


# THE LINK

Connecting facts and ideas  
for those working to create  
an environment in Maine that  
supports tobacco-free living.

 **Healthy Maine Partnerships**  
Partnership For A Tobacco-Free Maine  
Maine Department of Health and Human Services  
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention

SUMMER ISSUE

## A Classroom Lesson in Tobacco Control



*The Billionaire, Max Bernhard, has vanished! His staff has no idea where he is. In his final communication, a brief e-mail, he stated that he would not return until he recovered something of great value. In a panic, his associates searched his office, and finding no clues, have asked YOU for help.*

These are the opening sentences of “The Billionaire Vanishes,” a game designed for seventh grade students to learn about tobacco and discover web-based resources that provide them with vital health information. The search for Max takes them to several tobacco-use prevention and control websites, as well as a tobacco company website. Students must solve six different puzzles for clues and rewards from Max’s vault. Each clue is a letter, and when the six letters are correctly arranged, the answer reveals the priceless asset Max seeks.



PTM encourages teachers to divide the classes into student teams to work together. Because the questions require more

than “yes” or “no” answers, the game promotes class discussion. Students analyze and discuss topics such as



tobacco industry advertising, ways to help friends and family members to quit, the long- and short-term benefits of quitting, the effects of secondhand smoke, and the financial cost of tobacco use. If the school allows students to use e-mail, they can visit the state Healthy Maine Partnership (HMP) website and find the nearest local HMP



community/school program to inquire about tobacco use prevention programs available in their area.

“The Billionaire Vanishes” is intended to complement schools’ evidence-based tobacco prevention programs, not replace them. The game lets Maine students apply current technology to learn the facts and critical-thinking skills for staying tobacco-free. Five health teachers from different regions of the state have piloted “The Billionaire Vanishes” this spring, and PTM is reviewing their evaluations. If the evaluations are favorable, PTM hopes to introduce this program to Maine schools in the coming school year.

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# A Teen Looks Back on Her Life with Tobacco

## Quitting

My story of tobacco use is the typical tale of peer pressure and my quest to be cool. I was an outcast and friendless throughout my elementary school years. I drifted from one clique to another without acceptance. I never really had a best friend or even a close friend.

Everyone seemed distant. When the cool kids presented tobacco to me for the first time, the positives outweighed the negatives. I would finally fit in and I did. It was nice to have camaraderie with peers, and I would continue to smoke forever to continue this companionship. Then I began to inhale and a whole new world unfolded before my eyes. After I coughed until my throat burned, the smoke began to feel good. Not just good because I was with friends, but because I finally began to feel comfortable with myself. Of course I selected the prime time to smoke—puberty. Not only was my body changing due to hormones, but I also had an extra habit: I was a smoker.

I didn't realize the predicament I had gotten myself in—which seems so clear now—until I got in trouble. My parents stumbled across two cigarettes in my room one day and were shocked. I had been their little girl, but that day I became the problem child. I remember

the conversation so clearly. I remember where we were, what was said, and what I felt—shame. I had never experienced shame before, but in the events to follow, I would surely experience it again. Despite my parents' obvious disap-

*My decision to quit was the best but hardest decision I have ever made.*

pointment, I continued to smoke with my friends. I didn't think there was another option; I thought that I was happy.

Next came suspicion. To this day, when my dad hugs me, I can hear him smelling my hair for smoke. No longer did the "burning of the candle" routine work. I was pegged. Weakness to my friends' pressure and my personal curiosity led me to other substances such as pot and alcohol. Not

