

DISCUSSION PAPER

The youth program and its individual parts support The Institute's objective of discouraging unfair and counterproductive federal, state and local restrictions on cigarette advertising, by:

- o Providing on-going and persuasive evidence that the industry is actively discouraging youth smoking and independent verification that the industry's efforts are valid.
- o Reinforcing the belief that peer pressure -- not advertising -- is the cause of youth smoking.
- o Seizing the political center and forcing the anti-smokers to an extreme (as happened when the antis attacked the industry at the time of the launch.)

The strategy is fairly simple:

1. Heavily promote industry opposition to youth smoking.
2. Align industry with broader, more sophisticated view of the problem, i.e. parental inability to offset peer pressure.
3. Work with and through credible child welfare professionals and educators to tackle the "problem."
4. Bait anti-tobacco forces to criticize industry efforts. Focus media attention on antis' extremism. Anticipate and blunt antis' strongest points.
5. Establish the sense of a growing, well-accepted program by encouraging a proliferation of small, local projects; and appropriate co-ventures with other TI allies. Avoid dependency on any one organization.

Tactically, the program rests on two pillars:

Promotional -- for positioning purposes.

1. Broad-based advertising -- whether it offers the booklet or simply outlines the industry's five part program -- has the important effect of making the public aware that the industry says it is trying to do the right thing.

2. Third party communications adds the message that knowledgeable experts agree that the industry is doing the right things.
 - a) Jolly Ann Davidson's media tours provide a limited endorsement.
 - b) A Consortium "speakers bureau" will increase the effect.
3. Contingency planning helps us anticipate and counter anti's claims. For example, TI might conduct its own "sting" operation to demonstrate (a) that "it took us 25 "stings" to find our first "It's the Law" violation and (b) that the industry is attempting to enforce its own code.

Program -- to add substance to the claims.

1. The booklet series and spin-offs have been well accepted by educators and other experts. The large quantities distributed add to the credibility of this project.
2. The consortium provides a means by which experts can advise the Institute on how to refine and build upon existing approaches.

The Institute must remain fairly responsive to this group since its members will be asked to verify industry commitment to the goal of discouraging youth smoking. (In this way, the consortium is similar to the labor-management committee -- their "seals of approval" put others more at ease.)

3. Individual projects (whether implemented by consortium members or others) will be the way we establish working relationships where we need them. So long as projects support program strategies, it matters more who is doing them and where.

Projects may include:

- a) Production of materials, e.g., booklet aimed at low income families.
- b) Establishment of services, e.g., a program to help new Asian families deal with parent-child communication in the US culture.
- c) Development of a new approach, e.g., encouraging parents and children to work together on a community project.

- d) Training professionals to better help parents.
- e) Evaluations of other projects. This is important for two reasons: (1) we need continuing validation of our approach if we are to overcome the antis' claims that the industry efforts are mere PR stunts; and (2) educators "comfort levels." Educators routinely evaluate their programs and expect others to do so.

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