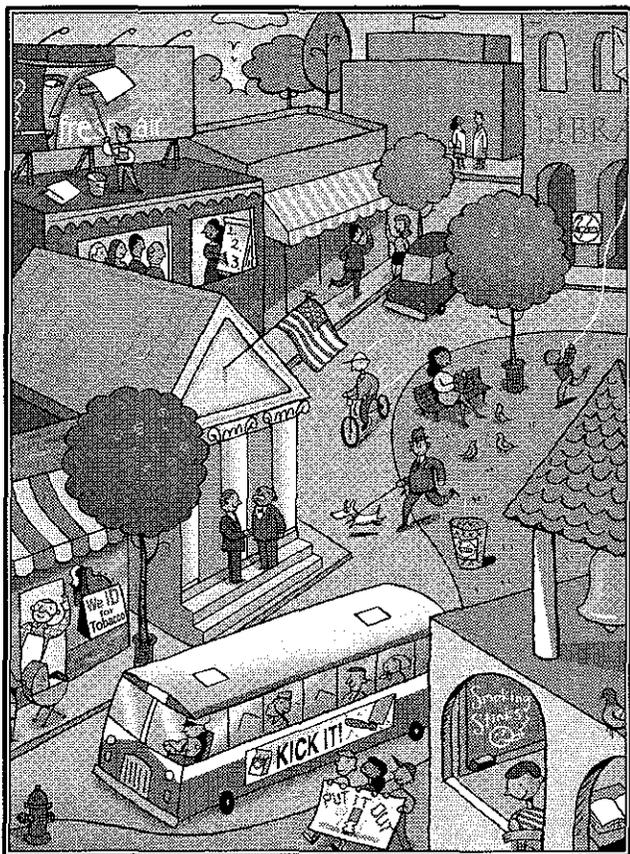


Introducing Communities of Excellence in Tobacco Control



This is a historic time in the history of tobacco control in the United States. The States are beginning to receive the first of 206 billion dollars over the next 25 years as a result of a settlement agreement between the States' Attorneys Generals and the tobacco companies. Some of these dollars will find their way to communities for implementing new tobacco control policies and programs. And we know what happens at the community level often leads the way and sets the standards for major improvements in public health.

Experience has shown that *comprehensive* tobacco control programs are the most effective in reducing tobacco use and protecting the public from secondhand smoke. Comprehensive programs include many different approaches to tobacco control, not just one or a few.

Communities, particularly those just becoming active in tobacco control, have identified a need for help in planning for comprehensive tobacco control programs. Communities of Excellence in Tobacco Control (CX) is designed to provide this assistance. CX is also helpful to existing tobacco control programs who want to strengthen their efforts.

At the heart of the CX concept is the idea that communities can achieve excellence in tobacco control by involving a motivated diverse group of people within the community to assess where they are now in terms of excellence in tobacco control, where they need to go to get

closer to it, and how best to get there. CX provides systematic guidance for achieving these critical planning outcomes. This tobacco control planning guide provides lessons learned from the experiences of others, ideas for getting started, and resources to assist you. The guide is broken down into six major planning sections:

GETTING THE BIG PICTURE

Identifying what a *community of excellence in tobacco control* looks like.

DEVELOPING THE TEAM

Bringing interested people from the community together to work on being a *community of excellence*.

FIGURING OUT WHERE WE ARE NOW

Assessing how the community is doing now compared to an ideal *community of excellence in tobacco control*.

DECIDING WHERE WE WANT TO GO

Determining what needs to be done to achieve *excellence in tobacco control*.

ORGANIZING TO GET IT DONE

Deciding how to work best together to become a *community of excellence*.

SEEING HOW WE ARE DOING

Watching how things are working so we know when we become a *community of excellence in tobacco control*.

Each section of this guide contains the following:

- *Things to Consider*
- *Lessons Learned*
- *Getting Started*
- *Helpful Tools*
- *Additional Resources*

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The CX Planning Guide is based on the best information available from people who have worked in community-based tobacco control programs. It raises important issues that must be addressed, but it is not a cookbook with step-by-step recipes. It respects the fact that communities work best on issues when given a little guidance and have the flexibility to determine their own directions and priorities in light of their unique needs, cultures, environment, and circumstances.

The American Cancer Society (ACS) is committed to dramatically reducing the burden of cancer through tobacco control and other means by the year 2015. ACS has developed this guide for use by its Divisions and Units and its many other tobacco control partners across the Nation as more and more communities become involved in tobacco control.

Use this guide to systematically work toward becoming an ideal *community of excellence in tobacco control*. If you do so, you can expect to build an effective community group committed to tobacco control, develop a realistic community plan of action, see the plan implemented, and watch your community become a healthier place to live!