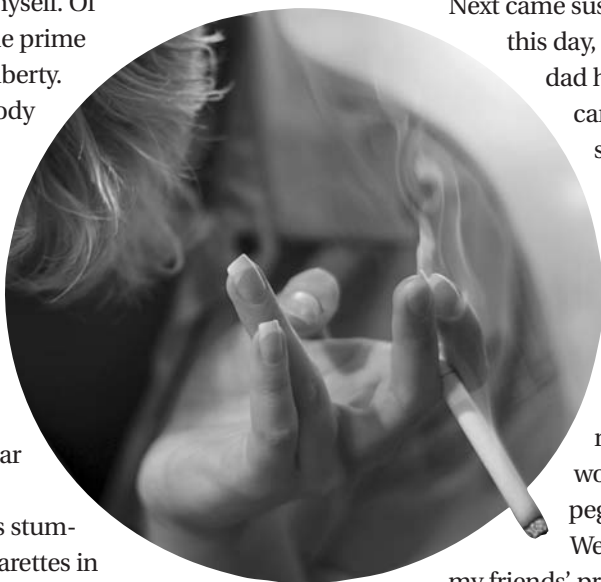
only had my parents exposed me, but now the whole community knew who I was—a smoker. Parents didn't allow their children to hang out with me, and teachers treated me like a leper. By the end of eighth grade I was fed up. I realized that my friends were just smoking buddies and suppliers, and that now, more than ever, I was truly alone.

My decision to quit was the best but hardest decision I have ever made.

Though quitting may sound simple, there were strings attached.

Once I quit, my friends faded away because our only bond was our potential for lung cancer. I entered high school without a friend and with a bad reputation. Not only did I not have friends, but it was also hard to make any. My bad name has yet to be lived down, and I still hear the occasional reference to my former image. I believe that my parents have yet to fully trust me, and I don't expect them to. I lied countless times and will always regret that. I was lucky and had few withdrawal effects from quitting. Many are not blessed with my body's resistance to addiction. If I had experienced major effects from quitting, I am not positive I would be smoke-free today. Therefore, I commend those who have experienced that and quit despite the difficulty.

I realize that smoking robbed me of three years of my social life. I will never have a friend that I have known forever because I had to start my life over. Knowing the effects tobacco has had on me, I am proud to advocate against its use.



# Stop. Quit. Resist!

## *A Message from the Second Annual Maine Youth Anti-Tobacco Summit*



*Youth Summit Planning Team*



*The youth had a great time while learning about ways they can make a difference in the fight against tobacco.*

The Second Annual Maine Youth Anti-Tobacco Summit was held this past April 13th and 14th in Bar Harbor. Sponsored by PTM, the event united approximately 100 youth from grades 8-12 together from all over Maine to rally against Big Tobacco, educate one another on basic tobacco issues, and discuss ways to prevent youth tobacco use. The Youth Planning Team, led by Ellsworth High School's Student Health Awareness Group (SHAG), decided to continue last year's successful theme, **Stop. Quit. Resist!**

**STOP** tobacco companies' lies and manipulation.

**QUIT** and/or support others who want to quit smoking.

**RESIST** the pressure and help your peers resist, too.

Patrick Murtagh, from the American Legacy Foundation, delivered the keynote address. Ignite, the only national anti-tobacco activism organ-

ization founded and led entirely by youth, sent representatives Courtney Otto and Brice Acee from Dartmouth College, who spoke on how to work effectively in the community, the state, and the national political

scene. The event also featured a series of workshops teaching youths how to influence the media and promote their message; how to advocate and take action; how to fight Big Tobacco; how to find resources for quitting tobacco; and most importantly, how to work together on anti-tobacco issues.

Students planned all aspects of the Summit, from location to workshop content. Prior to the event the team met in Bangor once every three weeks with an adult planner from the Maine Youth Action Network (MYAN), as well as three other youths involved in the planning. Several members of the Ellsworth SHAG helped emcee the event and facilitate workshops. All the youths involved demonstrated an obvious dedication to the Summit and a commitment to anti-tobacco efforts.

**STOP** tobacco companies' lies and manipulation.  
**QUIT** and/or support others who want to quit smoking.  
**RESIST** the pressure and help your peers resist, too.

