

[A Success Story:](#)

Tobacco Use Continues to be the Leading Cause of Death and Preventable Disease Among Kansans; 21% of Kansas Youth Smoke

State Program: Chronic Disease Prevention

National Health Objective: HO 12-1 Coronary Heart Disease

Block Grant Role: Supplemental Funding

Block Grant Funding Percentage: 10-49% - Partial source of funding

Block Grant Current Year Funds: \$479,568

Hispanic Youth Report Highest Tobacco Usage Rate

Issue:

The 2000 Kansas Youth Tobacco Survey (KYTS) indicated that students of Hispanic origin report the highest current smoking rate. The KYTS also shows 1 in 3 high school seniors have smoked a cigarette in the last three days.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Office of Minority Health, smoking is the leading cause of cancer deaths among Hispanics and Latinos. Cigarette smoking among Hispanic/Latino high school seniors declined from 35.7% in 1977 to 20.6% in 1989; however, smoking prevalence has been increasing in the 1990s — from 21.7% in 1990 to 27.3% in 1999. The CDC's study on Tobacco Use Among U.S. Racial/Ethnic Minority Groups says effective strategies are needed to reduce tobacco use among members of U.S. racial/ethnic groups and thus diminish their burden of tobacco-related diseases and deaths. There is enormous potential to reduce heart disease, cancer, stroke and respiratory disease among members of racial and ethnic groups who make up the most rapidly growing segment of the U.S. population. Included in these groups is the growing Hispanic population.

Intervention:

According to The CDC Office of Minority Health, in order to combat tobacco use among disparate populations, communities must develop new partnerships with populations at risk for tobacco-related disparities. The Garden City Recreation Commission in Finney County has developed a powerful partnership with the Hispanic youth of Finney County.

The Garden City Recreation Commission designated a recreation specialist to work with the local alternative high school at the Finney County Community Learning Center (FCCLC). The majority of students at FCCLC (83%) and a large percentage of Finney County residents (43%) are of Hispanic descent. The specialist assisted Hispanic students at FCCLC in forming a Hispanic youth group and partnered with these students on several projects aimed at educating high school students, elementary students and the adult population of the dangers of smoking and the benefits of quitting. With the assistance of the recreation specialist, Hispanic students at FCCLC launched an active, aggressive and culturally specific set of activities to bring an anti-tobacco message to their community.

Impact:

- FCCLC Hispanic youth group coordinated a Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead, a Mexican Holiday devoted to remembering the deceased and celebrating the continuity of life) activity. They set up a spook house, invited friends and family, celebrated the holiday and facilitated a discussion about the dangers of tobacco use with the 50 families in attendance.
- FCCLC Hispanic youth group put together an activity-filled booth and displayed it at two elementary school carnivals in which students were required to participate in each booth. The youth group designed the booth, set it up and played games with the children when they arrived. The culturally specific, Spanish-speaking booth brought a message of the dangers of tobacco and reasons for avoiding tobacco to each of the approximately 500 elementary students who took part.
- The Hispanic Soccer Leagues, which the Garden City Recreation Committee runs for adults and youth, conducted tobacco training for coaches and referees. The training taught the coaches and referees how to talk to their players about not using tobacco and how it negatively effects athletic performance. The league has instituted a policy for a tobacco free playing (including spit tobacco) which is actively enforced.
- FCCLC Hispanic youth group brought their message of the dangers of tobacco use to the adult Hispanic population through a Public Service Announcement (PSA) they produced with the help of the Garden City Recreation Commission and ran on the local Spanish radio station. The Hispanic youth group initiated this project as a means of reaching the members of the community to whom English is a second language.
- FCCLC Hispanic youth group produced a Spanish-speaking break dancing video that also conveyed the dangers of tobacco use. This video was produced with assistance from the Garden City Recreation Commission and ran on the local public access television station.
- FCCLC Hispanic youth group developed a plan and approached their school administration to request enforcement of a smoke-free grounds policy. The policy is comprehensive and includes all school buildings and grounds. The policy even includes dress code; students can no longer wear clothing that contains tobacco advertising. The FCCLC students' activities, combined with efforts from another, multi-racial youth group, a local health coalition, and the coordinated school health council, led to the school board instituting a district-wide policy change.

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