



Alaska Tobacco Control Alliance
www.alaskatca.org

Tobacco-Free News

NEWS FROM THE ALASKA TOBACCO CONTROL ALLIANCE

VISION

A tobacco-free Alaska

MISSION

To create conditions for Alaskans to live free from the harmful effects of tobacco

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CONTACT US

- By Phone
1-888-474-2453 Toll-free
1-907-450-2453
- By Fax (attn: ATCA)
907-450-2470
- By Email
atca@iialaska.com
- On the Web
www.alaskatca.org

NOTES FROM THE ATCA CO-CHAIRS



Greetings ATCA Members!

Hoping that you all enjoyed another amazing Alaskan summer. Between fun, fishing and frolic, ATCA workgroups met periodically throughout the spring and summer working to make our state a healthier place to call home. The Communications Workgroup is especially excited about the ATCA website update, so please go to www.alaskatca.org to find out the latest local, state and national news on the tobacco front, as well as to learn how you can become involved in activities that pique your interest.

ATCA is particularly excited about our continuing work towards statewide policy that protects all workers from the dangers of secondhand smoke. We are now strategizing coordinated efforts to gain support for a statewide smokefree workplace law, and YOU CAN HELP! Talk to your co-workers, family members, friends, policymakers and acquaintances about the benefits of smokefree policies. Contact your regional ATCA representative for talking points, or go to www.alaskatca.org where you will find links to other amazing resources that provide the information and documentation that you can use to encourage others to support future legislation.

Thank you for your continued interest in a tobacco-free Alaska and please consider joining us at the next ATCA meeting!

Jenny Olendorff & Pat Reynaga, Co-Chairs

STEERING COMMITTEE

Jenny Olendorff, Co-Chair
SouthCentral Region

Pat Reynaga, Co-Chair
Anchorage Region

Carrie Nyssen
American Lung Assoc.

Lincoln Bean Sr.
Alaska Native Health Board

Melanie Brenner
Interior Region

Gary Ferguson
Native Appointee

Alex Hicks
State of Alaska TPC

Brian James
Native Appointee

Pat Luby
AARP

Caroline Nevak
Native Appointee

Betty MacTavish
Southwest Region

Laura Muller
Native Appointee

Emily Nenon
ACS Cancer Action Network

Andrea Thomas
Southeast Region

Vacant
Western Region

Becky Stoppa
At Large

Michelle Woods
Northern Region



Around the State

KNOCK TOBACCO OUT OF THE PARK CAMPAIGN

ATCA members can join the Knock Tobacco Out of the Park campaign and help make a ban on smokeless tobacco use, on the field and in the dugout, at Major League Baseball games a reality. Just sign up – it's as easy as that!



Ten medical and public health groups, including the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, have joined together this year in pushing for Major League Baseball to ban smokeless tobacco use at games. To do that will require the consent of the MLB Players Association.

A ban was easily implemented in Minor League Baseball because those players aren't members of the union. The minor league ban prohibits tobacco use by uniformed players in the workplace—this ensures that kids won't be exposed to their heroes' tobacco use on the field, in the dugout, or on television. The Knock Tobacco Out of the Park campaign seeks the same restrictions in the major league, so young fans no longer see tobacco use by big-league players as cool and athletic.

Commissioner Bud Selig has already come out in support of a ban in response to a letter from the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. "Without reservation, I and the major league clubs share your concerns regarding the dangers of tobacco use," he wrote in a letter to the organization. "I personally believe that smokeless tobacco should be banned at the major league level . . . MLB will propose restrictions on the use of smokeless tobacco at the major league level comparable to the restrictions in place at the minor league level."

The contract negotiated this year will last for five seasons. If not successful this year, there will be a long wait before this can be tackled again. Each additional organization that signs on increases the pressure on the players' union and the owners to do what's right.

Here's How to Make it Happen

- Sign up your state tobacco control program or organization, even the state health department, as a supporter simply by sending an e-mail to Elizabeth Orlan at the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids at eorlan@tobaccofreekids.org with the message "Please sign my organization up as a supporter of Tobacco-Free Baseball" and the name and location of the organization.



Smokefree baseball policies in Kotzebue.

- Ask other partner organizations interested in the issue to join as supporters, and recruit members of your community (health, business, other local entities) to sign on to the campaign.

For more information on the campaign to Knock Tobacco Out of the Park, go to www.tobaccofreebaseball.org.

SMOKEFREE POLICIES

While many people in Alaska were out playing in the great outdoors, tobacco control advocates have been hard at work around the state. In Nome, the City Council passed one of the most comprehensive smoke-free workplace ordinances in the state. In Seward, the City Council passed a new 8 percent tax on tobacco products. In Skagway, a vote of the people passed handily to implement a smoke-free workplace ordinance that the City Council had originally passed. Most recently the Palmer City Council put forward a comprehensive smoke-free workplace ordinance that will be voted on in mid- September. It is great to see people working so hard to promote the health of their communities!

