



## ENGAGING YOUTH

# SMOKEFREE SPACES

Activist Toolkit



# SMOKEFREE SPACES

Activist Toolkit

FACTS Ideas Action

**TRY** STEP BY STEP ACTIVITIES

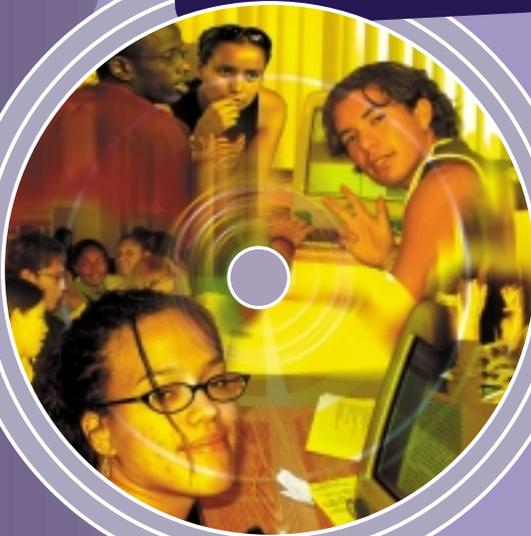
## Step 1: Recruit team

Recruit a team of students to do the work. Find adult allies to help.



## Step 2: Plan survey

Develop your questionnaire. Decide how you will conduct the survey: which students to target and how the survey will be delivered.



## Step 3: Conduct Survey

Distribute survey, promote its importance and then collect them once completed.



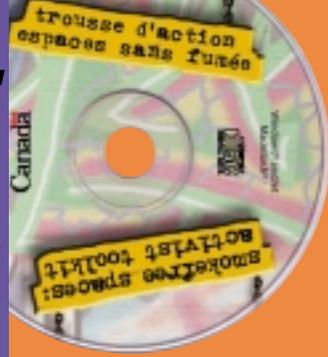
## Step 4: Publicize your findings

Share your findings with students, school staff, parents and community.

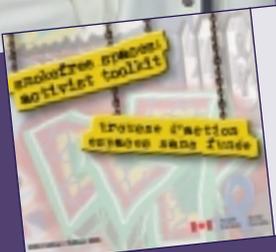


## ADVOCATE 4 CHANGE

Do you want to live in a smokefree world or make the world a healthier place for all? The *Smokefree Spaces Activist Toolkit* provides a framework for those who want to create positive change. The CD-ROM contains facts about second hand smoke, steps you can take to advocate for change and resources that will help. Get the free printed *Facilitator's Guide* as well.



GET THE CD



To order your own free **Smokefree Spaces Activist Toolkit** and **Facilitator's Guide**:  
**GO TO**  
[www.tgmag.ca/smokefree](http://www.tgmag.ca/smokefree)

# What's inside



## INTRODUCTION

1

Officially your school or workplace may now be smokefree, but it took a generation of activists to make not smoking in these public places the norm.

At a recent Forum of young people from across Canada, the attending youth identified that the most powerful reason for them not to smoke was not the impact of smoking upon themselves, but the impact of their smoking on others, particularly younger siblings and cousins who looked up to them as role models.

2

Many homes, cars, work spaces, and places of entertainment are not smokefree, and children grow up exposed to second-hand smoke, which can cause lower birth weights for children of smoking mothers, increased asthma, ear infections, coughs and colds, allergies and has even been linked to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

3

Under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, children have a right to protection from harm, a right to information and education, and a right to participate in decision-making around issues that affect them.

These are compelling reasons to provide positive tools for children and youth to engage in advocating and creating smokefree environments in all aspects of their lives.

4

This brochure is designed to

1) provide you with information and incentive to order your free *Smokefree Spaces Activist Toolkit* (a CD-ROM and *Facilitator's Guide* from [www.tgmag.ca/smokefree](http://www.tgmag.ca/smokefree))

2) Provide you with samples of posters you can order to promote the *Smokefree Spaces Activist Toolkit* and message.

3) Provide you with research and tips on the value of engaging youth in participatory activist activities, from research to advocacy to volunteering.

