

Communities Putting Prevention to Work



ST. LOUIS COUNTY, MISSOURI Tobacco Use Prevention

Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) is an initiative designed to make healthy living easier by promoting environmental changes at the local level. Through CPPW funding awarded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2010, a total of 50 communities are working to prevent obesity and tobacco use—the two leading preventable causes of death and disability.

“BY PUBLICLY ACKNOWLEDGING THAT PEOPLE WHO SMOKE ARE NOT THE BAD GUYS AND DO NEED OUR HELP, WE ARE NOW ABLE TO ENGAGE OUR COMMUNITY IN A POSITIVE WAY TO REDUCE TOBACCO USE AND EXPOSURE TO SECONDHAND SMOKE.”

— Dolores J. Gunn, MD, Director,
St. Louis County Department of Health

Community Overview

St. Louis County, Missouri, is tackling tobacco use throughout the community. In St. Louis County, which is home to 998,954 residents, the adult smoking rate is 15.3%. Missouri has the sixth-highest rate of lung cancers in the country, and only 13.3% of Missourians are protected by communitywide smoke-free-workplace policies. Additionally, St. Louis County's rate of asthma-related emergency room visits among children younger than 15 years of age is 52% higher than the state's rate. In addition to tobacco use prevention efforts aimed at St. Louis County's entire population, certain initiatives target high-risk groups.



Community Successes

If healthy options are not available, then healthy living is not possible. With the support of the *CPPW* initiative, St. Louis County has implemented a variety of changes throughout the community to make healthy living easier.

To decrease tobacco use, St. Louis County:

- Supported the adoption of comprehensive indoor smoke-free policies in the cities of Brentwood and Creve Coeur, protecting a total of 24,300 community members from secondhand smoke.
- Supported the implementation of tobacco-free campuses at area colleges and universities, including Washington University, Fontbonne University, the University of Missouri-St. Louis, Harris-Stowe University, and all five St. Louis Community College campuses. As a result, approximately 60,000 students and 34,000 faculty and staff members are no longer exposed to the dangers of secondhand smoke on campus.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



“I WAS SKEPTICAL AT FIRST, HAVING ALREADY TRIED THE PATCH AND THE GUM. ONE HUGE BENEFIT FROM THE CLASS BEING HELD AT WORK IS THAT WE CAN ALL HOLD EACH OTHER ACCOUNTABLE. THIS IS A VERY GOOD PROGRAM! I AM A QUITTER.”

— Jay, St. Louis County resident and smoking cessation program participant

Community Successes *(continued)*

- Provided a free smoking cessation program, including nicotine-replacement therapy, to employees at 40 work sites in the county.
- Assessed current tobacco use policies in all 23 public school districts and 67 private schools, and provided schools with customized toolkits for informing school officials of the tobacco control policies that meet the “gold standard,” as determined by a national advisory panel.

(The list above is a sample of all activities completed by the community.)

Let's Face It Campaign Empowers Residents to Live Smoke-free

St. Louis County is inspiring residents to cultivate a smoke-free culture. Through a large-scale public awareness and community engagement campaign, *Let's Face It*, the county is raising awareness of smoking cessation resources and empowering residents to spread the word about the benefits of living in a healthy, smoke-free community. The campaign was launched in January 2011 and has a special focus on youth, targeting them through schools, social media, and peer-to-peer outreach to prevent tobacco initiation. As part of the efforts to promote *Let's Face It* messages, the campaign partnered with the St. Louis Cardinals baseball and St. Louis Blues hockey teams. The partnerships include player appearances, in-stadium messaging, and television and radio commercials. Another main component of the campaign is the website www.letsfaceitstl.com, which receives more than 5,000 visitors each month. Over a seven-month period, the *Let's Face It* campaign garnered more than 120 million paid media impressions.

Leadership Team

The leadership team includes high-level community leaders from multiple sectors, who have the combined resources and capacity to make healthy living easier. Members of St. Louis County's leadership team are key agents for change in their community. The leadership team includes representatives from the following organizations:

- Center for Tobacco Policy Research, Washington University
- City of Clayton
- County Executive Office
- Health Advisory Board, St. Louis County
- Regional Health Commission
- St. Louis County

Additional Information

For more information, please visit www.stlouisco.com/doh.