.Youth Leadership Institute

The **Youth Leadership Institute** creates communities where young people and their adult allies work together to create positive social change. YLI designs and implements community-based programs that provide youth with leadership skills in the areas of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse prevention, philanthropy, and civic engagement. YLI creates curricula and training programs that advance social change efforts and promote best practices in the field of youth development.

The Tobacco Use Reduction Force (TURF) project is YLI's prevention youth council whose main goal is developing a land-use policy that would limit the number of tobacco retailers and reduce youth smoking citywide in San Francisco.

THE PROBLEM

There is an over-concentration of retail outlets selling tobacco in many San Francisco neighborhoods, creating a major public health concern.[1] Citywide, over 70 percent of tobacco outlets are within 1000 feet of schools. In particular, districts with higher proportions of low-income residents and communities of color, in particular African American and Latino, are more likely to have a higher number of tobacco retail outlets than are more affluent neighborhoods. Youth that lives in neighborhoods with high concentrations of retail outlets are not only disproportionately exposed to tobacco products and have greater access to these products, but are also more likely to view tobacco use as a norm. Studies show a strong correlation between higher exposure to stores that sell tobacco and higher smoking rates and other tobacco related harms.

WHAT THE ADVOCATES WERE TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH

TURF youth advocates set two goals for this project: 1) to pass a policy that reduces the number of tobacco retailers in San Francisco by amending the San Francisco Health Code (Article 19H), and 2) to create a formula that will create an equal number of permits in all SF Districts and reduce the disproportionate level of exposure to tobacco in communities with a high percent of youth, communities of color, and low-income residents.

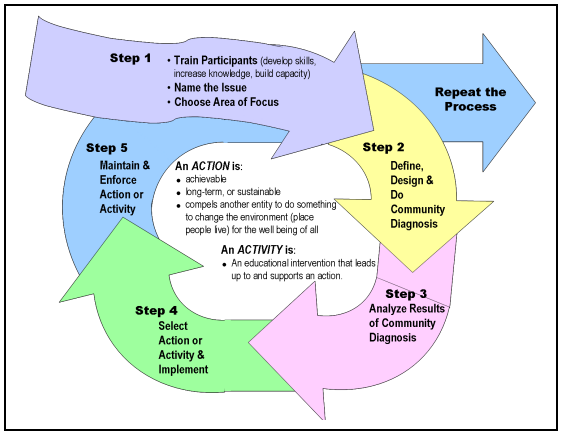
THE INTERVENTION MODEL

TURF utilized the Community Action Model (CAM), a process that builds on the strengths or capacity of a community to create change from within and mobilizes community members and agencies to change environmental factors promoting economic and environmental inequalities.

The Community Action Model includes the following steps:

[1] Youth Leadership Institute. (2009). Taking Our Turf Back, Setting Limits on Tobacco Retail Permits in San Francisco.

1. **Train Participants**: Community Action Team (CAT) members are recruited and trained to develop skills, increase knowledge and build capacity. The participants will use this knowledge and skills to choose a specific issue or focus and then design and implement an action to address it.



2. **Do a Community Diagnosis**: A community diagnosis is the process of finding the root causes of a community concern or issue and discovering the resources to overcome it.
3. **Choose an Action:** to address the issue of concern. The Action should be: 1) achievable, 2) have the potential for sustainability, and 3) compel a group/agency/organization to change the place they live for the well being of all.
4. **Develop and Implement an Action Plan**: The CAT develops and implements an action plan to achieve their Action which may include an outreach plan, a media advocacy plan, development of a model policy, advocating for a policy, making presentations as well as an evaluation component.
5. **Enforce and Maintain the Action**: After successfully completing the action, the CAT ensures that their efforts will be maintained over the long term and enforced by the appropriate bodies.

THE STRATEGIES

In 2008, the San Francisco Tobacco Free Project awarded funding and provided training and technical assistance to YLI to implement the Community Action Model.

