacco use data related to Nova Scotia. They would include it in the coaches’ manual and as a handout for players.

c) Policy

Coaches accepted the policy. The CHSC was also confident that municipal by-laws would support implementation of the policy on school grounds.

“The policy was something that we had to put into place anyway because we couldn’t just stick the logos on and have people just try to explain them. We had to have some way of dealing with them within the club itself, so besides having a statement or a message we had to make sure we had something to back it up. So--what did it mean to us and why were we doing these things? So that’s why we put that in place. That is why we explained it to all the coaches, and we did the research to know that if they were on a school field, they had a by-law that actually protected them and said that they didn’t have to deal with this situation, someone using tobacco products.”

The ‘Champs’ recommend no changes be made to the policy; *“It’s [the policy] not that specific. It’s very general, but it is clear. It’s simple and clear and that’s what you need. It was not debated in any way by anyone. If they get something long and complicated they will just throw it away.”*

d) Transferability

The ‘Champs’ agreed that the Tobacco Free initiative is transferable to other sports and leisure activities. Its strength lies in its simplicity.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the survey and the focus groups, the Tobacco Free Soccer initiative was successful in creating a high level of awareness, acceptance, and understanding of the tobacco-free message and policy among players, coaches, and parents.

Participants in the evaluation offered the following recommendations for a “successful” program:

1. Start your planning early and try to get most of the work accomplished during the off-season. Allow at least three months to plan, develop the policy, inform, and order/receive materials.
2. Engage coaches in the roll-out of the policy, not in the creation of the policy.
3. Keep the policy and messages simple and clear.
4. Plan how you will enforce your policy and communicate this plan to the appropriate people.
5. Organize an official launch and follow-up promotions to communicate your initiative to players, parents and the broader community.
6. Display the Tobacco Free logo on jerseys, t-shirts, banners, flags, etc. to reinforce the policy.
7. Commit to sustaining the message over three to five years to ensure the policy is embedded in the practice and culture of your organization.
8. Create pins with the Tobacco Free logo so players can exchange them with other teams, to spread the Tobacco Free message to other clubs.
9. Ensure that coaches talk to players and parents about the policy and the benefits of becoming a Tobacco Free organization. Distribute the policy and fact sheets with Canadian and Nova Scotia tobacco facts to coaches, parents and players. If your organization has a website, post your policy and provide links to tobacco-related education sites.
10. Encourage other sport and recreation programs in your community to develop a Tobacco Free policy and supporting materials.

APPENDIX 1: Tobacco Free Soccer Policy**Policy on Tobacco Free Soccer**

The Executive of Cole Harbour Soccer Club (CHSC) recognize that there is ample research demonstrating the health hazards of the use of tobacco products, including smoking and the breathing of secondhand smoke. We believe soccer is a healthy sport and as such we have a responsibility to the players and participants in this sport to demonstrate healthy choices. The Executive of the Cole Harbour Soccer Club, in the best interest of the health and safety of the players, participants and general public, directs the development of the following policies:

1. CHSC will further the goal of consistency among ongoing school and community programs to discourage the use of tobacco products during games, practices and other club or team sponsored activities on HRM sport fields.
2. CHSC will promote tobacco free soccer using various messages, including logos on team uniforms and encouraging our coaches to promote active, healthy, tobacco-free lifestyles among players.
3. CHSC will support tobacco free soccer in all our activities and we will work to eliminate the mixed messages that players receive by encouraging players and participants to respect our tobacco free polices.

APPENDIX 2: Survey Questionnaire

Participated in the 2003 soccer season: _____
FOR OFFICE USE

As a parent, we would like to hear your thoughts about a program the Cole Harbour Soccer Club (CHSC) developed last year. Please complete this short survey and return to one of the volunteers in the bright green T-shirts or place your completed survey in the bright green box.

1. Are you a soccer coach (assistant or head coach)? ¹ Yes ² No

2. Did you see or hear any health message at soccer games, practices or club events in 2003?

¹ Yes ² No

If yes, what was the message? _____

3. Did you see or hear the “tobacco-free soccer” message during the 2003 soccer season?

¹ Yes ² No

IF NO, PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 8.

4. Where did you see or hear the message? (please check all that apply)

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ¹ Uniform Badges | <input type="checkbox"/> ⁵ Corner Flags | <input type="checkbox"/> ⁹ Other parent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ² Whistle Straps | <input type="checkbox"/> ⁶ Media launch | <input type="checkbox"/> ¹⁰ My son or daughter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ³ T-shirts | <input type="checkbox"/> ⁷ Club Website | <input type="checkbox"/> ¹¹ Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ⁴ Banner | <input type="checkbox"/> ⁸ Coach | |

5. What does the “tobacco-free soccer” message mean to you? _____

6. How do you feel about the “tobacco-free soccer” message?

¹ I really like it ² It’s o.k. ³ I don’t like it at all

If you don’t like it, please explain _____

7. Did the message motivate you to do anything? ¹ Yes ² No

If yes, what did it motivate you to do: _____

In 2003, the Cole Harbour Soccer Club developed and implemented a tobacco-free policy that discourages members, officials and spectators from using tobacco products (e.g. cigarettes, cigars, chew/spit, snuff, etc.) during all team practices, games and club events.

