

100% Tobacco Free Schools Policy Template

Introduction

The purpose of this resource policy template is to assist school districts in establishing a 100% tobacco-free environment for students, staff, parents, visitors and those hired by the district to perform services in the district. This template is a guide for administrators, health and wellness committee members, health instructors, nurses and student assistance teams concerned about the health, welfare and safety of the school community. Please share this packet with anyone who wishes to collaborate in creating a tobacco-free environment for your district.

A 100% tobacco-free policy is a policy that prohibits the use of tobacco products in any form, by anyone, on any occasion and at any time on school grounds, in school vehicles, and at school-sponsored events on or off campus. This policy is enforced 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Why Should We Be Concerned?

Despite our best efforts, children continue to smoke. A study done by DiFranza, J.R., et al. in 2007 called "Symptoms of Tobacco Dependence After Brief Intermittent Use: The Development and Assessment of Nicotine Dependence in Youth 2 Study" found half of the young people studied were addicted by the time they were smoking seven cigarettes a month. Some of the participants were unable to stop smoking after consuming just a few cigarettes.

Laboratory experiments confirm that nicotine alters the structure and function of the brain in children within a day of the very first dose. These alterations can trigger addiction with the first cigarette. While smoking one cigarette will keep withdrawal symptoms away for less than an hour in long-time smokers, novice smokers find that one cigarette suppresses withdrawal for weeks at a time. The lesson here is that youth have all the same symptoms of nicotine addiction as adults do, even though they may be smoking only a few cigarettes per month.

A study published in the journal *Tobacco Control* in 2006 was the first study that shows an early experience with one cigarette by children leads to smoking several years in the future. Both of these studies show that it may be more important than previously thought to try to prevent children from trying even one cigarette.

At a conference convened in Bangkok in June and July of 2007 by the World Health Organization, the official delegates were asked by health advocates to adopt international standards and to push for comprehensive smoke-free laws as the only effective way to protect people from the danger of secondhand smoke. The standard they proposed states: "There is no safe level of exposure to tobacco smoke." Their belief is that only 100% smoke-free environments can protect health, and that all people should be protected from exposure to tobacco smoke.

We say that we have drug free schools. Many times nicotine isn't included in that equation. Why is this important? Nicotine is a drug! It has profound effects on those who take it willingly and those who are forced to inhale it through secondhand smoke. Yes, we are all exposed to nicotine when someone is smoking in our environment. Exposure to nicotine and secondhand smoke is measured by testing the saliva, urine, or blood for the presence of a chemical called cotinine. Cotinine is a byproduct of nicotine metabolization. We know for a fact that tobacco is the only source of this marker. There are detectable levels of this byproduct in nonsmokers exposed to secondhand smoke. We don't permit other drugs to be used on school property or at school-sponsored events unless properly supervised by a nurse or other professional. Should nicotine be the only exception?

The World Health Organization estimated in Reuters on July 2, 2007, that a billion people worldwide could die from tobacco-related illnesses during this century. That's like one jumbo jet going down per hour. They concluded that this is a completely preventable epidemic in our world.

One of the most effective strategies for reducing tobacco use on school property and at school-sponsored events is a three-pronged policy. The policy includes: prohibiting use, providing for education and accessing cessation programs.

- In the Guidelines section, described are the mechanisms for educating the school community about the policy, publication strategies that will keep you liability free, strengthening relationships with magistrates and police, offering cessation programs as well as required reporting procedures.

3. Use the following resource to evaluate what you have written.

Your School District Tobacco Policy	Students	Staff	Visitors
Prohibit All Types of Tobacco Products			
In Buildings			
In Vehicles			
On School Grounds			
At School Sponsored Activities & Events			

4. When your draft is completed and you feel satisfied that your draft has all the necessary components of a good policy, transfer the information to the Tobacco Policy Template on page 1.
5. Submit your policy to the School Board and the Solicitor for feedback.
6. Review any suggested changes to the policy.
7. Complete revisions and resubmit the policy for final approval.