# Cultivating Youth Activism in Community Health Efforts

## *How to Involve Youth in Local Advocacy ... and Keep Them Engaged for the Long Haul*

It's a classic problem in youth activism and social change programs: A big kick-off event, like a rally, is held; the youth get fired up about a cause; and then a few weeks or months later the whole thing fizzles. The youth are not coming to events, or making suggestions. Other things become more important or entertaining to spend their time on.

So how can you as a community organization cultivate a strong youth contingent to help with your anti-tobacco counter-marketing efforts? In his article<sup>1</sup> entitled, "Young people as competent community builders: a challenge to social work," Barry Checkoway says that youth are often viewed in the world of social work as victims or problems rather than as competent citizens



*Once you recognize youth as a huge potential resource, you are then freed to see the amazing influence they can have on the beliefs and actions of adults and other youths.*

capable of meaningful participation in society. Once you recognize youth as a huge potential resource, you are then freed to see the amazing influence they can have on the beliefs and actions of adults and other youths.

But how to get them active and stay that way? Drawing on a series of case studies about highly successful community-based youth initiatives researched by Checkoway and his colleagues, here are some expert tips to follow for your next youth involvement project.

- Recruit youth with an existing connection to a cause. Youth are more likely to feel comfortable getting involved – and most importantly, feel a sense of long-term accountability – if they already have an active interest in marketing, anti-tobacco causes, or have a strong connection to an adult who is. In one project, a research committee of adults with experience in youth issues was recruited by a community group to lay the initial groundwork for a new program. Once the first stage had been developed,

the adults then asked youth they knew to join the effort.

- Mentoring, thorough training and encouragement is essential. It may seem counterintuitive to what you think about today's youth culture, but teens desire meaningful mentoring. A genuine interest from an adult helps a youth understand the framework, or boundaries, associated with the work they're doing. Instead of feeling paralyzed by too many options or worrying about their abilities, they are able to explore new ideas and improve their skill sets. "Leadership must be a multi-generational, developmental process in which seasoned community activists come together with youths to build relationships, participate in dialogues, and create action plans," according to Checkoway. Older youth that have been mentored can then reach out and recruit younger youth.
- Give youth meaningful roles and goals by giving them the reins to generate marketing ideas or solve communication problems. In one case study, youth were allowed to develop project ideas within a certain framework and applied to receive small grants to carry out the work under adult supervision. They were not only responsible for winning the grant, but to manage the funds and report on results.
- Create flexible schedules that fit with their home and academic lifestyles. Some youth have more time and socioeconomic resources than others. For teens who feel overwhelmed by schoolwork or a difficult home life, adding a demanding volunteer project will likely lead to burn out. A project that actually helps them cope and learn new skills while helping others in a similar situation would be a good fit.

- Show youth that you care. Follow up immediately if someone does not show up for a meeting or event. Self-confidence at this age is very fragile, even for youth who outwardly appear mature and outgoing. You can provide meaningful validation of their importance by letting them know they are missed and learning how you can keep it from happening again.
- Reward and celebrate accomplishments, creativity and energy. Celebration, recognition and fun must be a part of any program that involves youth. Praise them constantly for their hard work and accomplishments. Publicly acknowledge their ideas. Provide fun "breaks" in a serious project with refreshments or social outings.
- Allow them to lead and teach when they're ready. Once a youth has reached a stage of self-confidence and skill, let him or her lead and teach as much as possible. By contrast, putting a youth up front who is not ready can shatter their confidence and hurt participation.
- Regularity is vital for commitment. Even if it is a small time commitment on their part, youth must have regular contact or involvement. Going too long between meetings, events, or two-way communications will lead to decline in participation.

*To learn more about successful anti-tobacco counter-marketing programs involving youth, visit these sites:*

[www.tobaccofreekids.org/youthaction](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/youthaction)  
[www.yli.org](http://www.yli.org)  
[www.youthinfoocus.net](http://www.youthinfoocus.net)  
[www.teenquit.com/YouthAdv/index.asp](http://www.teenquit.com/YouthAdv/index.asp)

<sup>1</sup> "Young people as competent community builders: a challenge to social work."  
Barry Checkoway, Social Work, 7/1/98.



