

Tobacco-Free College Campuses

GENERAL TRENDS

- ⊗ Tobacco use is still the leading cause of preventable death, causing approximately 438,000 deaths nationwide.¹
- ⊗ On average, there are 25,500 deaths in New York each year from tobacco use.¹
- ⊗ Tobacco use by young adults rose dramatically in the 1990's and remains high.²
- ⊗ Nearly 23% of 18-24 year olds in New York currently smoke compared to 18.2% of all adults.³
- ⊗ College smokers often describe themselves as "social smokers". They smoke more with others, often while consuming alcohol. Many don't consider themselves a smoker; don't think they are addicted; expect to stop smoking after leaving school; and are concerned about the acceptability of tobacco use.⁴
- ⊗ Survey results found that 51% of current smokers (ages 18-24) were social smokers. Most of them (71%) are occasional smokers and have not established daily smoking patterns.⁴
- ⊗ Tobacco industry documents reveal that smokers progress through several stages to becoming a regular addicted smokers. The young adult years are critical, when the number of cigarettes smoked per day increases sharply and habits are solidified.⁵
- ⊗ Tobacco companies host promotional events at fraternities and sororities, giving away free samples, coupons, and paraphernalia. A survey of 119 U.S. colleges and universities found that 109 of the schools (92%) had on-campus tobacco promotion events where free samples of cigarettes were available.⁶

REASONS TO ADOPT A TOBACCO-FREE CAMPUS

- ⊗ Colleges and universities provide an ideal site for tobacco prevention interventions with young adults as more than 1.76 million 18-24 year olds attend college nationwide.⁷
- ⊗ A Harvard College Alcohol Study indicates that smoke-free college housing may prevent non-smoking students from becoming smokers.⁸
- ⊗ Smoke-free environments, such as dorms, encourage current smokers to quit or decrease tobacco use.²

- ⊗ Secondhand smoke (SHS) is a Group A carcinogen, i.e. it is known to cause cancer in humans. There is no safe level of exposure. SHS exacerbates respiratory ailments, triggers asthma attacks and makes asthma symptoms more severe.⁹
- ⊗ Smoke travels outside an individual student's room and cannot be controlled by ventilation.¹⁰
- ⊗ There is strong support among students, including smokers, for tobacco-free policies on campus:
 - Over 75% of students favor smoke-free buildings, residences, and dining areas.¹¹
 - 71% support prohibitions on tobacco advertising and sponsorship of social events on campus.¹¹
 - 51% supported smoke-free campus bars.¹¹

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2007). *Best practices for comprehensive tobacco control programs*. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. October, 2007.

² Lantz, P.M. (2003). Smoking on the rise among young adults: implications for research and policy. *Tobacco Control*, 12, 60-70.

³ RTI International. (2007). *Independent Evaluation of New York's Tobacco Control Program Final Report 2007*. Research Triangle Park, NC: RTI International

⁴ Moran, S., Wechsler, H., & Rigotti, N.A. (2004). Social smoking among US college students. *Pediatrics* 114 (4), 1028-1034.

⁵ Minnesota Department of Health, et al. (2004). Patterns of smoking among Minnesota's young adults. *Tobacco Control. Surveys and Program Evaluations from Outside UCSF*. Paper MN2004.

⁶ Rigotti, N.A., Moran, S.E., & Wechsler, H. (2004). US College students' exposure to tobacco promotions: prevalence and association with tobacco use. *Am J Public Health*, 94(12), 1-7.

⁷ U.S. Bureau of the Census. (2006). *Facts for Features Back to School: 2006-2007*. Washington, DC: U.S. Dept. of Commerce. Retrieved on November 14, 2007 from http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/007108.html

⁸ Wechsler, H., Lee, J.E., & Rigotti, N.A. (2001). Cigarette use by college students in smoke-free housing: results of a national study. *Am J Prev Med*, 20(3), 202-207.

⁹ Department of Health and Human Services. (2006). *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke*. A report of the Surgeon General. Public Health Services, Office of the Surgeon General: Rockville, MD.

¹⁰ ASHRAE's Environmental Tobacco Smoke Position Document Committee, "ASHRAE Position Document on Environmental Tobacco Smoke", June 30, 2005.

¹¹ Rigotti, N.A., Regan, S., Moran, S.E., & Wechsler, H. (2003). Students' opinion of tobacco control policies recommended for US colleges: a national survey. *Tobacco Control*, 12, 251-256.