1. Train Participants

YLI recruited seven high school and college-age advocates. Advocates from YLI, along with advocates from other Tobacco Free Project funded projects participated in a 4 hour joint training on July 16 2008. The training covered a variety of topics including tobacco as a social justice issue, the global reach of tobacco, the impact of the tobacco industry on communities of color, and how to effectively implement the Community Action Model (CAM).

2. Do a Community Diagnosis

The advocates undertook a multi-step community diagnosis, including research, community mapping, and surveys.

Research. The advocates:

- Researched existing policies, laws, and procedures relevant to the issue of high concentration of tobacco retail outlets, and how existing policies could be used to

impact the issue (e.g., grandfathering/transferability issues, permit usage, and language in tobacco permit ordinance).

- Identified the policymaking entities that are involved (or could be involved) in the issue.
- Met with an Environmental Health/Department of Public Health inspector for input on the proposed policy.
- Compiled a list of key leaders, city departments, community groups, and stakeholders.
- Compiled a list of other local and national model policies that have removed existing tobacco retailers or reduced the number of tobacco retailers through attrition.
- Met with researchers at Stanford, TALC and UCSF to discuss tobacco permit density and potential policy options.
- Researched current legal information, e.g., updated codes and laws.
- Developed a formula using indicators and tobacco permits per capita that could be used to amend existing policy.
- Researched and developed a cost benefit analysis of tobacco use in San Francisco.
- Conducted a Literature review

Community mapping. The advocates met with Environmental Health and the Tobacco Free Project in the Department of Public Health to explore what current or estimated population and social indicator data was available by supervisorial district that could be mapped and used to present to the Board of Supervisors. These data included current population distribution, income level, percent of youth and people of color, and retail stores with tobacco permits.

Survey. The advocates developed and conducted a survey of residents, community members, and policymakers to gauge support for the proposed policy. The objective of the surveys would be to show that the community would support a policy that changes the tobacco retail density in low-income communities. The advocates surveyed 300 people from four San Francisco neighborhoods, including two affluent communities (Marina and Glen Park) and two low-income communities (Mission and Richmond).

The advocates found that, in San Francisco, many of the districts that are low income, and have higher populations of youth and communities of color (COC) have a disproportionate number of tobacco retail outlets. These conditions, in turn, lead to higher rates of smoking and disease, illness, and death.

Key findings of TURF's research include the following:

- According to the California Healthy Kids Survey, accessibility to tobacco in San Francisco is still a big issue. Half of 9th graders in San Francisco public schools thought it is "fairly easy" or "very easy" to obtain cigarettes.

- 70 percent of schools in 7 supervisorial districts are within 1,000 feet of a tobacco outlet.

- There is a higher rate of smoking in schools with tobacco outlets within walking distance.

- This is not just a youth issue: communities with low income and large numbers of people of color and high tobacco retail density had higher smoking rates.

Findings from the 300 surveys administered by TURF revealed the following:

- Of those surveyed in the low-income districts of the Richmond and Mission, 75 percent believe it is easy to purchase tobacco in their neighborhood;

- Over 80 percent approved of having policies to limit the number of stores that sell tobacco in neighborhoods with high numbers of youth and people of color, and

- Even a majority of the smokers that were surveyed supported reducing the number of tobacco outlets.

