



The Link

Linking you to the latest tobacco news.

June 2010



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



DC CANCER CONSORTIUM

Dear Partners,

Welcome to The Link--an interactive newsletter of the DC Tobacco Free Families campaign, featuring the latest tobacco news. Please feel free to share this newsletter with friends, colleagues and others who may find this information useful. DCTFF is funded by the DC Cancer Consortium and the DC Department of Health.

DC Adult Smoking Rate Reaches Historic Low

The District's smoking rate has now dropped to 15.2 percent, a decrease of 24.3 percent since 2005, making it one of the lowest in the country. The latest Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS) released in May by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shows a steady decline in overall smoking prevalence, but even more exciting is the new low rate of male smokers in the District of 15.7 percent, a 31 percent decrease since 2005.

As a result of the 24.3 percent decline, the District has an estimated 23,500 fewer adult smokers and potentially 6,200 fewer future premature deaths from smoking. This decline in smoking prevalence also forecasts major savings for District coffers. The District government will save more than \$223 million in future health care costs from tobacco-related illnesses, \$20.1 million of which will be saved from future Medicaid costs.

Between 2006 and 2009, the District provided tobacco settlement funds to fund a comprehensive tobacco prevention and control program, the DC Tobacco Free Families campaign, and supported passage of a comprehensive smokefree law and

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several significant increases in cigarette taxes, all of which are considered best practices in reducing tobacco use. The District's neighbors did not fare as well--Virginia experienced a three percent increase in prevalence, while Maryland's smoking rate remained virtually unchanged.

While this is a major achievement and milestone in DC tobacco control, the battle is far from over. Despite the evidence that tobacco kills, at least 75,000 DC residents remain smokers. Tobacco use continues to be the leading cause of death and disease in the DC, killing 860 residents a year. Moreover, 400 District youth becoming new daily smokers each year and 8,000 youth alive today are projected to die prematurely from smoking. The District must continue to support and promote implementation and enforcement of proven policies that discourage youth from smoking and encourage smokers to quit.

With generous support from the DC Cancer Consortium, DCTFF is committed to promoting the quitline and free nicotine replacement program to the African American, Latino, and Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Questioning communities, especially in Wards 1 and 5 through 8,

DCTFF Launches New 15 Second TV Ads

TV Ads Spin-off Existing Secondhand Smoke Transit Ads about Toxins in Tobacco Smoke

DCTFF has launched a new series of 15-second ads to continue to educate DC smokers about the harmful chemicals in tobacco smoke and to encourage them to take advantage of DC's free quitline and nicotine replacement program. These ads, entitled, "Roach Motel", "Urinal Cake", and "Rat Poison, highlight the chemicals arsenic, ammonia, and pesticides and encourage smokers to call the 800-QUIT-NOW for free counseling and nicotine replacement therapy. The spots are being aired on Comcast, FOX, DC 50 and other stations during popular courtroom shows, NBA games, and the BET awards. Along with television ads, secondhand smoke print ads are posted at bus shelters and Metro stations throughout Wards 7 and 8.

For information on how to get copies of these ads, please contact Charles Debnam at charles.bdc@umc-foundation.org.

Click [here](#) to watch the videos.



Quitter's Corner: Alvin Wiggins

Alvin Wiggins, 59, tried his first cigarette at seven years old when he found his parents' stash in their bedroom. That first cigarette would lead to thousands more as Wiggins quickly became addicted to

nicotine and the presumed social benefits of smoking.

"My friends and I thought smoking made you look cool and more mature," said Wiggins. "When I got older, most people in DC were smoking Kool cigarettes. It wasn't until much later that I realized what smoking does to you, but it was too late. I watched my mother and father die from diseases caused by years of smoking and I eventually developed emphysema myself."

Shaken by the tragic consequences of tobacco use, Alvin made his first of three attempts to end his nicotine addiction.

"The first two times, I tried to quit cold turkey. Without the right support system around me, my friends, who still smoked, kept luring me back. Each time I quit, I ended up right back where I started, until my condition got worse."

Frustrated with his overwhelming dependence on tobacco, Alvin decided to make a final quit attempt--this time, with a little help.

"I kept seeing all these ads on the bus saying that DC residents could call 800-QUIT-NOW for free help to quit smoking. At first, I was skeptical because it seemed too good to be true, but I decided to get past that and give it a try. It was one of the best decisions I've made in life."

Since he enrolled in the DC Quitline program, Alvin has experienced significant improvements to his health.

"I noticed very quickly how much my breathing had improved when I stopped smoking. I used to get so tired and even had to walk with an oxygen tank. I'm glad to say that is no longer the case. The Quitline taught me how to avoid the urge to smoke--it's a step-by-step process, but I know I can do it."

Four Positions Now Open for Live Well DC Tobacco Prevention and Control Initiative

The DC Department of Health has posted two of four Live Well

DC/Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) job opportunities on the District Government website:

- * Cessation Coordinator (announcement number 16106)
- * Evaluation Coordinator (announcement number 16091)

Two additional positions are to be released shortly:

- * Communications Coordinator
- * Community Outreach Coordinator

[View detailed job descriptions.](#)

Though not CPPW-related, there is also a DOH Synar Advisor position open (announcement number 16112). Synar is within the DOH Addiction, Prevention and Recovery Administration, and is charged with helping to ensure compliance with DC's law against tobacco sales to minors in the District.

Please share these opportunities with anyone who may be a good fit for this exciting and important work!

FDA Seeks Public Advice on Tobacco Ad Regulation to Youth, Minorities

Electronic comments due by July 26, 2010 at 11:59 p.m.

Letter from the FDA Office of External Relations:

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is soliciting information, research, and ideas to assist FDA in fulfilling its responsibilities regarding tobacco product advertising and promotion that is designed to appeal to specific racial and ethnic minority populations in the United States. For the same reasons, we are also interested in receiving information about advertising and promoting menthol and other cigarettes to youth in general, and to youth in minority communities. After reviewing the submitted information, research, and ideas, FDA will be better able to fulfill its responsibilities under The Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act (Tobacco Control Act).

We are requesting comments that will assist the agency's development of an action plan regarding enforcement of regulations on advertising and promotion of menthol and other cigarettes to youth generally and to youth in minority communities. FDA is also seeking information that will assist the Tobacco Products Scientific Advisory Committee in understanding and developing recommendations regarding the impact of the use of menthol in

cigarettes among children, African-Americans, Hispanics, and other racial and ethnic minorities.

Those interested persons can submit electronic or written comments by July 26, 2010 at 11:59 p.m. Submit electronic comments to <http://www.regulations.gov> under *[Docket Number FDA-2010-N-0207] Tobacco Product Advertising and Promotion to Youth and Racial and Ethnic Minority Populations*.

For more information contact Kathleen K. Quinn, Center for Tobacco Products, Food and Drug Administration, 9200 Corporate Blvd., Rockville, MD 20850-3229, 240-276-1717, e-mail: Kathleen.Quinn@fda.hhs.gov.

Sincerely,

Mary C. Hitch
Senior Policy Advisor
Office of External Relations
U.S. Food and Drug Administration

Upcoming Events

DCTFF Coalition Dinner Meeting

Date: July 21, 2010

Time: 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Location: United Medical Center, 2nd Floor

Visit <http://www.dctff.org/dc-tobacco-free-coalition/> to access Coalition membership forms and updates regarding Coalition activities.

Contact Information

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