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6

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## ORDER POSTERS FOR THE SMOKEFREE SPACES ACTIVIST TOOLKIT

To order promotional posters for the *Smokefree Spaces Activist Toolkit* go to [www.tgmag.ca/smokefree](http://www.tgmag.ca/smokefree). Pick your favourite poster and we'll send it along with the CD-ROM and *Facilitator's Guide*.



#1



#2



#3



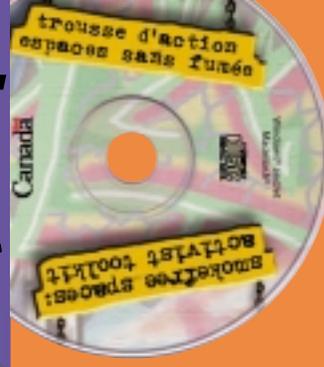
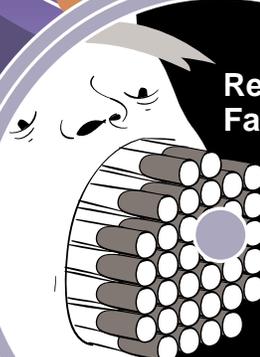
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# SMOKEFREE SPACES

## Activist Toolkit

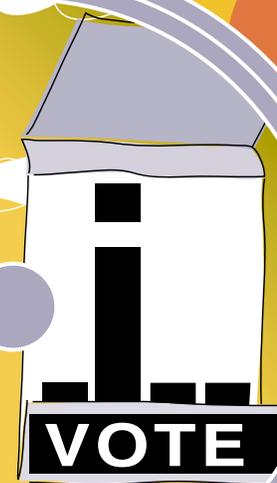
### IN SCHOOL

# GET THE CD

**Research Facts**

A non-smoker in a smoky room, such as a bar, inhales the equivalent of 35 cigarettes an hour.



**Design a Poster**

Have students create a poster that will promote smokefree spaces and give them the opportunity to express their ideas and benefit their community.

**VOTE**

**FOR SMOKEFREE**

Get your Smokefree Spaces: activist toolkit FREE at [www.tsmag.ca](http://www.tsmag.ca)



### AT WORK



**Create a contest**

Find local business sponsors and involve your peers in a contest to educate others.

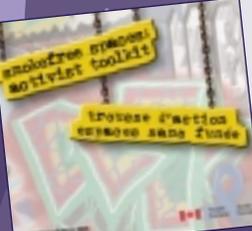
### AT HOME



**Plan a Parent Night**

Educate parents with the information you have gathered. Perhaps run your contest during Parents Night.

**IN YOUR COMMUNITY**

To order your own free **Smokefree Spaces Activist Toolkit and Facilitator's Guide:**

**GO TO**

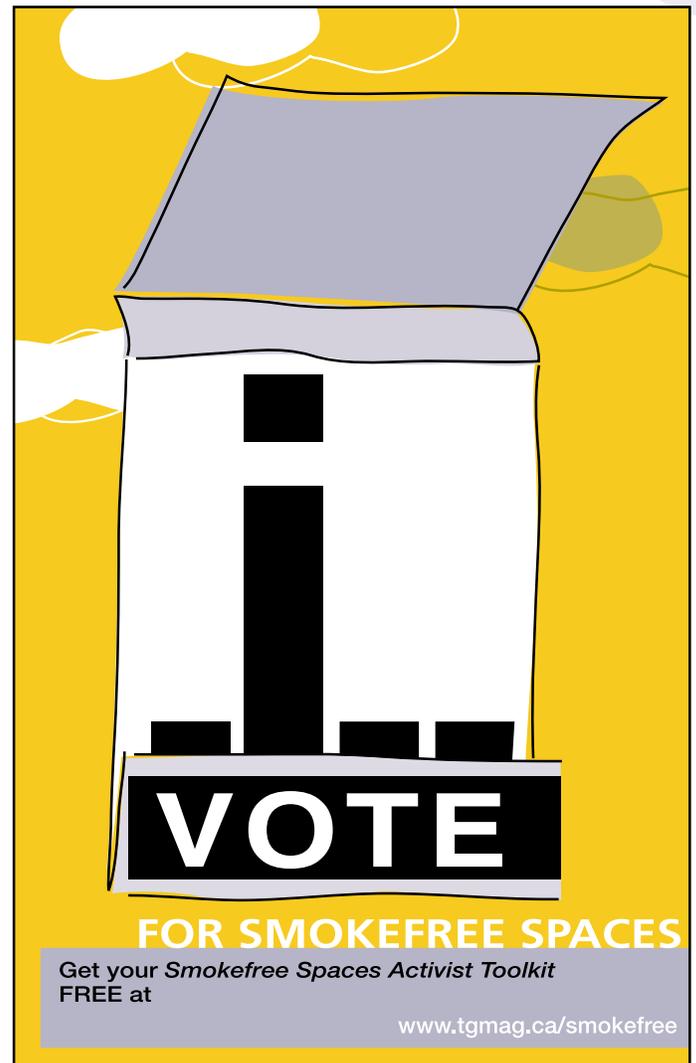
[www.tsmag.ca/smokefree](http://www.tsmag.ca/smokefree)