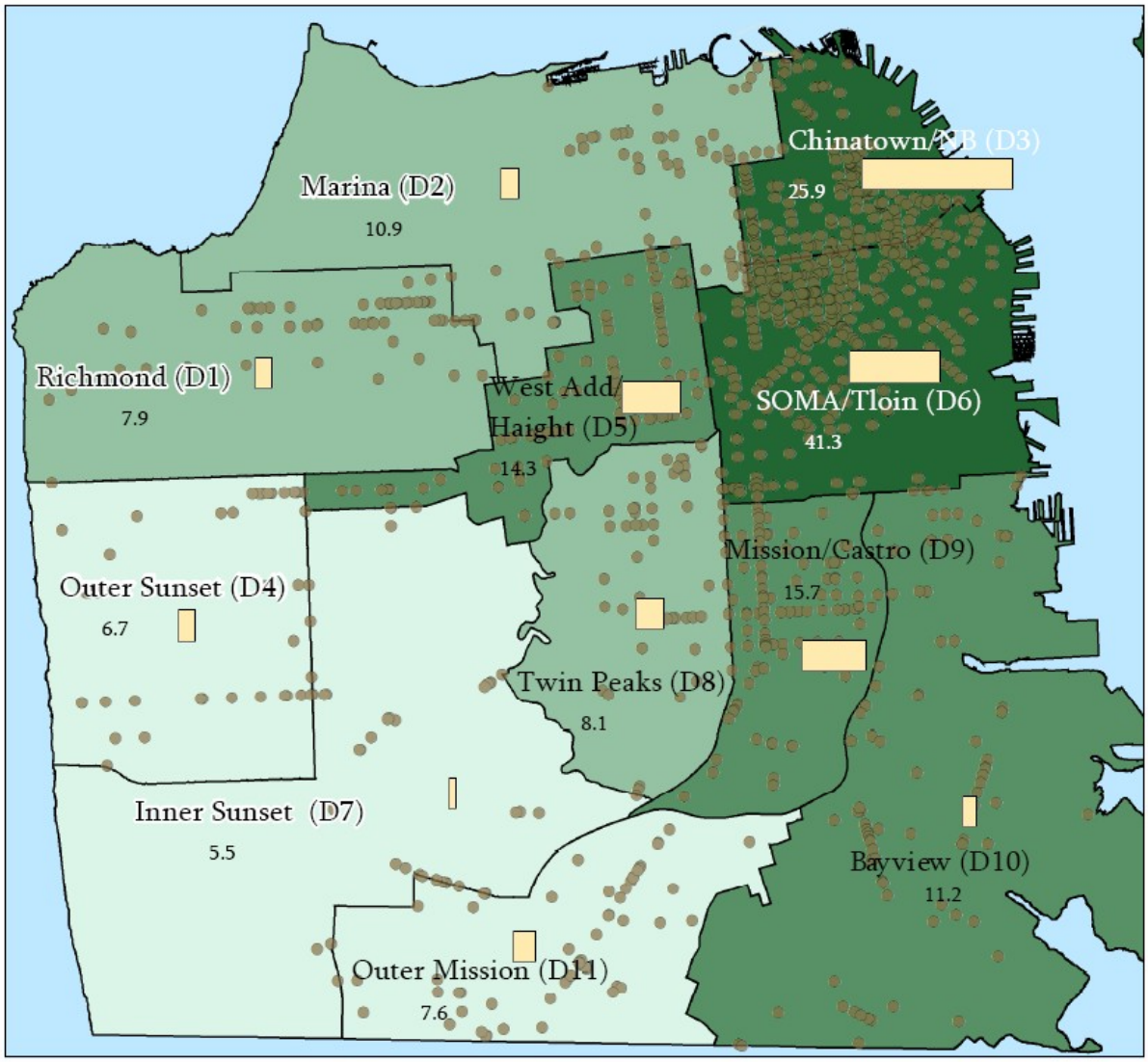
Using data from the San Francisco Department of Public Health, TURF found that:[2]

- Of the five districts in San Francisco with the highest proportions of Latino and African American residents, four also have the highest concentration of retail outlets. The districts with the highest concentration are Haight/Western Addition, South of Market, Mission, and Potrero/Bayview Hunters Point. As shown in Figure 1, there are 41.3 tobacco outlets for every 10,000 residents in South of Market and 25.9/1,000 in Chinatown, compared to 5.5/10,000 in the Inner Sunset and 10.9/10,000 in the Marina districts.

[2] Sciortino, S. (2009). Maps of distribution of tobacco outlets by various criteria using 2000 Census Data. *Unpublished report, City and County of San Francisco, Department of Public Health, Tobacco Free Project.*

- Of the five lowest income districts in San Francisco, three also have the highest concentration of tobacco retail outlets. These districts are: South of Market, Mission, and Potrero/Bayview Hunters Point. Districts with the lowest per capita income include the Mission ($21,000) and South of Market ($25,000), compared to higher income districts, such as Marina ($76,000) and Inner Sunset ($40,000).[2]

Figure 1. Tobacco Retail Density and Demographics of Selected Districts (Sciortino, 2009)



3. Choose an Action

Based on their community diagnosis, TURF advocates developed and proposed legislation to amend the San Francisco Health Code to establish a cap of 35 tobacco permits for each supervisorial district. The legislation would achieve a permit density of five tobacco retail outlets per 10,000 residents, about the same as District 7, the Inner Sunset, which has the lowest number of permits (5.5 per 10,000 residents) of all supervisorial districts in San Francisco.

