

## **2011 Grantee and Contractors Meeting Counter-Marketing: The future of media relations and advertising in tobacco control**

### ***Example: Roseburg Parks Testimony Preparation***

#### **Tobacco-free Parks – Key Messages**

##### **Kids Learn from their Environments**

The vast majority of new smokers are children. The peak years for first trying tobacco is in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades, when kids are about 11 or 12 years old, with a considerable number starting even earlier.<sup>1</sup>

Tobacco use by kids is consistently higher in Douglas County than among kids statewide – 15 percent of 8<sup>th</sup> graders in Douglas County use tobacco, as compared to 9 percent statewide.<sup>2</sup>

Kids learn from their parents, their grandparents, their peers and from their environment. When our kids see adults smoking, they see it as a normal and acceptable behavior.

*A tobacco-free parks system will not only reinforce tobacco-free norms and attitudes, but will create an environment in which the healthy choice is the default choice for kids and adults.*

##### **Effects on Children's Health**

Our kids are the youngest casualties of tobacco use, and it begins before birth. In Douglas County, one in four (25%) of infants are born to women who use tobacco during pregnancy—two times the state rate of 12 percent.<sup>3</sup>

The consequences of tobacco use during pregnancy are well-documented—low birth weight, slowed growth and development, increased risk of Sudden Infant Death (SIDS), and other negative health outcomes.

Tobacco use during pregnancy has wide-ranging repercussions for schools. Children exposed to tobacco smoke are more likely to have an impaired ability to learn and suffer from Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and conduct disorders, respiratory problems, depression and the list goes on.

*A tobacco-free parks system will help break the grip that the tobacco industry has on our community and will demonstrate the City's commitment the health of our kids and our entire community.*

##### **Shared School/Parks Environments**

A tobacco-free parks policy will reinforce Oregon's comprehensive tobacco-free policy – which prohibits all forms of tobacco use on school properties and at all school sponsored events.

Our students use City of Roseburg parks year-round for tennis, cross country, softball, baseball, and for various educational projects.

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<sup>1</sup> Tobacco-Free Kids, How Schools Can Help Students Stay Tobacco-Free, 2009

<sup>2</sup> Oregon Tobacco Facts, 2009

<sup>3</sup> Data from 4Ps Project to assess substance use during pregnancy show that the rate of use is even higher (Douglas County Perinatal Task Force project in collaboration with Dr. Ira Chasnoff, University of Chicago, Children's Research Triangle)

*The City of Roseburg and Roseburg Public Schools are working to increase recreational opportunities for our kids and our community. It makes sense to be proactive in ensuring a safe, healthy and tobacco-free parks and open spaces for kids and families.*