# MARK YOUR CALENDAR

## Tobacco Intervention Basic Skills Training Schedule

**September 26, 2006**  
**Fort Kent**

**November 7, 2006**  
**Norway**

**March 7, 2007**  
**Augusta**

## The 23rd Annual Peer Leadership Conference

**Sheraton South Portland,  
near the Maine Mall**

**November 30, 2006**

**December 1, 2006**

## Intensive Tobacco Treatment Training Conference

**April 2007**  
**Lewiston-Auburn**  
**(Specific Date &  
Location TBA)**

# What's Behind the Tobacco Industry's Youth Antismoking Programs: Recruiting Young Smokers and Gaining Political Leverage

## EXPERTS AT THE 2006 WORLD CONGRESS ON TOBACCO OR HEALTH REVEAL SHOCKING FINDINGS OF RECENT STUDIES

Philip Morris International, along with British American Tobacco, claim that they're trying to convince youth in more than 70 countries not to smoke. Here in the U.S., parents have seen television commercials and received direct mail materials at home, urging them to talk to their children about smoking. At first glance, the messages seem rational, very well developed and sound potentially effective. It may even seem like the tobacco companies are responsible, caring businesses that really are concerned about our youth.

Sound too good to be true? It is. But some parents, community and school groups, legislators, reporters and other organizations across the country have been persuaded of just these things – taking tobacco sponsorships for youth events and utilizing the prevention materials and tools – even when there is no evidence that these programs reduce youth smoking.

In a session entitled “Industry Youth Prevention Campaigns – Give Me a Break!,” experts from the Center for Tobacco Control Research and Education and Essential Action, a tobacco control activism organization,

told the audience that the origins of the youth prevention programs were:

- Politically motivated to help curb the tide of legislation against the tobacco industry in the 1980s, and;
- Designed specifically to help them better target young adults with marketing messages and product choices.

Dr. Pamela M. Ling from the Center told the conference audience that Philip Morris has gained recognition from legislators, improved their public image and obtained highly valuable data on youth, all under the guise of trying to prevent youth smoking. She went on to explain how they have researched youth at a level worthy of any statistical public health study, which has given them a tremendous ability to better target their products and marketing messages at young adults. The research topic areas, including demographics, lifestyle preferences and psychographics, of the youth surveys mirror the research they also conduct among young adults to market tobacco.

Experts reviewed several tobacco industry documents that reveal the

psychological strategies behind the messaging of the prevention programs. Big tobacco believes that antismoking behaviors learned as a child can be unlearned in adulthood. Moreover, they play on the idea that youth look forward to growing up and adopting adult behaviors, such as college or working, owning a house, social nightlife, etc. And smoking is marketed as a part of that maturation process.

As public health, community, and youth leaders in Maine, it is critical that we encourage the rejection of these youth prevention campaigns for better, proven methods of prevention from the Maine CDC, national CDC, Tobacco-Free Kids, and many other state and nonprofit programs developed without the influence of tobacco monies. It is also important to educate communities throughout Maine about the motives behind these campaigns and reveal the real truth about big tobacco's image.

To learn more, visit  
[www.essentialaction.org/tobacco](http://www.essentialaction.org/tobacco),  
<http://legacy.library.ucsf.edu/tid/ugr39e00>,  
<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/reports/smokescreen/study.shtml>

## Smoke-Free Housing Conference Offers Resources and Support



The Smoke-Free Housing Coalition of Maine recently hosted the conference “Smoke-Free Housing: Higher Profits. Happier Tenants. A Happier Apartment Building.” For those that missed the conference and are interested in helping to make a difference in their local community or housing complex, copies of all the presentations are now available online at

[www.smokefreeforme.org](http://www.smokefreeforme.org). Visit the Web site for tips, ideas and links to get support and technical assistance from your local HMP.