8. Were you aware of the Club's tobacco-free policy? ¹ Yes ² No

If yes, how did you hear about the policy? (please check all that apply)

- ¹ Coach ⁴ Another parent
- ² My child ⁵ Club President or Executive Member
- ³ Another child ⁶ Other

9. How do you feel about the tobacco-free policy?

- ¹ I really like it ² It's o.k. ³ I don't like it at all

If you don't like it, please explain _____

10. Do you currently use any tobacco products (e.g., cigarettes, cigars, chew/spit, snuff)? ¹ Yes ² No

11. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements (please circle one response for each statement):

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Don't Know</i>
A. Parents support the tobacco - free policy	1	2	3	4	0
B. Spectators respect the policy and do not use tobacco products at practices, games or club events	1	2	3	4	0
C. The tobacco - free soccer program (i.e., message, policy, education) is important	1	2	3	4	0
D. The tobacco - free soccer program should be done again this year (2004)	1	2	3	4	0
E. The tobacco - free soccer program should be done in other sports and recreation programs.	1	2	3	4	0

12. In your opinion, how effective is the tobacco-free soccer program in (please circle one response for each statement):

	<i>Not at all Effective</i>	<i>Not Very Effective</i>	<i>Somewhat Effective</i>	<i>Very Effective</i>	<i>Don't Know</i>
A. Creating a smoke-free environment at soccer games and practices	1	2	3	4	0
B. Encouraging kids to not smoke	1	2	3	4	0
C. Encouraging tobacco users to quit	1	2	3	4	0
D. Promoting a healthy lifestyle	1	2	3	4	0

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX 3: Tables***ACCEPTANCE OF THE POLICY & OVERALL PROGRAM AND PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS*****Tobacco Users - Perceptions of Support for the Policy**

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Parents support the policy (n=24)	13% (n=3)		17% (n=4)	71% (n=17)	
Spectators respect the policy & do not use tobacco products at practices, games or club events (n=24)		25% (n=6)	21% (n=5)	54% (n=13)	

Coaches- Perceptions of Support for the Policy

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Parents support the policy (n=64)	6% (n=4)	6% (n=4)	16% (n=10)	72% (n=46)	
Spectators respect the policy & do not use tobacco products at practices, games or club events (n=64)	8% (n=5)	8% (n=5)	31% (n=20)	52% (n=33)	2% (n=1)

Tobacco Users: Acceptance of Overall Program

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
The tobacco-free soccer program is important (n=24)	8% (n=2)		8% (n=2)	83% (n=20)	
The tobacco-free soccer program should be done again this year – 2004 (n=23)	13% (n=3)			87% (n=20)	
The tobacco-free soccer program should be done in other sports and recreation programs (n=24)	13% (n=3)		4% (n=1)	83% (n=20)	

Coaches: Acceptance of Overall Program

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
The tobacco-free soccer program is important (n=64)	13% (n=8)		6% (n=4)	81% (n=52)	
The tobacco-free soccer program should be done again this year – 2004 (n=64)	13% (n=8)		2% (n=1)	86% (n=55)	
The tobacco-free soccer program should be done in other sports and recreation programs (n=64)	13% (n=8)		2% (n=1)	86% (n=55)	

Tobacco Users: Effectiveness of the Program

Statement	Not at all Effective	Not Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Very Effective	Don't Know
Creating a smoke-free environment at soccer games & practices (n=24)			46% (n=11)	54% (n=13)	
Encouraging kids to not smoke (n=24)	5 % (n=1)		54% (n=13)	42% (n=10)	
Encouraging tobacco users to quit (n=24)	5% (n=1)	42% (n=10)	33% (n=8)	21% (n=5)	
Promoting a healthy lifestyle (n=24)			42% (n=10)	58% (n=14)	

Coaches: Effectiveness of the Program

Statement	Not at all Effective	Not Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Very Effective	Don't Know
Creating a smoke-free environment at soccer games & practices (n=64)			31% (n=20)	66% (n=42)	3% (n=2)
Encouraging kids to not smoke (n=64)			42% (n=27)	52% (n=33)	6% (n=4)
Encouraging tobacco users to quit (n=64)	3% (n=2)	30% (n=19)	34% (n=22)	20% (n=13)	13% (n=8)
Promoting a healthy lifestyle (n=64)			34% (n=22)	66% (n=42)	