

Development of a Statewide Media Campaign to Promote TFS Policies in a Tobacco State: What We Feared and What Actually Happened

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Teen Tobacco Prevention in NC

- In May of 2002, the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTf) voted to allocate funds for a statewide Teen Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation Initiative (TTUPC).
- One of the primary objectives for this initiative was promoting local adoption of and compliance with 100% Tobacco-Free School (TFS) policies.

Tobacco-Free School (TFS) Policies

- Comprehensive Tobacco-Free School (TFS) Policy
 - "tobacco-free school environment" (CDC)
 - 100% TFS policy (NC)
- Comprehensive, enforced TFS policies
 reductions in youth tobacco use

A 100% tobacco-free school has a policy that prohibits the use of tobacco products by anyone, including students, staff, and visitors, on school grounds or at school events at all times. This tobacco-free zone includes school premises, school vehicles, and school events, both indoors and outdoors, and both on and off school property.



The goal for 100% TFS statewide

- The goal of HWTF's statewide 100% TFS campaign is to protect the health of our state's children by encouraging all 115 school districts in North Carolina to adopt a model 100% Tobacco-Free policy.
- Before HWTF took a leadership role in the TFS movement, only 14 school districts had adopted TFS.
- As of October 2007, 82% (94/115) of NC school districts have gone 100% Tobacco-Free.

TFS Policy Advocacy

- States have used two basic methods in passing TFS policies:
 - State law
 - 17 states had comprehensive TFS laws as of June 2007*
 - District-level advocacy
 - has been major strategy in NC

*Tobacco-Free Schools Laws State-by-State Summary, June 2007, Tobacco Public Policy Center at Capital University Law School, Available at http://www.law.capital.edu/tobacco/documents/tobacco_free_schools_laws_state_by_state_summary.pdf

Why media?

- Low hanging fruit
- Wanted to use mass media to influence local decision making in hard to reach districts
- Create statewide awareness about the issue

What we feared

- Campaign to promote tobacco policy in “tobacco state” could result in:
 - Negative feedback from state and local political leaders
 - Potential loss of funding if media campaign was overreaching or not on target
 - Local leaders not being open to pressure from state entity – potential backlash
- Given concerns, commissioned formative research to inform campaign creation

Formative Research for Campaign

■ Methods

■ Literature Review (initial list of themes)

■ Interviews

- Feb-Mar 2005
- 45 experts & stakeholders, inc. 9 NC legislators
- Names: NC TFS Director and a CDC expert; snowball sampling
- Included NC and 5 other states, districts with and without policies, legislators in both parties and chambers
- Response Rates: 94% for experts and 54% for stakeholders/legislators



Methods

- Survey tool
 - Experiences with TFS
 - Issues/themes most salient for media (categorize list as likely or not likely to work)
 - Best types of people for ads
 - Other recommendations?
- Content analysis and ranking of themes