*Jim Bergman, Director of Smoke-Free Environments Law Project in Ann Arbor, Michigan, delivered a keynote address.*

*The Partnership For A Tobacco-Free Maine will continue to support, promote, and participate in the Smoke-Free Housing Coalition in the coming year.*



*Tina Pettingill, MPH, Chair of the Smoke-Free Housing Coalition, awards Dora Anne Mills, MD, Maine Public Health Director, with an honorary construction hard hat for her support of the initiative.*

# Tobacco Intervention Basic Skills Training Schedule Announced

PTM's Tobacco Treatment contractors, the Center for Tobacco Independence (CTI) will offer three Tobacco Intervention Basic Skills trainings for health professionals and social service providers over the next eight months. The trainings are designed to develop provider skills in delivering brief tobacco interventions in order to motivate tobacco users to quit. Brief interventions by providers are proven to increase quit rates, so it is essential to increase the number of tobacco interventions delivered by a variety of health and social service providers.



Training tailored specifically for

staff, substance abuse counselors, social workers, nutrition consultants, diabetes educators etc., as well as other community members. CTI is also offering a

PTM sponsored Basic Skills

Training tailored specifically for

social service providers who work primarily with female clients. Providers encouraged to attend are WIC counselors, TANF caseworkers, public health nurses, Home visitors and others who serve women and families.

Brochures are being printed and will be sent out soon. Please note that the Basic Skills training is a prerequisite for the more advanced training in Intensive Tobacco Treatment, which is one of the requirements for Maine certification as a Tobacco Treatment Specialist. The Intensive Tobacco Treatment Training is scheduled for April 2007 (specific date and location to be announced). Maine certification of Tobacco Treatment Specialists is provided through the American Lung Association of Maine.

## Maine Youth Survey Data to be Available on the Web in Fall 2006

Data from the combined Maine Youth Drug and Alcohol Use Survey (MYDAUS), and the Maine Youth Tobacco Survey (MYTS) results will be available on the Web this fall. The



survey data describes the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other substances among middle and high school students in Maine. Also measured are the risk and protective factors that influence a student's choice of whether or not to engage in these and other harmful behaviors.

Survey data are available online at <http://www.maine.gov/maineosa/survey/home.php>. The site features both a public area and a secure area. The public area has statewide, regional, and county level data; the secure area features school and district data that are password-protected. Each school designates a contact person, usually a superintendent or principal, who receives a password. Users can access the data in several formats: results of each survey question; reports on selected substances and issues by school grade; and summary reports by geographic areas, gender, grade, and race. A printed summary report of statewide data is available at <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/osa/pubs/data/2004/2004mydausexec.pdf>.

Because of its targeted focus, MYDAUS/YTS can be a powerful tool for informing an audience about sub-

stance abuse issues that specifically affect their community. The data can also be used for the planning, implementation, and evaluation of various programs. Other suggestions for MYDAUS/YTS include:

- Assessing the use of substances by in-school youth, as well as other factors in the home or community that affect them
- Setting priorities or addressing problems based on their severity and scope
- Comparing trends to determine whether change is occurring naturally or as a result of initiatives in the school and community
- Comparing local or county data to other counties (available only with the permission of the school contact)



## Youth Websites for Resources

Check out these sites for information and ideas with special appeal to youth.

<http://www.gen-swat.com/gen-swat1/ammunition.html>

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/youthaction/>

<http://www.jeliowa.org/>

<http://www.ovx.org/index.php>

<http://www.worthit.org/#>

The Link is published by the Partnership For A Tobacco-Free Maine (PTM), MaryBeth T. Welton, Program Manager, 287-4627.

The mission of PTM is to reduce death and disability from tobacco use among Maine residents by creating an environment supportive of a tobacco-free life.



John Elias Baldacci, Governor  
Brenda Harvey, Commissioner  
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention  
Printed under appropriation #014-10A-9922-022

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www.tobaccofreemaine.org