## Looking for **EDGY** ways to engage your students?

INVOLVE THEM IN DECISIONS THAT AFFECT THEIR LIVES

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



The youth advisory team for this project said this poster idea was the best – their favourite!! However, adult members of the team were concerned that it might offend some people and create the wrong message. — so the poster became this ...



Research suggests that effectively engaging young people in volunteer activities to improve their communities and schools has significant benefits:

Decreased alcohol, marijuana and hard drug use

Lower rates of school failure and drop-out, of sexual activity and pregnancy in girls, of anti-social and criminal behaviours, and lower rates of depression.

**AN IDEA:** Vice Principals often discipline students with detentions who might benefit more from involvement in positive activities — such as those outlined in the *Smokefree Spaces Activist Toolkit*. Try assigning negative leaders a project with the *Smokefree Spaces Activist Toolkit* as a chance to define more positive roles for themselves at school and in their community.



# Youth Engagement: action reduces risk

In terms of documented health benefits, young people who are involved in community activities and extracurricular activities, who are doing well in school, and who are connected to caring adults and role models lead healthier lives and are less likely to engage in risky behaviors such as abuse of drugs and alcohol, getting pregnant, smoking tobacco, and breaking the law. These assets of youth protect them from harm. The more of these assets, such as doing well in school or being involved in community organizations, the less the risk, but each asset even alone seems to help prevent risky behavior.

Research in the field of youth engagement is rapidly expanding, and gaps, questions, further areas of research are rapidly being identified.

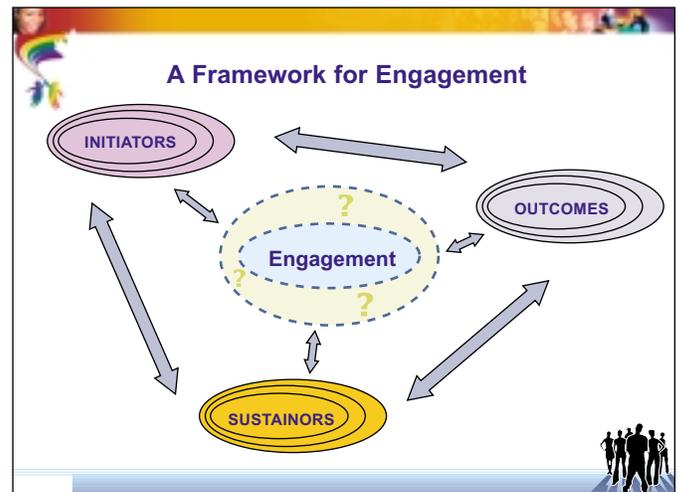
## EFFECTIVE PRACTICES IDENTIFIED BY RESEARCH LITERATURE.

