



BREATHE FREE

Quarterly



Montgomery County Tobacco Free Coalition Newsletter
Promoting healthy living and smoke free environment

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Message from the Editor-In-Chief

Dear Community Partners ,

Happy Holidays from everyone here at Montgomery County Health and Human Services, Cancer and Tobacco Initiatives! May the New Year bring health and happiness to you and your family!

One of the healthiest things that anyone can do in 2008 is to quit smoking or commit to never start. Do you have a friend or a loved one who wants to quit but lacks a quit plan and professional support? Montgomery County Tobacco Free Coalition has put together a guide to cessation resources available to all residents. If you would like to request copies of this guide or wish to receive the document electronically, please contact Ithara Phlong at Ithara.phlong@montgomerycountymd.gov or (240) 777-3497.

Nicotine addiction is very complex and highly individual. Nicotine is so addictive that many smokers continue to use tobacco products even when their lives are in immediate danger. Because smoking cessation is so difficult to achieve, prevention is extremely important. Unfortunately, approximately 90% of smokers begin smoking before they reach the age of 18, while they are still in school.

This edition of the "Breathe Free" Newsletter will focus on the county's school-based initiatives. The programs highlighted in the following pages focus on partnerships to reduce the rate of adolescent experimentation with tobacco, to delay the onset of tobacco use, and to help those who do smoke to quit early. Introducing tobacco education in our public schools, educating college students on the dangers of tobacco use, providing tailored cessation strategies for young smokers, and developing young advocates and peer educators are some of the powerful ways that Montgomery County is working toward creating a community where youth are free of the deadly consequences of tobacco use.

Thanks to all our young tobacco control advocates including, Lisa Fuentes, who showed her support for tobacco prevention and education by participating in the county's first evening coalition meeting held on October 22, 2007. During this meeting, the coalition welcomed Michael Strande, Deputy Director of the Legal Resource Center for Tobacco Regulation, Litigation & Advocacy at the University Of Maryland School Of Law. Michael provided an informative presentation titled, "Regulating Tobacco for Social Justice." The evening Tobacco Free Coalition meeting was held at the newly smoke free campus of Holy Cross Hospital. Congratulations to all the Hospitals in Montgomery County (and Frederick Memorial Hospital) for becoming smoke free on November 15, 2007!

Best wishes!

Meaghan McHugh, MPH

The mission of the Tobacco Use and Cessation Program is to reduce the prevalence of tobacco use, promote healthy living and smoke free environments, thereby eliminating the death and illness associated with tobacco use.



Tobacco Cessation Resource Guide
 now available!
240-777-3497
Ithara.phlong@montgomerycountymd.gov



Caron works closely with each student to develop individual student treatment strategies that are both personally and culturally appropriate.

COMMUNITY HEALTH CONSULTING



Einstein H.S. SOS Club members
L to R: Lacey Coleman, Karen Crisostomo, Bryan Sumardi, Dina Yuli & Sisley Chung (sitting)



Helping Young Smokers to Quit

Caron Treatment Centers, Comprehensive Addiction. Recovery for Life, is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to provide an enlightened and caring treatment community in which all those affected by drug addictions may begin a new life. Now in its sixth decade of providing quality services, Caron offers a number of gender-specific chemical dependency treatment programs, including tobacco cessation for youth.

Montgomery County has partnered with Caron to provide professional facilitation of youth tobacco prevention, cessation and reduction services through weekly sessions of teen peer groups in most public high schools and alternative schools throughout the County.

Working within Montgomery County Public Schools, Caron works closely with each student to develop individual student treatment strategies that are both personally and culturally appropriate. These support groups meet weekly to best connect and coach students through tobacco cessation or tobacco reduction by assisting students in recognizing their own stages of change, the consequences of engaging in risky health behaviors and how to use their newly acquired skills to stay tobacco free.

