

~ PACT Notes ~

An update for members of the Pennsylvania Alliance to Control Tobacco

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Tobacco control in the news

The following news clippings, unless otherwise noted, are from Tobacco BBS' Tobacco News Daily and distributed via tobacco.org (www.tobacco.org). Occasionally, the clippings will be accompanied by a news alert that one of the attached stories might warrant further action in Pennsylvania. Also, a note might be used to provide an informational introduction to a story. For more information contact Jennifer Kulaga at jkulaga@lunginfo.org.

Tobacco BBS is a free resource center focusing on tobacco and smoking issues. It features tobacco news, information, assistance for smokers trying to quit, alerts on tobacco control issues, and open consideration of all aspects of the spectrum of issues concerning tobacco, nicotine, cigarettes and cigars. Credit: ©1996 Gene Borio, Tobacco BBS (212-982-4645). Webpage: www.tobacco.org.

(NOTE: The enclosed news articles do not necessarily reflect the views of PACT. The stories are merely provided as a service to keep members informed on what's happening with clean indoor air within tobacco control.)

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Tobacco control issues in Pennsylvania

State Launches New Campaign to Help Pregnant Smokers Go Tobacco-Free

PR Newswire

June 22, 2009

Pilot program kicks off in Northwestern PA

In an effort to educate pregnant smokers about the harms of tobacco use on their unborn babies, the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Northwestern Pennsylvania (NWP) Tobacco Control Program are launching a new smoking cessation campaign to target the 28 percent of pregnant women who smoke in that region of the state.

"More than one-quarter of expectant mothers in Northwestern Pennsylvania smoke cigarettes," said state Secretary of Health Everette James. "There are serious harms to both mother and child that can occur from tobacco use. We also understand that quitting takes practice. This campaign is geared to provide the necessary support and resources expectant mothers need to help them be successful in their quit attempts -- giving their unborn babies the best chance possible for a healthy start to life. The goal of this program is not only to help these women go tobacco free during pregnancy but for their entire life."

According to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, women who smoke during pregnancy are twice as likely to have health complications that may cause pre-term labor. In fact, babies born to smokers are 30 percent more likely to be born prematurely and/or with lower birth weights, increasing their risks of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, or SIDS.

The pilot program will be overseen by the NWP Tobacco Control Program, which provides direct services to individuals in the region. In addition to promoting the program and sharing resources available to pregnant smokers through regional media, the campaign also includes informational convenience store posters and radio advertisements encouraging listeners to use the PA Free Quitline, 1-800-QUIT NOW (1-800-784-8669) or by visiting www.DeterminedToQuit.com for cessation information and support.

The NWP Tobacco Control Program regularly offers services to pregnant women in their attempts to quit using tobacco. All services are offered free of charge and include support for family members seeking cessation support.

The Department of Health's tobacco efforts are intended to help individuals to quit -- or never start -- using tobacco products, and to curb the retail sale of tobacco to minors.

Under a state law that took effect last September, smoking is now prohibited in most public places and workplaces across Pennsylvania.

For more cessation resource information, visit www.DeterminedToQuit.com or call 1-800-QUIT NOW.

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Teachers Union's Objections Sink Smoking Ban in Pennsylvania

Fox News

June 4, 2009

The teachers at Pennsylvania's state colleges and universities have succeeded in doing what their students couldn't: overrule a statewide ban on smoking on campus.

Some students in the Keystone State raised a ruckus last September when the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education banned smoking throughout its 14 campuses, including all outdoor areas.

But the students' outcry went largely unheeded — until their professors chimed in.

The Association of Pennsylvania State College and University Faculties (APSCUF), the union that represents the 6,000 faculty members and coaches in the state school system, objected to the smoking ban — and last month the state's Labor Relations Board overturned it, ruling that the education board had failed to negotiate with with the union.

The labor board ordered the education board to rescind the smoking ban for union members and to “cease and desist” from refusing to negotiate with the union.

And though no one has directly said so, it appears that the ruling also frees non-union employees and students from the smoking restrictions, as well.

That leaves schools such as Clarion, West Chester and Kutztown Universities, among others, with tenuous holds on their smoking bans — much to the delight of smokers like 21-year-old Clarion student Steven Dugan.

“We don't want to impose our habits on somebody else,” Dugan said. Still, he added, the students wanted everyone else to know it was “our life, our body, our decision.... We weren't asking for the ability to stand in every doorway to smoke.”

The education system can appeal the decision to the Commonwealth Court, but the system's spokesman, Kenn Marshall, says officials would rather meet with the union, students and other campus representatives to hammer out a “mutually acceptable” agreement that would accommodate the union and protect the health of the campus population.

But the union's communications director says the invitation to negotiate has come nine months too late.

“That's something we feel they should have asked to do up front,” Kevin Kodish said. He added that the union would respond if the state system issued a demand to bargain.

Though this latest conflict regarding a public smoking ban has spurred headlines recently, the debate over a tobacco-free campus is nothing new for state universities.