- 1) Peer-based approaches with peers who are knowledgeable about the issue (life experience).
- 2) Positive activities for youth to do, holistic and values-based approaches.
- 3) Knowledge, facts, access to information and services in youth-positive ways with skill-building and motivational components are effective practices.
- 4) Creating leadership and decision-making roles for youth is an effective practice.
- 5) Positive involvement with support, resources, and positive relationships with adults and institutions (schools, community centres, health services) is an effective and protective practice.

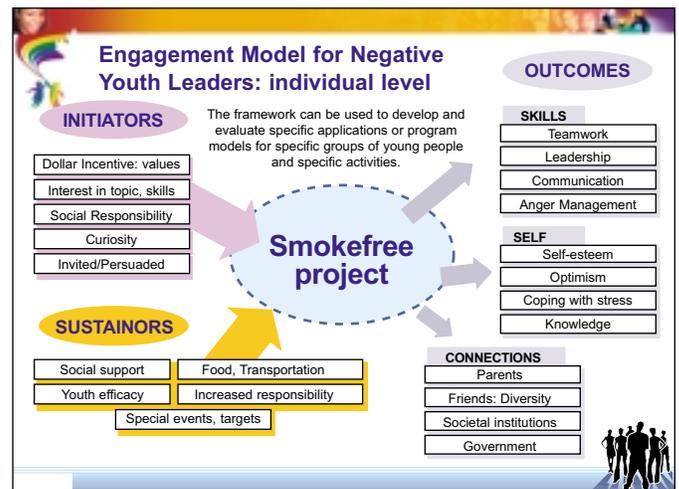
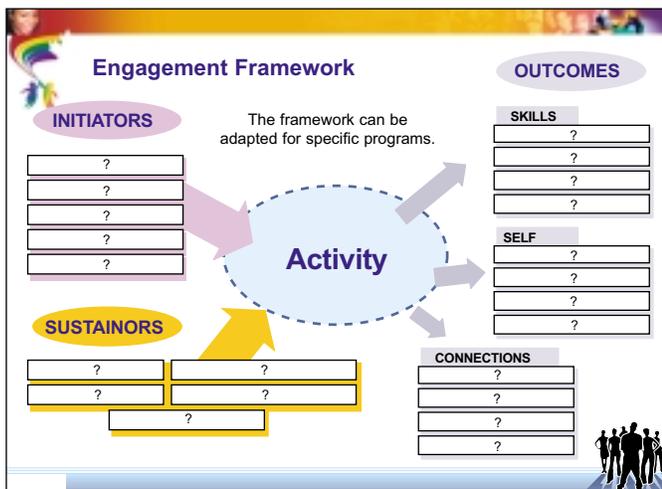
## A Way of Looking at Engagement

If we think of any activity, good or bad, we can think about the things or factors that initiate or begin the activity. Next we can look at what will keep us interested and working on following up on the activity; what will sustain our action and positive behaviour? Then finally, we can look at what will be the results of our engagement? What will be the outcomes? Will our skills improve, will we be changed, will our connections with others improve? This framework is based upon work done by the Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement.<sup>1</sup>

In the framework, we recognize three levels of influence, and so there are three layers in our diagram and three levels of factors: individual, social (the individual's social influences such as family and friends), and system (the systems in which the individual goes to school, works, volunteers, and lives).



Interestingly, the relationship between all those things that initiate and sustain engagement are stronger and more significant than the direct relationship between the activity and the results, at each level. This supports the thinking that it's not about "what" the specific engagement activity is, it is about how the engagement is done, the environment in which it is done, and who is there supporting it.