Although, some students will relapse and begin smoking again, part of the Caron message is that relapse happens and relapse can often be part of recovery so students should never give up their battle to stop tobacco use. After all, research shows that it takes the average adult seven attempts at tobacco cessation before they are ultimately successful in conquering nicotine addiction.

Just as with any addiction, working to help other smokers give up their habit is a major component of continued success and recovery. By encouraging students to participate in community advocacy, such as Students Opposed to Smoking, students who complete the Caron Cessation program are provided the opportunity to stay tuned in and active in the tobacco free lifestyle and message sharing.

In fiscal year 2006 and 2007, the Caron Treatment Centers helped over 520 high school students to quit smoking.

For more information on the Caron Residential treatment and its school based student assistant programs, contact Kathy Houser at 301-829-4412 / khouser@caron.org

Anti-Tobacco Youth Advocacy and Empowerment

Community Health Consulting (CHC) organizes and facilitates school-based educational programs in middle and high schools that are both youth inspired and youth led. These programs include the organization of school-based clubs, training program for youth leaders, peer education and intervention activities and education for pregnant teens on the dangers of second hand smoke.

A few of the successes in fiscal year 2007 include training of over 90 youth as peer advocates educating 3602 peers and younger children, creating school-based clubs at 4 Linkages to Learning middle schools, mobilizing peer cessation leaders to support youth cessation, and conducting a "Quit While You Are Ahead" presentation to 780 high school students (this presentation includes education

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Einstein H.S. SOS Club peer outreach for Great American Smoke Out



Montgomery College focuses much of its tobacco control efforts on preventing the initiation of tobacco products and protecting young adults from second hand smoke.



COMMUNITY HEALTH CONSULTING - continued from page 2

on the tobacco industry's tactics to target youth, the basics of nicotine addiction and the motivators for quitting).

Education for and by pregnant teens was another goal in fiscal year 2007. According to a survey of 56 pregnant teens, most pregnant teens do not smoke but are exposed to second hand smoke on a regular basis. Based on this finding, CHC partnered with a young anti-tobacco advocate to educate pregnant teens and fathers on the dangers of tobacco smoke. In addition, a group of pregnant teens developed a video to educate other teens on the importance of keeping their babies away from a smoke filled environment.

Another school based initiative involved promoting tobacco free sports within County high schools. A former NFL football player provided an anti-tobacco message and encouraged students to make healthy choices to ensure a bright and positive future.

There are many youth led initiatives and opportunities to get involved. Students receive service learning hours and training to become leaders. Please contact Wendy Norcross for more information t: (301) 469-8678 / wenmick@aol.com

Montgomery College is going Smoke-Free

Tobacco use is common among too many college students nationwide and is not limited to cigarettes. Young adults may smoke cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco and pipes. Some of the most common reasons that college students use tobacco are stress, less supervision, having more free time, and social pressure. Unfortunately, many students and young adults do not realize

how addictive nicotine is.

Montgomery College focuses much of its tobacco control efforts on preventing the initiation of tobacco products and protecting young adults from second hand smoke. The College organizes campus-wide tobacco use prevention programs and encourages cessation through high profile events such as the 'Great American Smoke Out,' "Give

the Perfect Gift" (smoking cessation as a holiday gift), and "If not now, When?"

In 2008, Montgomery College will be a smoke free campus!

For more information on the programs offered at Montgomery College or its efforts to become smoke free, contact Kathy Dayton at Kathy.dayton@montgomerycollege.edu

Classroom-based Tobacco Education (Grades 5 - 10)

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), at least 2,000 U.S. children and adolescents begin tobacco use each day. Nearly 500 of these young people will die of tobacco-related diseases. Tobacco use and other risky behaviors increase dramatically when children are 11 to 13 years old (6th grade – 8th grade). CDC supports and encourages Project Towards No Tobacco Use (Project TNT) and Project Adolescent Learning Resistance Training (Project ALERT) for these young people to prevent tobacco initiation and to help youth to develop self esteem and effective communication skills.

