

# Continuing the Fight Against Tobacco Use

Engaging community coalitions in tobacco use prevention and smoking cessation activities

### **SUMMARY**

Tobacco use is still among the most serious and challenging public health issues today. To better address tobacco use at a local level, from November 2011 through August 2013, the Alexandria, Va.-based nonprofit Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) connected with organizations across the nation that are active in tobacco use prevention and smoking cessation to create networks. Working together, they developed a publication focused on trends in the field and prepared a training module on tobacco.

CADCA trains local grassroots groups in effective community problem-solving strategies including the assessment and development of comprehensive plans to address issues of substance abuse in their communities. From the time of CADCA's founding in 1992 until 2004, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) supported its core activities around drug use prevention. See the Program Results Report of the organization's first 12 years, posted on the RWJF website.

The Smoking Cessation Leadership Center, funded by RWJF and led by the Foundation's former president, Steven Schroeder, MD, supported this project with editorial review. RWJF launched the Center in 2003 to provide expertise on, and technical assistance for, tobacco prevention and smoking cessation efforts nationwide. For additional information, see the Progress Report covering the organization's first 10 years.

For more on RWJF's two decades of support for tobacco control, see the retrospective *The Tobacco Campaigns of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Collaborators*, 1991–2010s.

#### **Results**

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America presented the following project results in a report to RWJF. The project team:

- **Fostered networks among organizations concerned about tobacco.** The network-building included:
  - Connecting CADCA's member organizations with national leaders in tobacco prevention through two educational webinars organized by the project team:
    - Tobacco-Free Living Webinar Series: An Introduction to National Tobacco Control Partners (August 15, 2013) detailed the successes and challenges of local coalition leaders in rural areas implementing evidence-based tobacco use prevention strategies, and how they tailored those strategies to local conditions. Thirty-four coalitions participated in the webinar. Read more about the webinar on CADCA's website, with a link to the recording.
    - Coalition Roundtable: Our Story about Local Tobacco Use (July 10, 2013) attracted 234 registrants. In this webinar, some of CADCA's national partner organizations (for example, the Center for Science in the Public Interest, the National School Boards Association, and the Smoking Cessation Leadership Center; a full list is available online) expanded on their missions and visions, shared priorities and future plans, and outlined ways that community leaders can help reduce tobacco use at the local level. Read more about the webinar on CADCA's website, with a link to the recording.
  - Strengthening relations with two other national organizations in the field of tobacco prevention. CADCA hosted separate meetings with high-level staff from Legacy for Health and the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. Discussions centered on possible joint efforts. The organizations agreed to seek out projects of mutual benefit and partner on future funding opportunity when possible.
- Published Strategizer 56: Creating Healthy, Tobacco-Free Environments. CADCA released the 26-page publication in August 2012. It presents specific best-practices recommendations from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Smoking Cessation Leadership Center, and an advisory committee comprising some of the coalition's own members. The publication:
  - Presents the recommendations under four strategies:
    - Reducing tobacco use initiation
    - Restricting minors' access to tobacco products
    - Reducing exposure to environmental tobacco smoke
    - Increasing tobacco use cessation

- Offers a guide to implementing the publication's recommendations with attention to practical considerations such as data-gathering, local partnership-building, message content, and cost-effectiveness
- Includes case studies of successful programs from six local coalitions

CADCA distributed more than 3,000 print copies of the publication, plus electronic copies to its members, all major tobacco prevention and control organizations, state tobacco-control networks, and state alcohol and drug abuse directors.

• Created a training course on tobacco for local coalitions titled, "Tackling Tobacco: Effective Strategies to Reduce Use, Boost Cessation, and Expand Smoke-Free Environments, Parts 1 and 2." The three-hour training received high marks in post-session evaluations by participants in two areas: introducing them to the latest tobacco research, and effective how-to directions in implementing proven strategies. An estimated 137 coalition leaders participated in the two-part training during the grant.

#### **Lessons Learned**

1. **Develop a dissemination plan during the initial phase of a publication project.** "Begin with the end in mind," urges Mary Elizabeth Elliott, project director. "Build out a robust dissemination plan as a deliverable in every product development project."

# **Funding**

RWJF supported this project from November 2011 through August 2013 with a grant of \$50,000 to CADCA.<sup>1</sup>

### **Afterward**

CADCA continues to distribute *Strategizer 56* to community coalitions, at conferences and through workshop presentations. To further expand outreach, the organization is developing an online tobacco toolkit.

In September 2013, CADCA began work under a five-year grant from the CDC to addresses tobacco and other cancer-related health disparities in rural communities.

 $<sup>^1</sup>$  ID# 69568 (\$50,000, November 2011 through August 2013).

# TWO COALITION CAMPAIGNS: SECONDHAND SMOKE IN MULTI-UNIT HOUSING AND SMOKE-FREE PLAYGROUNDS<sup>2</sup>

## **Multi-Unit Housing**

CADCA member, the Tobacco Free Community Partnership for Hampshire and Franklin counties in Massachusetts has been educating tenants, private landlords, and local housing authorities about the health consequences of secondhand smoke exposure in multi-unit dwellings such as apartment buildings. Then the coalition began working with the housing authority, landlord associations, boards of health, the asthma association, city planners, fire departments, realtors, and the Massachusetts Rental Housing Association to establish smoke-free policies in multi-unit dwellings. Their collaborative work resulted in the adoption of a smoke-free policy by four local housing authorities.

# **Playgrounds**

In 2011, the Partnership of Community Resources Coalition in Minden, Nev., a CADCA member, wanted to promote smoke-free playground policies in Minden. But, first, they needed to find out the scope of the problem. They asked Students Taking on Prevention, a team of young people, to collect cigarette butts in parks throughout the community.

Over two weeks, the group collected 200 butts; it was the proof the coalition needed that smoking in parks was a problem. The group presented their findings to the Parks and Recreation Commission, and got approval to post "Young Lungs at Work" and "Watch Your Butts" signs in and around playground areas.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> These stories are adapted from the CADCA toolkit, *Strategizer 56*.

# **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

(Current as of date of the report; as provided by the grantee organization; not verified by RWJF; items not available from RWJF.)

### **Curricula**

Tackling Tobacco: Effective Strategies to Reduce Use, Boost Cessation, and Expand Smoke-Free Environments, Parts 1 and 2. Alexandria, VA: Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, July 25 and 26, 2012.

### **Toolkits**

Strategizer 56: Creating Healthy, Tobacco-Free Environments. Alexandria, VA: Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, 2012. Available for purchase online.