Even before Pennsylvania's Clean Indoor Air Act went into effect in September, the state system had been moving toward a smoke-free campus, Marshall said. The universities banned smoking indoors long before Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell signed the act prohibiting smoking in many public areas in the state.

Because the act banned smoking in public places, which includes educational facilities, state university officials believed they could ban smoking both indoors and outdoors, because classes are sometimes held outside, Marshall said.

That logic may have been sound, the Labor Relations Board ruled, but the fact that no negotiations took place between the union and administrators left the outdoor smoking ban null and void for those in the union.

Despite the ban imposed last fall, many students on the Clarion campus continued to smoke, and no student was cited for smoking when the ban was in effect. Now with the ban rescinded — at least for union members — Dugan said he's more than happy to meet with administrators to help find a permanent solution that could accommodate everyone on campus.

“We'd love more than nothing to sit down and say we're willing to work with you, and we just want the same rights as anyone else,” he said.

While Marshall said there will always be locations where people cannot smoke outdoors on campus, such as directly in front of buildings, he said officials are looking to designate fringe areas of the campus and sidewalks along campus thoroughfares as acceptable outdoor smoking areas.

Administrators have already been talking with the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees — which represents about 4,000 clerical and maintenance workers in the state school system — to strike a deal. But they don't want to stop there.

“The whole goal of this is to protect the health and welfare of our campus population,” Marshall said. “At this point what our next step will be is to sit down with everybody. Hopefully APSCUF will come to the table.”

State Sen. Stewart J. Greenleaf, who worked for more than 15 years to help pass the Clean Indoor Air Act, said though his law regulates only indoor areas, state schools and municipalities are free to regulate outdoor areas as they see fit.

“That's up to the university to decide that — what's best for their students,” he said. “But I applaud them for their effort. I think it's important for them to protect their students and the faculty.”

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Smoke-free proposals in the U.S.

Military advised to ban tobacco gradually

UPI

June 29, 2009

The U.S. Department of Defense should phase in a tobacco ban in the military, beginning at military academies, an Institute of Medicine report said.

The report was requested by the Defense Department and the Department of Veterans Affairs. The government departments asked the Institute of Medicine to identify policies and practices that could lower rates of smoking and help soldiers and veterans quit.

Tobacco use reduces soldiers' physical fitness and endurance and is linked to higher rates of absenteeism and lost produc-

tivity, the report said.

In 2005, 32 percent of active-duty personnel and 22 percent of veterans were smokers. Rates among active-duty personnel have recently increased -- possibly because of growing tobacco use by deployed troops -- the report said.

“We found that the adverse effects of tobacco use on military readiness, the health of both smokers and non-smokers and the financial cost of the medical care of smoking-related illness in military and veteran populations are a sound basis for moving systematically toward a tobacco-free military,” Stuart Bondurant, of the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill and chairman of the committee that wrote the report, said in a statement.

All DOD and VA healthcare providers should be able to provide brief counseling and nicotine-replacement therapy to patients, the report said. The VA and DOD should develop toll-free “quitlines” to provide military personnel and veterans with counseling on quitting tobacco, the report said.

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Smoke-free proposals: International and Canada

Turkey will successfully implement smoking ban, experts believe

Zaman Daily Newspaper (tr)

June 28, 2009

July 19 of this year will be listed as one of the turning points in Turkey’s history since it will mark the beginning of “100 percent smoke-free air” in the country.

Despite some question marks raised by the public about the implementation of the ban as of July 19, the smoking ban, which went partially into effect on May 19, 2008 is due to be expanded to include restaurants, coffeehouses, cafeterias and bars, and as the day draws nearer, experts say the public will successfully adjust to the ban in a short time if everyone plays their part.

“Turkey will be the best example for the world with its two-year journey to enact and implement the law,” said Sylviane Ratte, a tobacco control expert at the International Union against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease. She explained France’s 17-year journey to implement the law during a press conference held on Thursday by the National Cigarette and Health Committee (SSUK) in İstanbul. Stating that the first legislation was passed in 1991 in France to ban smoking in closed areas, she said Turkey has moved more quickly. “We lost large amounts of money, and the health of many people suffered in France up until the enforcement of the law; we are looking forward to its implementation in Turkey,” she said. Speaking at the same conference organized to inform the Turkish public of countries that have succeeded in having a smoke-free environment, Stephen Hamill, online communications and marketing manager of the World Lung Foundation, said he has traveled to Turkey five times since March 2008 and has seen many positive trends necessary for the smoking ban to succeed. “First of all there is a great political will to impose the ban. There is also a high level of public support from smokers and non-smokers, and there is the necessary mechanism in place for enforcing the law,” said Hamill.

‘There will certainly be opposition, yet majority favors the ban’

Sharing the French experience of the smoking ban, Ratte said France encountered many obstacles, mainly from the tobacco industry. “The tobacco industry tried to stop the process by arguing that this was legislation against the right to smoke, turning the ban into a human rights issue. This is a habit that kills and has nothing to do with human rights,” Ratte said. Noting that another argument of anti-ban groups was that all cafes, tea houses and restaurants will go out of business, she said they had conducted many surveys and found that the smoking ban has no effect on businesses. “We have seen that businesses negatively affected by the ban were those which did not prepare for it and tried to stop it,” she added.