In Fiscal Year 2007, Montgomery County Public Schools successfully implemented Project TNT, Project ALERT and tobacco prevention curriculum in all 38 middle and 25 high schools.

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS - continued from page 3

Grade 6 received the Project TNT, Grade 7 participated in Project ALERT and Grade 8 students completed Project TNT and ALERT booster sessions. Grade 10 students participated in a five day tobacco prevention unit.

The goal of Project TNT implementation was to increase student knowledge of tobacco use by 15 percent or greater. The average score on the pre-test was 15.81 or 52% and the average score on the post-test was 22.78 or 76%. The knowledge increase was 44%.

Project TNT - 2006-2007 Outcome Evaluation (N=975)					
Quarter	1	2	3	4	Total
<u>AVERAGE</u> Pre-Test	50 %	52 %	53 %	55 %	52 %**
<u>AVERAGE</u> Post-Test	73 %	76 %	75 %	79 %	76 %**
<u>KNOWLEDGE</u> <u>INCREASE</u>	45.60 %	45.22 %	39.94 %	44.87 %	43.90 %

** p = .000

The goal of Project ALERT implementation was to increase student knowledge of tobacco use by 10 percent or greater. The average score on the pre-test was 18.08 or 60% and the average score on the post-test was 22.88 or 76%. The knowledge increase was 26%.

Project ALERT 2006-2007 Outcome Evaluation (N=1090)					
Quarter	1	2	3	4	Total
<u>AVERAGE</u> Pre-Test	60 %	60 %	59 %	61 %	60 %**
<u>AVERAGE</u> Post-Test	75 %	77 %	74 %	79 %	76 %**
<u>KNOWLEDGE IN-</u> <u>CREASE</u>	24.55 %	27.91 %	25.56 %	29.76 %	26.95 %

** p = .000

For more information on this and other school-based tobacco control curriculum, contact Kathy Green at 301-279-3436 / Elizabeth_K_Green@mcps.org

In fiscal year 2007, Montgomery County Public Schools implemented tobacco prevention curriculum in all its 38 middle and 25 high schools.

STUDENTS VIEWPOINT



" When I encouraged a teenage girl smoking near me to try the carbon monoxide machine, she laughed. It turned out she was only fifteen with a dangerously high level of carbon monoxide in her body. I could tell she got scared because she kept asking 'Am I going to die?' The girl turned serious and revealed that she had been trying to quit for months with the nicotine patch and gum but had been unsuccessful. Sometimes, teen smokers need that extra push, a reality check to give them the drive to quit. The fact that she was smoking 2 packs a day made me want to help her even more. I suggested that she start cutting back little by little everyday and this time she listened to me intently. I gave her a quit kit and cessation resources. The Great American Smoke Out event was an opportunity to give advice to teens wanting to quit by offering teen to teen support."

Mai Segawa

President of Students Oppose Smoking Club, Walt Whitman High School

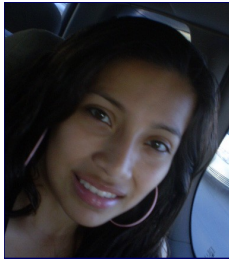


“The other day my friend came up to me, with a cigarette in hand, and told me that starting to smoke was her biggest regret. She started to smoke during the beginning of last year and was addicted instantly. The sad part of this situation is that I knew this particular friend before she started to smoke and do drugs. I can only imagine what her life would have been like if she had not become addicted to cigarettes.

