

## SMOKE-FREE SIT-INS

This activity takes a bit more time and thought than some of the other activities, but is highly effective and lots of fun.

During a smoke-free sit-in, a large group of people descends upon a facility that allows smoking (a bowling alley, restaurant, or bingo hall are good picks) and fill the smoking section. While inside, talk to the employees about secondhand smoke and about how it personally affects them. Share information with them from the surgeon general's report on secondhand smoke (see <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/secondhandsmoke/>).

Occupy the smoking section for an hour, and at the end, hold up signs announcing the following, "This hour of smoke-free dining (or bowling, bingo, etc) brought to by youth who care about workers' health." Create other signs that quote the Surgeon General and represent the huge death toll inflicted by secondhand smoke.

If the facility owner/manager thinks that the business would lose customers if a smoke-free policy was adopted, refer him to the documents (have them printed off with you) available at <http://tobaccofreekids.org/reports/shs/onepagers.php>. Try to get the business owner to make a statement to the media about whether he/she plans on going smoke-free.

1 month before the activity:

- Get together with your group and think about the places you go to frequently in your community, such as schools, malls, stores, sports arenas, and restaurants. Make a list of the places you like to go to that allow smoking in their facility.
- Choose a facility to target and send a letter to the owner. If the location is publicly owned, you will need to send a letter to the government office that controls that area.
- In the letter, ask that the facility be smoke-free. Cite research (accessible at <http://tobaccofreekids.org/reports/shs/>) that shows secondhand smoke kills and that banning smoking in a public indoor facility improves the health of workers and business. One week after you send the letter, call the owner or office to make sure they received the letter and discuss smoke-free policies.
- If the facility does not respond or says no to your smoke-free proposal, get ready to get active!

2 weeks before the activity:

- Begin to plan your sit-in.
- Choose a date and time (preferably during lunch hour or another busy time) to stage your sit-in.
- Begin to recruit volunteers who are willing to use the services of the facility (eat a meal, go bowling, etc.) on the specific date and time, or make sure you secure enough funding to support enough volunteers to fill the entire smoking section of the facility.

Adapted from: <http://www.kickbuttsday.org/search-activities/>

- Contact the local media and let them know what you plan to do. Be sure to give them the date, time and location of the event, and mention that you will have great visuals!

Day before the activity:

- Follow-up with potential media contacts reminding them of your event.
- Pick out key youth to be interviewed if a media opportunity comes up.
- Make signs with secondhand smoke messages. Be sure to encourage the patrons to pressure the facility to become smoke-free, and mention your group's name.

Day of the activity:

- Meet all volunteers outside the facility. It is most effective if you enter the facility together.
- Enter the facility with the rest of your group and request to be seated or use the smoking section of the facility. The goal is to fill all of the smoking section.
- Be prepared to wait for awhile so that everyone can use the facility at the same time.
- Be polite to the management and employees of the facility! Also, you must pay for the services you use! If you sit at a table in a smoking section, you should buy a meal so the facility doesn't lose money by your being there.
- Take lots of pictures!
- After about an hour of using the facility, expose your signs to the patrons, employees and management of the facility. Give the management your contact information so they may ask you questions in the future.

***Don't Forget!***

- Email your event report to [staff@txsaywhat.com](mailto:staff@txsaywhat.com) for a chance to win scholarships to the 2014 Say What! Texas Tobacco-Free Conference!