

## No Thanks Campaign

# Q & A

### Questions & Answers about the No Thanks campaign

1. What is the *No Thanks* campaign?
2. Who is organizing the campaign?
3. What does the campaign want to accomplish?
4. What is the reason for the campaign?
5. What does this have to do with our organization?
6. What's in it for my organization?
7. Who else is doing this?
8. Why now?
9. Does anyone even get tobacco money?
10. It is already our practice to not take tobacco funds, so why bother with this?
11. How could charitable giving by tobacco companies hurt anyone? They're just trying to help.
12. If we do this wouldn't we alienate smokers and especially current donors who smoke? Then we would lose out twice.
13. What companies are part of the tobacco industry?
14. Does *No Thanks* require that I reject money from Kraft and other subsidiaries?
15. Does *No Thanks* require that I join Tobacco Free Tompkins?
16. What is our next step?
17. Who should we contact?

### **1. What is the *No Thanks* campaign?**

*No Thanks* is a campaign to call attention to how tobacco industry sponsorships and charitable funding hurts communities on a scale that far outweighs any potential benefit, and to urge community non-profits to take a stand against tobacco money.

### **2. Who is organizing the campaign?**

*No Thanks* is organized by T-Free: Tobacco Free Tompkins, a partnership of organizations and community members dedicated to reducing the burden of tobacco use in our community through:

- reducing the social acceptance of tobacco,
- reducing exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke, and
- increasing access to cessation services.

The partnership is staffed and coordinated by the Tompkins County Health Department (TCHD) and funded as a Community Partner by the New York State Department of Health Tobacco Control Program (TCP.)

### **3. What does the campaign want to accomplish?**

The campaign is asking nonprofits to adopt a policy stating they will not accept any funding or charitable donations — cash or in-kind — from the tobacco industry.

### **4. What is the reason for the campaign?**

Every year, tobacco use is responsible for over \$36 million in health care and lost productivity costs in Tompkins County, and over 24,000 deaths in NYS. In 2004, Tompkins County spent an estimated \$2.7 million on Medicaid related to tobacco use.

Ninety percent of current smokers started before age 18 and everyday over 4,000 kids nationwide try cigarettes for the first time; half become regular smokers. About one third of all youth smokers will die prematurely from smoking-related disease. Among NYS adults who smoke everyday, 58 percent have tried to quit.

Tobacco use is still widely recognized as socially acceptable - part of the "social norm" - making it is easier for kids and young adults to start smoking and harder for current smokers to quit. Tobacco industry charity represents these current and future tobacco sales; profits from sales to committed tobacco users; sales to users who want to quit and sales to minors and first-time users.

A goal of the NYS Tobacco Control Program (TCP) is "To decrease the social acceptance of tobacco use." A nonprofit that accepts tobacco industry charity is implicitly sanctioning tobacco use and supporting it as socially acceptable without the option of differentiating to whom acceptance is given.

### **5. What does this have to do with our organization?**

Many non-profits have a mission which includes a commitment to the social and economic strength of both the community as a whole, and/or of special populations within the community. Tobacco use depletes both social and economic health by causing disability from chronic disease, lost productivity in the workplace, and the loss of millions of dollars in health care and Medicaid costs.

Tompkins County pays an estimated \$2.7 million in annual Medicaid charges due to smoking related illness. Overall, medical and lost productivity costs caused by smoking top an estimated \$36 million annually in Tompkins County. These estimates are based on current data from the NYSDOH, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC,) the U.S. Census Bureau and Tobacco Free Tompkins.

The 1998 Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) resulted from a court's ruling of tobacco industry responsibility for these costs.

## **6. What's in it for my organization?**

First and foremost, a policy to refuse all tobacco funds will support a commitment to your mission in all aspects of organizational conduct. In the long run this commitment can foster greater respect within the community and among like organizations in other communities. In addition, T-Free: TFT plans to publicize the *No Thanks* campaign through press releases and paid media. Participating organizations can be part of that publicity if they so choose.

## **7. Who else is doing this?**

Family & Children's Services of Ithaca has joined the *No Thanks* campaign by adopting a policy to not accept tobacco industry funding .

Also, while this initiative is just getting underway in Tompkins County, organizations across the state and across the country are establishing policies to refuse tobacco industry donations. Close to home, Community Partners in Cortland, Herkimer and Oneida County's are working with local organizations to declare tobacco money out-of-bounds.

In Broome County, The Spiedie Fest, Broome County YMCA and YWCA, Southern Tier AIDS Program, Discovery Center of the Southern Tier, Opportunities for Broome/Headstart, Boys and Girls Clubs of Binghamton and of Western Broome, and Mothers & Babies Perinatal Network, plus Tioga County Council on the Arts, have all adopted policies to not accept tobacco industry funding.

## **8. Why now?**

The NYS Tobacco Control Program (TCP) - as part of their mission to reduce morbidity and mortality and alleviate the social and economic burden caused by tobacco use in New York State - has launched a statewide initiative to make communities aware of the ways in which tobacco use permeates society. Discussing tobacco industry donations at the local level is an active part of that initiative.

