

## Indiana Implementation of Project SHOUT

### Background:

Smoking is the single most preventable cause of disease and death in the United States. 80% of smokers initiated their addiction before the age of 18 and most began using tobacco when they were 14 to 15 years old. According to 1999 data from the National Youth Tobacco Survey, 29.3% of middle school students and 63.5% of high school students reported ever smoking. Of the adolescents that continue to smoke, half will die prematurely. Each day, more than 6,000 young people try a cigarette and nearly 3,000 become regular smokers. The industry's advertising and promotion campaigns often target these young people. The Surgeon General's report states that there have been rapid increases in smoking by minority teenagers. Cigarette smoking among African-American teens has increased 80% over 6 years, which is 3 times the proportion of white teens.

Minority communities throughout the State called upon the Indiana Minority Health Coalition, Inc. (IMHC) to take a proactive role in addressing the aforementioned tobacco-related concerns. In response to the issues presented by the minority community, the IMHC identified, modified, and piloted Project SHOUT (Students Helping Others Understand Tobacco), a tobacco intervention curriculum targeting 5<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> grade students. IMHC modified the curriculum so that it is more culturally appropriate in reaching African American adolescent youth 11-15 years old (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades).

### Project SHOUT Indiana:

**Some of the modifications included:** utilizing and training indigenous members of the community to provide education and information to program participants; discussing and addressing issues that are faced by African American adolescents; conducting session within the minority community; having participants develop and design racially, ethnically, and culturally appropriate anti-tobacco messages that will be displayed on their web site.

The curriculum was implemented for one year to determine program impact and effectiveness within African American communities statewide. **The pilot project objectives were** as follows:

- Provide a total of 2,889 hours of smoking prevention education using the SHOUT program curriculum sponsored by the National Cancer Institute and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (two ninety minute workshops were provided each week)
- Modify the curriculum to incorporate the cultural nuances of being a minority in America today
- Serve a minimum of 700 unduplicated youth
- Teach strategies that assist participants in resisting peer pressure. These strategies should be culturally appropriate and reflect the realities that minority youth face on a daily basis.
- Increase awareness of the real messages in cigarette smokeless tobacco advertising and how that can affect the participants' behavior.
- Teach the effects of tobacco use on the human body

### Implementation:

Project SHOUT was implemented in 5 Indiana counties (Marion, Lake, Floyd, Clark, and Harrison) under the direction of the Indiana Minority Health Coalition, the Indiana Black Expo, and local Minority Health Coalitions in each of the 5 counties.

### Findings:

- Youth were asked if they have ever smoked a cigarette, marijuana or a Black & Mild. Of the youth responding (N=386), 22.8% (N=88) said that they had smoked a cigarette and 7% (N=27) said they had smoked marijuana.
- When asked if a parent, or other relative, friend or someone else had ever offered them a cigarette, marijuana or Black & Mild, more than 20% of the youth responded that a friend or someone else had offered them a cigarette, while less than 10% of the youth stated that a parent or other relative had offered them a cigarette.
- At least 19% of the youth responded that a friend or someone else had offered them marijuana while less than 6% of the youth stated that a parent or other relative had offered them marijuana.
- Approximately 18% of the youth responded that a friend or someone else had offered them a Black & Mild, while less than 6% of the youth stated that a parent or other relative had offered them a Black & Mild.
- More than 50% of the youth felt that their parents and friends would not like it if they found out they were smoking.
- When asked which brand of cigarettes they had recently seen on a billboard or magazine, Newport was the most frequently mentioned brand (23.1%) with Camel as the second most frequently mentioned brand (17.6%)
- When asked the name of the cigarette brand was featured in an advertisement that attracted their attention, the Newport brand was mentioned most often (16.3%) with Camel as the second more frequently mentioned brand (14%).