

The Phase Model: Teaching Skills Necessary for Enacting Strong Local Tobacco Control Policies in a Variety of Social and Political Environments

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>BACKGROUND

A comprehensive approach to change social norms is more effective in reducing tobacco use than focusing on individual smoking behavior. A primary avenue for achieving social norm change is through enactment of strong tobacco control policies.

>OBJECTIVE

A key finding in Reducing Tobacco Use: A Report of the Surgeon General (2000) is that "...recent lack of progress in tobacco control is attributable more to the failure to implement proven strategies than it is to lack of knowledge about what to do."

The objectives of this presentation is to: 1) demonstrate a practical and easy to implement approach for enacting strong local tobacco control policies that requires advocates to develop an understanding of their community and a base of support before taking action and 2) train community-based organizations (CBOs) in implementing this approach.

>METHODS

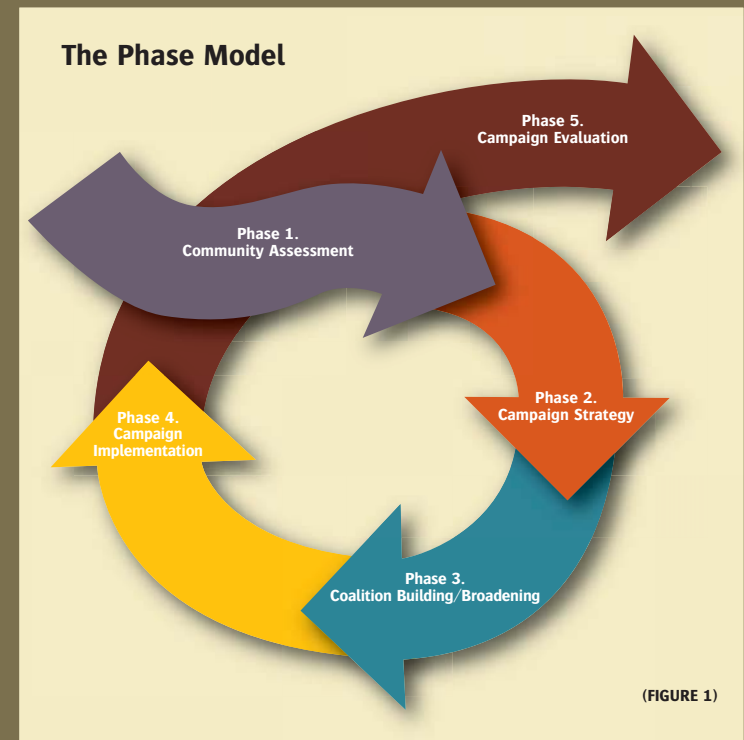
The Los Angeles County Tobacco Control and Prevention Program (TCPP), in collaboration with the Center for Tobacco Policy and Organization (CTPO), developed a Phase Model campaign approach to pass tobacco policies in dramatically different social and political environments within Los Angeles County.

The recognition that most successful policy campaigns go through similar phases is fundamental to the Phase Model approach. Activities in each phase lay the foundation for the success of the next phase(s) (FIGURE 1). The five phases are: 1) Community Assessment — investigate the public health and political environment to identify issues that will influence local policy makers; 2) Campaign Strategy — develop a blueprint or roadmap to organize the campaign and build the power necessary to influence local policy makers; 3) Coalition Building/Broadening — engage a diverse group of community stakeholders to ensure the needed leadership and skills are available to achieve the policy goals; 4) Campaign Implementation — implement activities designed to influence local policy makers and 5) Campaign Evaluation — determine effectiveness of campaign and understand its strengths and weaknesses so refinements can be made and future efforts can be optimized.

In July 2005, TCPP funded thirteen CBOs to utilize the Phase Model in the following policy categories: tobacco retail licensing, smoke-free outdoor areas and smoke-free housing. The CBOs received Phase Model training and technical assistance from TCPP and CTPO such as developing strategies to influence policy makers and to recruit and maintain a local coalition.

>RESULTS/CONCLUSIONS

All 13 CBOs completed the first three phases suggesting that the Phase Model can be easily put into practice and applied to a range of tobacco control policies. TCPP and CTPO will continue to provide additional training and technical assistance on phases 4 and 5. Future evaluation efforts will assess if the Phase Model facilitated the adoption of strong tobacco policies.



(FIGURE 1)

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

—Margaret Mead