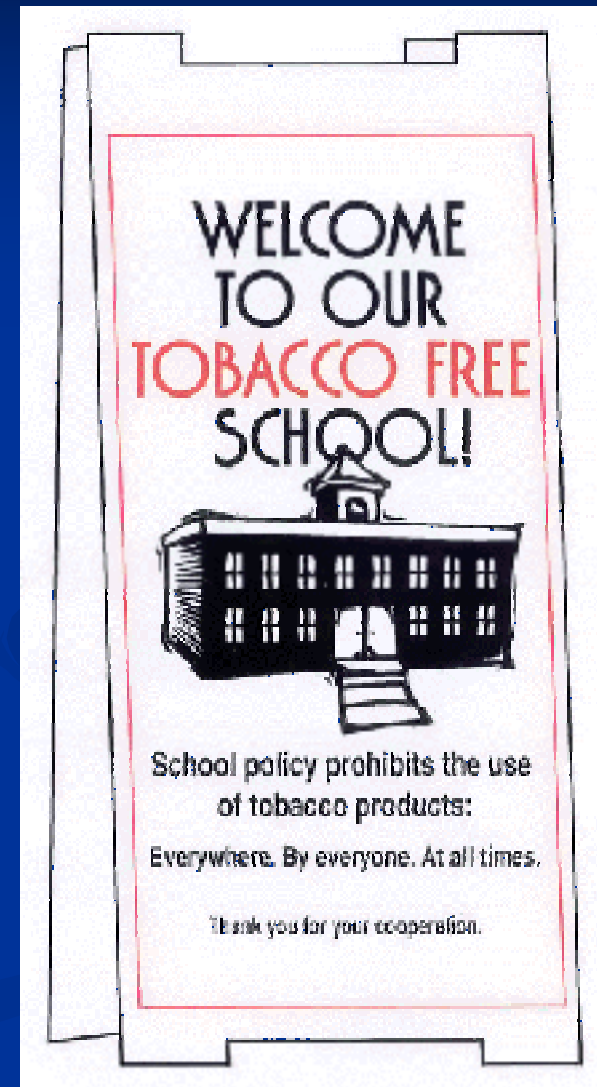


Recommendations

Themes

Theme 1: Positive Message about TFS Becoming the Norm in NC

- Idea: Convey idea that TFS now accepted norm in state
- Use “Positive Peer Pressure”
- Most frequently chosen best message



Themes

Theme 2: Experiences of Successful TFS Districts

- Idea: Adults and youth from districts that have passed TFS policies talk about their success
- “Dispel myths” about policy
- Highlight
 - Diversity of districts
 - Districts that others can relate to
 - e.g.: rural and urban areas



Themes

Theme 3: Importance of Adult Role Modeling

- Idea: Talk about teachers, staff, and parents serving as role models for youth
- Consistency between classroom teachings and observed adult behavior



Themes

Theme 4: Personal Story from Youth Relating TFS Policy to Health Consequences

- Idea: “Put the face on the policy” by having a youth give own story
 - e.g. band member with asthma exposed to SHS at football games
- Would help people understand why policy important



People to Appear in Ads

- Youth (top choice)
- School administrators
- Parents
- Teachers

- *Must have personal connection to or experience with TFS or tobacco*



Connection to Website

- Ads should promote website for viewers to:
 - Learn more about TFS and their own school districts
 - Take action to promote adoption/compliance



Additional Themes

Tested but ranked lower than recommended themes

- Health effects of SHS
- Impact on youth smoking rates
- Serious health consequences of tobacco use
- Non-health impacts



Limitations

- Snowball technique can lead to selected sample of respondents
- Did not speak with TFS experts in all states
- Limited evaluation of campaign



Campaign Creation

- Ads utilized two of recommended themes
 - TFS becoming norm in NC
 - Experiences of successful districts
- Featured diversity of people
- Directed at (1) **parents** and (2) policy makers
- Included facts:
 - Impact of TFS on smoking rates
 - Parental support for TFS



Campaign Creation

- Used taglines:
 - *Is your child's school tobacco-free?* (adoption ad)
 - *Support your child's tobacco-free school* (compliance ad)
- Directed viewers to website to learn more and take action: www.HealthWellNC.com
- Tested in focus groups with parents and policy makers



TFS Ads



TFS Website

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the TFS Website. The browser's address bar is empty, and the toolbar includes standard navigation icons. The website's main content area is green and features several sections:

- 100% TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOLS**: A prominent header with a right-pointing arrow.
- Learn how to adopt a 100% TFS policy.**: A link in a green box with a right-pointing arrow.
- Learn how to promote compliance for a 100% TFS policy.**: A link in a green box with a right-pointing arrow.
- ARE YOUR SCHOOLS 100% TOBACCO-FREE? FIND OUT BELOW.**: A large black box with white text, accompanied by a photograph of a young woman with headphones reading in a locker room.
- START HERE.**: A section with the text "Select your county below to find out if your school is 100% tobacco-free." and a dropdown menu labeled "<< Select A District >>".
- GO**: A yellow button with a right-pointing arrow.
- A message from Lt. Gov. Bev Perdue.**: A small portrait of a woman with a speech bubble.
- 97 and counting!**: A section with a map icon and the text "Use this map to learn which school districts are 100% tobacco-free."
- NEWS**: A section with the text "Attend TFS forum for tools & resources to make your tobacco use policies work!"
- YOUTH TOBACCO SURVEY**: A section with the text "Adoption of a 100% TFS policy helps to reduce North Carolina youth smoking rates. Click here to see the evidence!"
- VIEW TELEVISION ADS**: A blue button.
- Health & Wellness**: A logo at the bottom right of the page.