I am a seventeen year old senior at Walter Johnson High School. When I was in middle school I promised myself I would never smoke cigarettes. I have fortunately been faithful to my word. My parents ask me all the time why I do not tell my friends to stop smoking. I tell my parents that my friends know the dangers of smoking; after all, we took the same health class and heard the same lectures. It is ultimately their choice if they want to engage in an activity that will probably kill them eventually. Who am I to tell them not to smoke? But, then again, if I do not say something to my friends, who will? “

Isabel Milone

Intern, Montgomery County Cancer and Tobacco Initiatives, DHHS
Student, Walter Johnson High School



“Youth can influence other teens not to smoke and they can spread the word about what they know about smoking and quitting. They can teach other teens that smoking is very harmful “

Ana Rodriguez

Students Oppose Smoking Club Member, Einstein High School



“Since 90% of smokers begin before the age of 18, youth advocacy is the most powerful way to prevent an increase in tobacco use. By educating youth about the effects of tobacco use and by engaging youth in activities within tobacco free environments we will decrease the amount of smokers in the future. Because when today's youth is educated about tobacco use, they will be tomorrow's educated and tobacco free adults!. We also have the power to increase awareness of county decision makers to promote tobacco free environments in our schools and workplaces such as restaurants where many young people work”

Melissa Jones

Co Chair, Students Oppose Smoking, Kennedy High School ambassador

“During high school, I became involved in Students Opposed to Smoking (SOS), a school based program, as a result of my personal struggle against second hand smoke. My asthma was so aggravated by the second hand smoke I encountered while at school that I was unable to make it through an entire school day without suffering an asthma attack. By my sophomore year, I had to be taught at home.

I am extremely proud of my work with SOS. Our work contributed to the enactment of several national policies aimed at limiting minors' access to tobacco. I was honored to be invited to speak at the National Press Club and have numerous opportunities to talk about my work with SOS in the media, including being interviewed by CNN. These experiences were life-changing. I became empowered to change my world and learned to empower others.

Although it has been eleven years since I was chairperson of SOS, I still have a love of advocacy, lobbying, and community organizing. I am now a clinical social worker, a career that allows me to work with individuals and communities to facilitate change. I am proof that school based programs can shape the lives of youth.”

Aziza E. Jones, MSW

Our work contributed to the Enactment of several National policies aimed at limiting minor's access to tobacco.

Participating Hospitals



If you have community news that you would like to share in our next newsletter, please send them to us by February 15th 2008.



CONGRATULATIONS!

Tobacco-Free Hospital Collaborative

On November 15, 2007, all hospitals in Montgomery County (and Frederick Memorial Hospital) became tobacco free. The date of this tobacco free policy coincides with the American Cancer Society's Great American Smoke Out.

During a press conference held to celebrate this important policy change, a flyer was distributed to answer questions Montgomery County residents may have about this tobacco free initiative. Here are a few of those questions and answers:

Q. Will the policy apply to everyone?

Yes. The policy will apply to all patients, visitors, medical staff, volunteers, vendors, contacted staff, and employees. Employees, including vendors and contractors assigned to the hospital, will be expected to refrain from smoking during the workday and clothes worn by staff cannot smell of tobacco. Visitors and patients will be expected not to smoke anywhere on the hospital's property.

Q. What does it mean by the term "campus"?

Tobacco use will not be permitted inside hospital buildings, in parking lots, at the hospital's offsite facilities, or anywhere on the grounds of the facility, including vehicles. Clothes worn by hospital staff cannot smell of tobacco.

Q. Will the hospital provide assistance to employees who use tobacco products and wish to quit or need assistance getting through the workday?

For employees who would like to quit smoking, all hospitals are offering classes, counseling nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) at no cost. For employees who do not wish to quit but who will need some help getting through the workday, over-the-counter NRT will be available for purchase.

Q. How will patients who smoke be assisted in adhering to the policy?

For non-emergency patients, information about alternatives to tobacco use will be available at physician's offices. Information will also be available to patients during the registration process. For emergency patients or others who find themselves at the hospital and are having difficulty dealing with the cessation of regular tobacco use, physicians will have specific order sets that can be used to provide NRT. Non-prescription aid, such as nicotine gum and lozenges will be available.

BREATHE FREE Quarterly NEWSLETTER

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"Promoting Healthy Living and a Smoke Free Environment"

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