

## *South Carolina*

# Using Community Roundtables to Promote 100% Tobacco-free School Policies

### Problem Overview

According to the 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, among high school students in South Carolina

- 53% had ever tried cigarette smoking.
- In the previous 30 days, 20% smoked cigarettes and 27% used tobacco products (e.g., cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos, chewing tobacco, snuff, dip).

Schools can provide a tobacco-free environment—prohibiting anyone from using tobacco on school property—that will model and support a tobacco-free life style. Best practice also dictates providing evidence-based tobacco-use prevention education and offering tobacco cessation programs for students and staff who smoke.

### Program/Activity Description

The South Carolina School Boards Association (SCSBA), in partnership with the CDC-supported SC Healthy Schools program and the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) Division of Tobacco Prevention, established a model comprehensive tobacco-free school policy that addressed the following components:

- Tobacco use on school property.
- Procedures for enforcement.
- Education for tobacco prevention.
- Cessation programs.
- Tobacco industry advertising.

SC Healthy Schools then partnered with SCDHEC and SCSBA to promote the adoption and implementation of the comprehensive model policy by hosting community roundtables in 2009 and 2010 for school board members, school district staff, regional health department staff, and representatives of local governments and nongovernmental organizations. During the roundtables, participants

- Received an analysis of their existing policies—showing which elements of the comprehensive policy were missing in their local districts.
- Learned successful strategies for adopting and implementing the policy.

With CDC DASH funding, SC Healthy Schools also employed a School Health Policy Coordinator to focus districts on policy promotion.

### Program/Activity Outcomes

At the time of the first roundtable, only 19 of the 85 SC districts had adopted the comprehensive tobacco-free schools model policy. After two events in 2009 and 2010, the number of districts adopting the comprehensive model policies increased to 30. An additional 19 districts have 100% tobacco-free campus policies, although they do not yet include all components of the model policy. SC plans to conduct additional roundtables in other regions of the state to encourage the remaining districts to adopt the comprehensive model policy.