SMOKEFREE FAIRGOING

Fairgoers will breathe a little easier at the Alaska State Fair next year, thanks to the Fair's new smokefree policy, which will prohibit smoking in all public areas of the fairground. "This decision came out of concern for the fairgoer experience, that not everyone is exposed to direct or secondhand smoke," said General Manager Ray Ritari.

Young and old are praising the new policy, which received more than 150 "likes" and dozens of positive comments on the Fair's Facebook page. "Thank you! On behalf of myself and my little kiddos," wrote one of the Fair's Facebook friends. The policy brings the Alaska State Fair in line with dozens of other fairs around the country and theme parks like Disney World and Six Flags.

Youth: Part of the Solution

ATCA SUMMIT YOUTH TRACK “SMOKEFREE IS THE WAY 2 BE”

“Super fun and learned lots” was one of the comments we heard after this year’s ATCA Summit Youth Track, held in Palmer April 27 – 29. This is the second year that the “Got Air?” ATCA Summit has had a Youth Track component. Attending the Summit were twenty-one teens and their chaperones from all around Alaska, including Wrangell, Nenana, Kenai Peninsula, Nome, Kotzebue, Mat-Su Valley and Anchorage. Teens learned the latest information about secondhand smoke as well as advocacy and activism strategies they could take home to promote healthier communities and a smokefree Alaska. A Summit highlight for the youth was the opportunity to meet Senator Murkowski, who spoke at the event!



Youth present to the whole summit.

Teens stayed at Camp Challenge, near Palmer where they participated in an ACTivism Boot Camp, led by Luke Witcowski, FACT Field Guru with the American Lung Association in Wisconsin. Luke inspired the group with his high energy, interactive

and impactful workshop on how teens have the power to positively impact their communities. Youth track participants helped Luke with his keynote presentation “Pump Up the Volume: Amplifying the Youth Voice to Make Alaska Smokefree.” They also helped with his



A young superhero championing tobacco control, with US Senator Lisa Murkowski (left).



The ATCA Summit Youth Track with US Senator Lisa Murkowski

breakout session “Can You Hear Me Now? Successful Youth Engagement Strategies from Alaskan Youth.”

Teens participated in other workshops at camp and attended keynote presentations at the Palmer Train Depot. Youth enjoyed an evening Ice Cream & Activism party at the Mat-Su Boys & Girls Club, where they created a human billboard, spray painted t-shirts with tobacco prevention messages and watched a “live demo” as two Mat-Su teens spray painted a banner “Smokefree is the Way 2 B.”

To wrap up the conference, youth leaders created a pledge board. One teen wrote “In honor of the next generation, I pledge to help make Alaska a smokefree state.” After the Summit, they created an ATCA Youth Leaders Facebook page to keep the group connected.

National News

60 MINUTES PROVIDES TIMELY REMINDER OF BIG TOBACCO’S LIES

In August, major tobacco companies again showed their aversion to the truth when they filed yet another lawsuit to block the FDA from implementing new, graphic warning labels on cigarettes.

The new warnings show and tell the truth about cigarettes — that they are addictive and deadly, causing cancer, heart disease and other serious illnesses. But the tobacco companies claim that being forced to tell the truth would violate their First Amendment rights.

Thanks to CBS’s “60 Minutes,” we have a timely reminder of just how far Big Tobacco will go to suppress the truth.



Ask the Doc

How can I make a difference in the tobacco-free movement?

I recently spoke to the Alaska Native Health Board's Tribal Health Directors, and found that over 75% have struggled with tobacco use at some point in their lives. They have drafted an Alaska Native

Health Board (ANHB) resolution supporting Tobacco Free Workplaces that will go to the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention this year. Leaders are modelling the way toward health and wellness. Another important health leader, US Surgeon General, Dr. Regina M. Benjamin, recently submitted the 30th Tobacco-related Surgeon General's report, in which she writes, "Although we have made great strides in tobacco control, more than 440,000 deaths each year are caused by smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke. The cost to the nation is tremendous: a staggering amount is spent on medical care and lost productivity. But most importantly there is immeasurable cost in human suffering and loss." Each of us are leaders in our circles of friends and family. It's time that we stand up with our local, state and national health leaders and decide to be tobacco-free.

-Dr. Gary Ferguson

ALASKA'S TOBACCO
QUITLINE
1-800-QUIT-NOW

Sitka, Alaska

Dear Me,

I've smoked for over half of my life, and now half of my children smoke... a deadly habit I'm ashamed to admit I've influenced, despite all of my love and devotion.

Why have I not stopped smoking when I have so many reasons to quit?

Love,
me

1-800-QUIT-NOW
No one can make me quit but me.
IT'S FREE. IT'S CONFIDENTIAL. AND IT WORKS.



Alaska Tobacco Control Alliance

c/o Information Insights
212 Front Street, Suite 100
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

ATCA is a statewide network of health advocates who develop, support and sustain comprehensive tobacco control programs.

JOIN TODAY!
www.alaskatca.org