

# Implementing 100% Tobacco-free School Policy

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## What Happens after the Tobacco-free School Policy is Adopted?

- Celebrate the adoption of the policy through school websites, newsletters, and banners.
- Publicly thank the school board for adopting the 100% Tobacco-free School Policy.<sup>1</sup>
- Set an implementation date of at least 4-6 weeks after the policy is adopted to allow time for planning enforcement and communication strategies.<sup>1</sup> Involve all sectors of the school community in planning for implementation. Be sure to take adequate time for implementation planning.
- As the implementation date approaches, post notices about the policy at all entrances to school buildings, school grounds, parking lots, athletic facilities, and in school/activity buses.<sup>2</sup> If this is not feasible, post information on the school's website and/or hang a banner in the main office.
- Create scripts and train staff, students, and community volunteers to politely ask everyone including visitors and vendors to respect the school policy.<sup>2</sup>
- Develop and diligently implement an enforcement plan to set a strong precedent for compliance.<sup>1</sup>
- Enlist the help of community law enforcement and/or school resource officers to assist with implementation.<sup>1</sup>

## How Can the Policy Be Implemented Effectively?

### ■ Communicating with Students

- Announce the tobacco-free policy to students via multiple channels (i.e., assembly programs, electronic media, student newspaper, and/or a series of daily announcements).<sup>2</sup>
- Provide students an opportunity to design posters or media campaigns to announce the policy to the school and community.<sup>2</sup>
- Use educational programs as alternatives to suspension for student violators;<sup>2</sup> and offer cessation programs or brief interventions with referral to local cessation resources.

### ■ Communicating with Parents

- Provide policy information at parent orientation meetings at the beginning of the school year.<sup>2</sup>
- Send a letter to parents describing the policy change and consequences of violation.<sup>2</sup>
- Invite students to deliver announcements of the new policy to parents at athletic events, meetings, concerts, and plays.<sup>2</sup>

### ■ Communicating with Faculty/Staff

- Discuss the policy at staff/faculty meetings and new staff/faculty orientations.<sup>2</sup>
- Tell staff about access to tobacco treatment support programs and provide free nicotine replacement products (i.e., nicotine patches) if possible.<sup>2</sup>
- Involve respected and well-liked school personnel in sharing messages with staff groups.<sup>2</sup>

### ■ Communicating with the Community

- Place a print ad thanking the school board for their decision to adopt a 100% tobacco-free policy.<sup>2</sup>
- Remove all cigarette butt receptacles from school property, especially those outside entrances.<sup>2</sup>
- Inform vendors and those who assist with school-sponsored activities about the policy.<sup>2</sup>

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1. North Carolina Department for Health and Human Services. Eight steps to policy change. 2010; <http://www.nctobaccofreeschools.com/adopt/8steps.shtm#6>. Accessed June 29, 2010.

2. North Carolina Department for Health and Human Services. Checklist for Communicating a 100% Tobacco-free School Policy. 2010; <http://www.nctobaccofreeschools.com/communicate/TFS-communication-checklist.pdf>. Accessed June 29, 2010.