Tobacco Free Schools Policy Worksheet

<p>1. Purpose</p> <p>Recognition of the board's responsibility to do the following in regard to tobacco use and distribution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To protect health, safety and welfare • To acknowledge tobacco as a health-endangering compound • To uphold the law • To provide role models for students 	
<p>2. Definitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tobacco products—any lit or unlit cigarette, cigar, pipe, bidi, blunt, clove cigarette, chewing tobacco in any form or any items containing or reasonably resembling tobacco or tobacco products • Tobacco Use smoking, chewing, dipping or any other use of a tobacco product • Tobacco advertising or promotion—clothing, bags, hats or other items that include tobacco company names or logos • Tobacco cessation programs—support systems, programs and services to help people impacted by this policy to abstain from the use of tobacco products • Tobacco Free Environment —100% absence of tobacco products, use or advertising or promotion 24/7 on school grounds, at school-sponsored events or in vehicles owned, rented or chartered by the district 	
<p>3. Authority</p> <p>Federal and state laws translated into school code</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 U.S.C. Sec 7181 et seq—Not permitted to use tobacco products at any time • Pa Code Title 22 Sec 12.3—Not permitted to use tobacco products in buildings, facilities or vehicles that are owned, leased or chartered • 35 P.S. 1223.5—Not permitted to use tobacco at school-sponsored or school-related events, on or off campus 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 PA C.S.A. Sec 6306.1—Definition of tobacco products and prosecution for violation • S.C. 510 1303-A—Required reporting to Office of Safe Schools for incidents of possession, use and sale of tobacco 	
<p>4. Delegation of Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent or designees notify all annually of the policy through multiple channels • Superintendent or designee develops procedures to implement this policy 	
<p>5. Guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate policy verbally and in writing to students, parents and faculty/staff in the handbooks, student/faculty code of conduct (Be sure to make people aware of the policy at school events through signage and announcements, as well as the website, newsletter and newspaper.) • Develop and implement procedures for consistent and fair enforcement • Coordinate with local magistrates, policy agencies on enforcement of federal, state and local ordinances • Develop educational alternatives to suspension • Treat violators who are students or staff with disciplinary action in the same magnitude and manner as violations of other school policies • Ensure that visitors who violate the policy discontinue using tobacco product or leave premises • Prohibit tobacco use in contracts with outside groups who use their schools • Report to Office of Safe Schools each year the incidents of tobacco use • Track the number of referrals to SAP for tobacco policy violations and the result • Review the number of smokers referred to SAP and what occurred as a result of the referral 	

Evaluation Template

Evaluation Question	Data Needed to Address	Resources Needed	Who Will Work on This?	Target Date
1. Does the school have a comprehensive 100% tobacco-free policy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Revised tobacco policy -Board approval date -Completed 100% Tobacco Free template -Copies of student handbooks -Copies of staff handbooks -Checklist of items for 100% Tobacco Free Schools Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Central office directive and support -Access to board policy and approval publication 		
2. Has the policy been implemented and enforced as written?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Number of policy violations -Structured interview of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Disciplinarian/administrator •Policy violators •District justices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Central office directive and support 		
3. Have all stakeholders been made aware of the policy both verbally and in written communications?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Dates and sign-in sheets from staff/faculty in-service on policy -Copies of all related correspondence, publication with/to: students, staff, parents, athletic managers 			
4. What statistics are gathered on policy violations? What do they tell you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Number of policy violations -Number of policy violators referred to SAP -Disposition of SAP referrals 			
5. Does the school provide information via multiple communication venues regarding facts about tobacco use and secondhand smoke?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provide evidence of multiple communication venues used to educate students, staff, parents and community: website, handbooks, poster contest, prevention curricula, parent newsletter, community newsletter 			
6. Is education to prevent tobacco use provided as planned in K-12 grade?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Names of prevention curricula 			
7. Is intensity of education increased with age?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Hours and topics presented at each grade level -Random observation of students/staff at each grade level 			
8. Are outcome measures used to evaluate impact of curriculum?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Number of policy violators -Pennsylvania Youth Tobacco Survey over three years post implementation 			

9. Is in-service training provided as planned for stakeholders responsible for implementing policy and teaching curriculum?	<i>-Dates, sign-in sheets, agenda</i>			
10. Are parents and caregivers involved in the 100% Tobacco Free Schools program?	<i>-Evidence of parental representation and involvement</i>			
11. Are cessation resources made available to all students and staff who use tobacco?	<i>-Types of cessation resources offered -Dates and times of meetings -Number participating -Number referred</i>			
12. Is the 100% Tobacco Free School Program fully integrated and consistent with Student Assistance Program policies and procedures?	<i>-Number of policy violators referred to SAP -Number of smokers/tobacco users referred to SAP -Referrals from SAP for cessation resources -Disposition of referrals for assessment</i>			
13. Does the SAP team use the SAP Performance Report accurately to report tobacco related information?	<i>-SAP Performance Report statistics for #12</i>			
14. What outcomes are generated by the SAP Performance Report?	<i>-Academic -Discipline -Attendance -Promotion or graduation data</i>			
OTHER:				

For more information, contact:

TobaccoFreeAllegheny

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