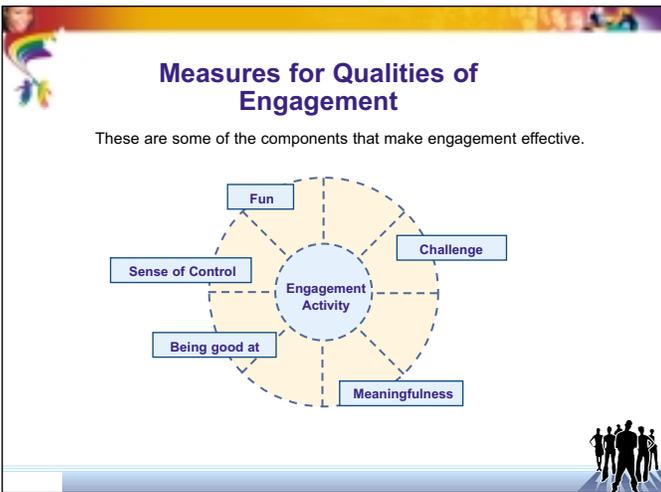


1. Framework originally developed by Dr. Mark Pancer of Wilfrid Laurier University, and modified by Dr. Linda Rose-Krasnor and Michael Busseri of Brock University, and Stoney McCart, Director of the Centre and The Students Commission.

References: The Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement website contains a variety of literature reviews, an expanded version of the framework, and a series of papers on youth engagement. See [www.engagementcentre.ca](http://www.engagementcentre.ca). The Centre is a consortium of academics, youth organizations and youth working in the area of youth participation, engagement and empowerment.

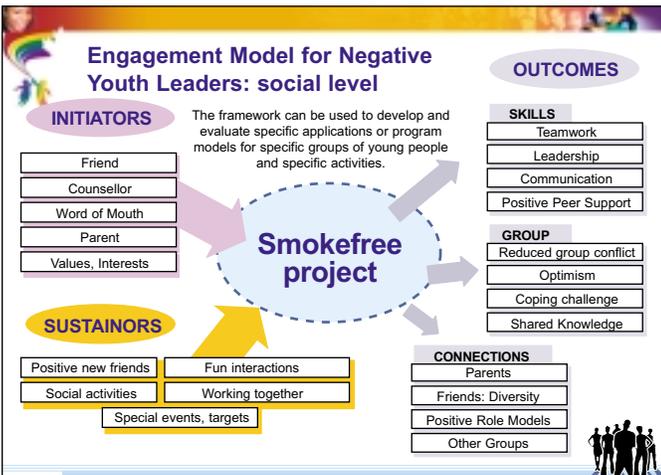
## Sustaining Factors

Once you start an activity, several things become important to keeping you involved or sustaining your engagement. The following qualities are frequently reported in the research.

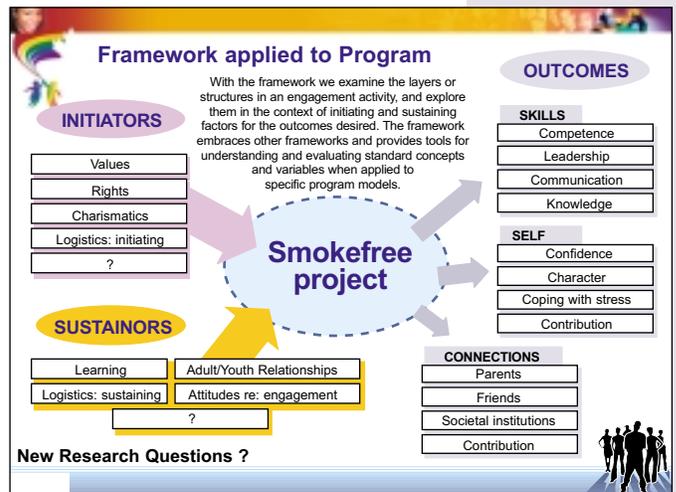
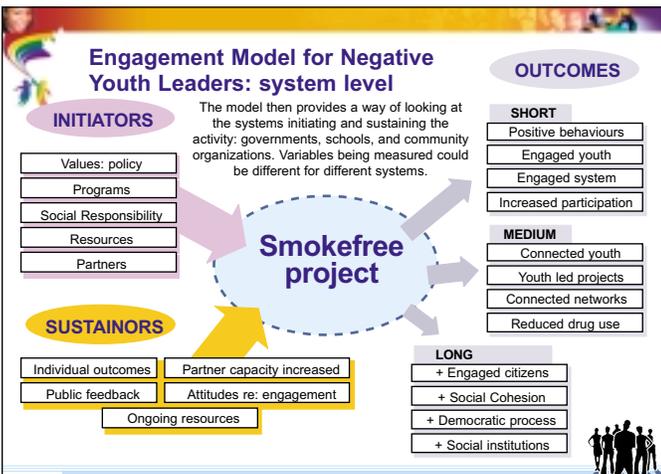


Youth are learning something and mastering skills, while gaining a sense of control, and experiencing success. Programs that involve youth in planning, decision-making, as well as running the program, will score higher on their meaningfulness and effectiveness.