Hamill, who shared New York's experiences of the ban, said there was similar opposition in New York, where a smoking ban in all enclosed areas has been in force since 2001. It had been a source of concern for some in New York whether the ban would negatively affect tourism, the key industry there; however, there had been an increase in the number of tourists New York receives, and some bars and restaurants even generated more money. "I believe that İstanbul and Turkey will be no different to other smoke-free cities -- Paris, Dublin, Milan and New York. I congratulate you [Turkey] for taking such a big step," he said.

Answering questions from the press about possible repercussions of the ban in Turkey, SSUK Chairwoman Elif Dağlı said it should not be forgotten that while Turkey generates \$20 billion a year from tourism, it spends \$20 billion a year on smoking. "If we can manage to decrease cigarette consumption by 30 percent, we will save \$7 billion in tourism revenue. So it is groundless to argue that the smoking ban will negatively affect Turkey's tourism potential. Furthermore, since the smoking ban has expanded in the world, the smoking rate is lower than Turkey in many countries from where tourists come," she added.

'The ban will be violated' rumors

Both Ratte and Hamill said that one of the toughest obstacles they faced was countering the rumors that make people believe the law will be violated.

Hamill said that some claimed it was impossible to enforce the ban with Americans who love to smoke since "Marlboro man would never go out to smoke." "However, all this opposition turned out to be wrong in the end, and New York is 100 percent smoke free just like Italy and Ireland. There is a health rationale behind this ban, and everybody understands this," he said. Ratte also said that in France some people thought that to enforce the law a policeman would have to stand behind everyone since the French are law breakers and would not obey it. "Yet, everybody obeyed the law because it makes sense. The government stood firmly behind the law. There was only one café in France that opposed the ban and broke it, and then it was closed," she added.

Dağlı also said although there are nearly 22 million smokers in Turkey, there are also around 50 million non-smokers, 10 million of whom suffer from lung and cardiovascular disease. Noting that there is sufficient public support to enforce the law, she said if everyone plays their part in adjusting to the law, Turkey will implement it successfully.

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Other tobacco control issues

Is your kid a smoker? Blame your demographic

Montreal Gazette (ca)

June 26, 2009

Parents' income, education, race, religion affect whether a teen lights up: report

Whether your child becomes a smoker may be determined in part by the neighbourhood he or she grows up in, according to a new report by a Montreal-based research centre.

"We wanted to develop a better understanding of how neighbourhoods affect health," said Christiane Montpetit, who wrote the report for the Centre Léa-Roback, a research institute that focuses on the impact of social inequality on health.

Researchers at the centre analyzed about 20 different smoking related studies produced over the last decade and tried to draw conclusions about environmental factors that encourage or discourage tobacco use among youth.

Overall, adult Quebecers are smoking less, partly because of smoking bans in restaurants, bars and other public places. But 31 per cent of young people (age 20 to 24) in Quebec still smoke, and most start in their teens.

As with adult smoking, socio-economic status plays a role, in that a greater percentage of poor kids smoke. But an even stronger link seems to be the level of education of parents, the report notes. The more educated the parents, the less likely the kids smoke. Attitudes toward school (whether a young person values academic performance, feels a sense of belonging to their school, etc.) have an impact on smoking, and those attitudes are often influenced heavily by parents.

Peer group pressure is also a major factor in whether a teenager will choose to smoke. The weight of this influence varies according to gender (girls are more easily influenced), ethnic group, and intensity of parental guidance.

Several U.S. studies show that smoking rates are higher among white teenagers than African-American teens, or those of South American or Asian origin. While it is difficult to isolate ethnicity from other factors, some studies have shown that parents in certain ethnic groups send more vigorous anti-smoking messages than others.

Ethnic concentration in a neighbourhood can have a positive effect on youth smoking rates, the report says. "Adolescents who reside in a neighbourhood where a strong proportion of residents are African-American are less at risk to start smoking than those who live in neighbourhoods where there are few black people," the report says.

Montpetit said these findings related to ethnicity don't necessarily apply in Montreal, but studies here have shown smoking rates are higher among francophones than anglophones or allophones.

The researchers also found that in neighbourhoods where violence is common and a feeling of insecurity dominates, the likelihood that kids will start smoking at a very young age is high.

Neighbourhoods where young people have opportunities to get involved in community events tend to have lower youth smoking rates.

And young people who regularly attend religious services are far less likely to smoke than their peers who do not, the report says.

Montpetit acknowledged the report raises more questions than it answers, but it shows that strategies that target only the individual might not be an effective way to reduce smoking among teens.

"We all know that in certain neighbourhoods, often wealthier ones, it is considered shameful to be seen smoking. People actually hide when they smoke. ...Whereas if you live in a place where everyone smokes, it becomes a social activity," she said.

To read the full report, *Le point sur les jeunes et le tabac ... l'effet de quartier*, go to www.centrelearoback.ca

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