



A few of our
SUCCESS STORIES

2018-2020

YOUTH EDUCATE THEIR PEERS ABOUT ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES

Setting: North Platte High School. Early spring semester, 2020.

Conflict: The use of electronic cigarettes has increased substantially among high school students in Lincoln County in the past few years. Lack of awareness of the negative effects of e-cigarette use has been identified as a factor, along with tactics of tobacco companies that appeal to youth, including the use of flavorings, and trendy e-cigarette devices.

Use of e-cigarettes any time in the previous 30 days by Lincoln County 12th graders increased from 21.5% of the reporting 12th graders in 2016 to 47.4% in 2018. That is according to the Nebraska Risk and Protective Factor Student Survey that is administered by University of Nebraska-Lincoln Bureau of Sociological Research during the fall semester on even numbered years. Use by 10th increased from 15.8% to 26.3% during that time period, and 30-day use by 8th graders increased from 7.5% to 13.9%.

Lincoln County Youth Leaders (LCYL), an organization of middle and high school students that conducts substance abuse prevention activities, wanted to do something to make a difference.

On Feb. 24, 2020 the Youth Leaders who were students at North Platte High School partnered with Tobacco Free Lincoln County to conduct an educational activity during the lunch periods at the school. They displayed posters and handed out brochures. They gave stickers and phone tech pockets with e-cigarette prevention messages. Calls to action on the materials were to visit relevant youth-oriented e-cigarette information web sites, and to text "DitchJuul" to the Truth Initiative's e-cigarette cessation service.

Outcome: The youth leaders reported that many of their peers looked at the materials and several took promotional items and educational brochures. Youth Leader Kirstyn Ablard walked around the lunch room, giving items to her peers. She reported that students were receptive and positive about receiving the information.

Relevance: The activity demonstrated that youth will listen to their peers and respond to factual information. The topic, e-cigarette awareness and cessation, is relevant and a need for this type of education and activism is apparent. The Youth Leaders, themselves, reported that they felt empowered to make a difference, by participating in the activity. Youth Leader Coordinator Wendi Stover said "LCYL was happy to assist in spreading the message about the harm of e-cigarettes. They look forward to the next time they can partner with Tobacco Free Lincoln County."

YOUTH LEADERS PROMOTE TOBACCO-FREE PARKS

Setting: North Platte City Parks, 2020.

Conflict:

The City of North Platte Parks Department has posted signs asking people not to use tobacco in the parks and trails. Sometimes people are still seen smoking in some areas.

Action:

Tobacco Free Lincoln County Coalition coordinated with Community Connections Youth Leaders. The result was that three middle and high school aged youth were voices for a radio advertisement, airing on three local stations, encouraging people to help to keep the parks and trails tobacco-free. Photographs of different areas of the park system were then added to the audio, resulting in a 30-second video clip that was displayed on the TFLC web page and Facebook page. This provided a no-cost way to add value to the radio announcement.

Outcome:

The youth who were involved in the project expressed satisfaction and likelihood that they will continue their leadership roles in tobacco awareness and prevention. Radio listeners and viewers of the online video became more aware and willing to comply with tobacco-free parks policies.

Relevance:

Many communities across Nebraska have adopted tobacco-free policies for their outdoor recreational areas. This is an example of an awareness campaign to contribute to the success of such policies.

WOUND CARE CLINIC HELPS PATIENTS UTILIZE THE QUITLINE

Setting: Great Plains Health, North Platte, Nebraska. 2019.

Conflict:

Dr. Schafer was experiencing frustration with some of his patients and wound healing. The patients were primarily diabetics and their wounds were surgical sites or wounds that developed due to poor circulation. He talked with patients about smoking cessation and explained the problems of smoking and healing in diabetic patients. He referred them back to their primary physician for cessation orders. However, not much happened with that approach.

Action:

Jill Miles, RN, Director of the wound care clinic, had Dr. Schafer and others meet and discuss the concerns. This included staff involved in respiratory therapy, pharmacy personnel and staff trained in cessation. They developed a plan. When patients came to wound care, staff talked with them about healing, smoking and diabetes. They talked about the cost of care, including hyperbaric oxygen therapy, which is about \$1,500 per treatment. They also talked about the dangers of failed healing, which can lead to amputation. They discussed smoking cessation with the assistance of the Nebraska Quitline. Once the patient agreed, staff stayed with them while the Quitline was contacted. Then the clinic gave the patient a few nicotine replacement patches to use while they were waiting for their supplies to arrive.

Miles developed a "Smoking Tracker". This keeps track of patient progress. The staff continues to be of support to all patients.

Outcome:

Patients expressed positive remarks about the experience. The patches and counseling were helping.

Relevance:

This program is in its infancy but the staff are seeing increased numbers of patients willing to try to quit using tobacco. Three or four patients are on the program and two or three have set quit dates.

TFLC and NP Housing Authority EDUCATE VISITORS to AUTUMN PARK

Setting: North Platte Housing Authority. October, 2018.

Conflict:

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has mandated that public housing throughout the country have smoke-free policies for building interiors and within 25 feet of the buildings. North Platte Housing Authority has adopted smoke-free policies for the entire campuses.

Workers coming onto the site that includes 25 four-plexes did not understand the policy and some were smoking on the property.

Action:

The housing authority director reached out to Tobacco Free Lincoln County for help in solving the problem. She wanted to send a positive message that workers were likely to understand and respect. TFLC worked with her to design and obtain 10 yard signs that say, "You are enjoying a smoke-free campus. Thank you for not smoking." The signs were placed at strategic locations throughout the property and have been met with acceptance by workers.

Outcome:

Regarding the signs, the housing authority director said, "They have been awesome!" Their placement "has helped with guest and vendors/contractors being aware they can't smoke on the property." The move also brought awareness to residents who said they did not know the policies had been fully implemented.

Relevance:

The housing authority director turned to Tobacco Free Lincoln County as a resource. She is committed to smoke-free policies and found a way to communicate the policy in a positive way to residents, visitors and workers.