## **9. Does anyone even get tobacco money?**

Some of the most prominent recipients of tobacco industry donations are NYC-based arts organizations, including Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Jazz at Lincoln Center, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, Dance Theatre of Harlem and the Museum of Modern Art.

Closer to home, in 2004 Altria - parent company of Marlboro maker Philip Morris - gave \$150,000 to Visiting Nurse Service of Rochester and Monroe County, gave \$23,400 to Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cayuga County, and gave \$30,000 to Vera House Inc. in Syracuse. In 2003 Altria gave \$25,000 to the National Audubon

Society in Albany, and gave \$15,000 to Garth Fagan Dance of Rochester in each of 2003 and 2004.

**10. It is already our practice to not take tobacco funds, so why bother with this?**

The TCP statewide initiative and the local *No Thanks* campaign are similar to other efforts to build momentum for change. The act of setting policy affirms your board's commitment to No Tobacco Charity, and helps build a community consensus.

**11. How could charitable giving by tobacco companies hurt anyone? They're just trying to help.**

Sponsorships and charity is an increasingly important marketing tool for tobacco. The 1998 Master (Multistate) Settlement Agreement (MSA) between states and tobacco companies put a stop to many of the industry's most notorious and aggressive marketing tactics. Yet, domestic cigarette marketing and promotion expenditures still reached a record \$15.1 billion in 2003. For the tobacco industry, community giving is a quiet — and critical — way to get the company name and products out in front of target markets, to begin to reverse the widely negative public image of the industry, and to build political support for their causes among community leaders.

**12. If we do this wouldn't we alienate smokers and especially current donors who smoke? Then we would lose out twice.**

The vast majority - over 80 percent - of adults in Tompkins County do not smoke or use any tobacco. (In fact, there are more former smokers in Tompkins County than there are current smokers.)

Similarly, over 80 percent of Tompkins County adults either favor or have no opinion about the 2003 Clean Indoor Air Act, which banned smoking in all workplaces including bars and restaurants. Fifty percent strongly favor the law.

Statewide, among those adults who smoke everyday, 58 percent have tried to quit.

These numbers suggest that you may be as likely to gain the respect of a former smoker, a smoker who wants to quit, or someone who strongly favors smokefree air as you are to lose the respect of a committed smoker. Ultimately however, individuals are most likely to base their relationship with an organization on shared values and the work the organization does in the community. The organization's board will consider its support for *No Thanks* using the same criteria.

**13. What companies are part of the tobacco industry?**

For the purposes of our *No Thanks* campaign, the “Tobacco Industry” includes those businesses and corporations engaged in the production, manufacture, importation, packaging or primary marketing and distribution of tobacco products. This includes, but is not limited to, tobacco product manufacturers Altria, Philip Morris, R.J.

Reynolds, Sante Fe Natural Tobacco Co., Lorillard, Liggett and U.S. Smokeless Tobacco (UST.)

Some organizations or agencies may also chose to recognize subsidiary companies and corporations as part of the tobacco industry. Companies and brand names which are owned by the product manufacturers' parent corporations include Kraft Foods, CNA Financial, Loews Hotels (*not Lowes Home Improvement or Loews Movie Theaters*), Bulova watches, and Chateau Ste. Michelle and Columbia Crest wines. The T-Free web site has additional information about brands affiliated with the tobacco industry. (Visit [www.tompkins-co.org/wellness/tobaccofree/asp/brands.htm](http://www.tompkins-co.org/wellness/tobaccofree/asp/brands.htm).)

**14. Does *No Thanks* require that I reject money from Kraft and other subsidiaries?**

No. The suggested policy does not include Kraft Foods as part of the tobacco industry. Your organization may decide to define the tobacco industry in a more limited way, or more broadly.

The *No Thanks* campaign is one path toward building a consensus that our community will be richer when tobacco is not casually accepted as part of the social landscape. Any policy that limits tobacco industry access to and influence on our community is an important step along that path.

**15. Does *No Thanks* require that I join Tobacco Free Tompkins?**

No. Though all organizations and individuals with an interest in T-Free's goals are invited to join, the *No Thanks* campaign is separate. The *No Thanks* campaign is only asking organizations to take a stand against tobacco industry marketing through charitable giving.

**16. What is our next step?**

T-Free has prepared a sample policy against accepting money from the tobacco industry. Members of your board may review the sample document and, based on the information in this Q&A and discussions among those with a role in policy decisions, you may adopt the sample policy as is or make changes before voting on the policy. Additional resources and references will be provided upon request.

**17. Who should we contact?**

Please contact Ted Schiele at the TCHD: call 274-6712 or email [tschiele@tompkins-co.org](mailto:tschiele@tompkins-co.org). The T-Free web site is [www.tompkins-co.org/wellness/tobaccofree/](http://www.tompkins-co.org/wellness/tobaccofree/)