When it comes to what sustains the individual, the research indicates that the factors include logistical support and strong social support.



Logistical support includes transportation, food at events and providing a structure of roles which allow for increased responsibility as one participates.



## Outcomes and Components

The research is showing that generally "engagement" in itself is an effective harm prevention and reduction strategy, associated with a number of positive outcomes for individuals, family and friends, and society's institutions.

Debra J. Holden in her work looking at a large scale tobacco prevention program in five US states found that the roles youth played were more important than the quantity of time they spend in the program. "Our findings indicate that youths can benefit from local participation in tobacco control efforts. If their roles are established so that they can hold leadership positions and be active in their participation (i.e., openly discuss issues in group meetings, encourage others to participate, take responsibility for actions to be completed), youths can obtain attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and skills that will help them feel more empowered as community change agents."

The National Research Council and Institute of Medicine in the United States (J.S. Eccles and J.S. Gootman) identifies these key ingredients of positive youth development programs:

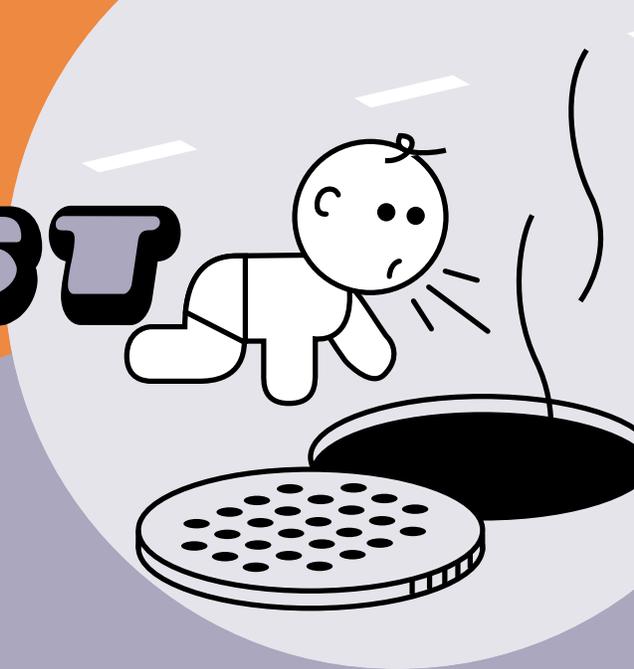
- Supportive relationships: warmth, closeness, caring
- Physical and psychological safety
- Appropriate structure: boundaries, expectations, consistency, adult supervision
- Opportunities for belonging
- Positive social norms
- Support for efficacy and mattering
- Opportunity for skill building
- Integration of family, school and community efforts

When we apply the Engagement Framework, we can begin to think of how these elements serve as both initiators and sustainors of the activity. The International Youth Foundation in a World Bank report identified five characteristics of a well-developed youth: confidence, character, connection, competence, and contribution. The result that we are all aiming for is a well-connected youth, because connection to family, friends, and social institutions such as schools, community organizations and government is shown to be a very strong protective factor. Well-connected youth are confident in their skill sets and ability to manage themselves. They have character, a sense of themselves and what they value. They are competent to the best of their ability in a number of areas: emotionally, physically, socially, intellectually, culturally, and financially. They feel like they matter; they know that they can contribute to friends, family and society and they do so. They are engaged.

The *Smokefree Spaces Activist Toolkit* contains step-by-step activities for youth to engage in positive social change, including guidelines on conducting research on the issue, creating poster and media campaigns, and hosting educational events.

# BE AN ACTIVIST

RAISE A STINK



SAFE  
SPACES



ARE  
SMOKEFREE SPACES

[www.tgmag.ca/smokefree](http://www.tgmag.ca/smokefree)

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