The browser's status bar at the bottom shows "Internet".

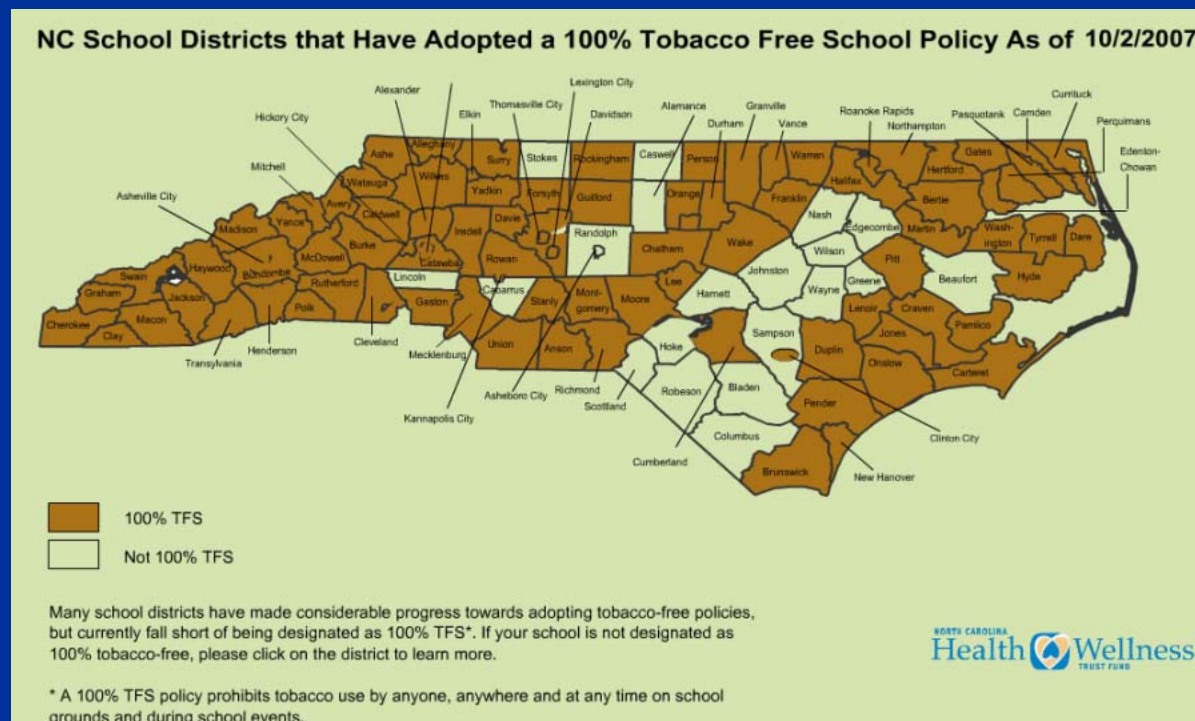
What Happened Next?

- In 8 months after campaign launch, additional 9 districts passed policies
- 17% of NC adults aware of campaign (Study by UNC TPEP, Spring 2007)



And most important. . .

July 2007: NC passed state legislation mandating TFS in all NC school districts (to take effect 8/08)



Conclusions

- A tobacco state can utilize a mass media campaign to promote TFS policy without political fallout.
- Other states may wish to use similar themes and strategies in developing a targeted media campaign as part of a comprehensive approach to promote TFS policies.



Questions?



100% TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOLS



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