The new policy would: 1) significantly reduce the number and concentration of stores, 2) level the playing field across San Francisco districts, and 3) improve public health.

4. Develop and Implement an Action Plan

The following strategies were selected:

- Educational meetings and presentations to the Board of Supervisors;
- Policy proposal and case statement with GIS maps;
- Town Hall meeting or consortium centered on tobacco retail density in low-income communities;
- Media advocacy, including publicity through radio, television, and newspapers; and
- Press conference(s).

Based on findings from the community diagnosis, TURF advocates developed proposed legislation to amend the San Francisco Health Code that would establish a cap of 35 tobacco permits for each supervisorial district. The advocates developed an educational packet and identified stakeholders, and conducted community outreach to educate residents about the potential policy and begin a dialogue with community members. Following the educational presentations, the advocates asked the group or organization to demonstrate support for the policy by endorsing it.

The advocates selected a likely ally on the Board of Supervisors and prepared a comprehensive package, including their research, survey findings, and tobacco retail density maps to use in their presentation when they met with him. They were successful in persuading him to sponsor the policy. During the last half of 2009, the advocates worked with the sponsor to craft language and work with key stakeholders to build support towards introducing legislation to the Board of Supervisors. Two additional supervisors agreed to co-sponsor the legislation, once it was introduced in January 2010.

During this time a number of meetings were help with small business groups and others and range of potential revisions to the model policy were discussed including addressing limits affecting proximity to schools, permit attrition and new ownership, and others.

The advocates prepared testimony they would use in hearings as the policy made its way through hearings before relevant committees to the full Board. The advocates also prepared scripts for press releases and press conferences to gain additional community support and mobilize allies, constituents, and community members, and attract supporters to attend key Board hearings.

Then, on January 27, 2010, TURF learned from a newspaper article that the Mayor had formally introduced his own legislation to the Board, before the supervisor who was sponsoring the TURF policy had a chance to introduce his legislation.

Figure 2 compares the three versions of the policy (TURF, sponsoring supervisor, and mayor). To summarize the major points:

- The mayor's proposal focused exclusively on limiting tobacco sales within 1,000 feet of public and private schools.

- TURF proposed a cap on tobacco permits in districts with more than 35 permits; the supervisor proposed no new permits to be issued in any district. The mayor's legislation is silent on this issue.
- TURF and the supervisor's proposals would not issue or renew permits within 750 feet of schools, while the mayor's legislation bans new tobacco sales permits within 1,000 of schools.

While supporting the mayor's efforts to restrict tobacco sales within 1,000 feet of schools, TURF had concerns about the unintended consequences of the legislation and other exceptions that were proposed for family owned businesses, tobacco shops, and bars.

The advocates decided that their best course of action would be to work to amend the Mayor's proposed legislation through the hearing process and before the full Board of Supervisors. Their proposed amendments included:

1) Creating a 35-store cap on stores outside school zones that sell tobacco for each supervisorial district to prevent an increase in the number of tobacco outlets in neighborhoods already overly saturated with tobacco retailers.

2) Closing the loophole that exempts bars and tobacco shops from the proposed legislation.

3) Closing the loophole that allows a sibling, parent, domestic partner, or child to assume the permit of the existing permit owner within 1,000 feet of schools (a transfer that would be allowed to continue indefinitely under the proposed legislation). TURF supports a one-time exception that allows family members of current owners of tobacco retail outlets outside the 1,000-foot school zone boundary to assume a tobacco permit.

As the Mayor's proposed legislation made its way through the Board process, TURF advocates reached out to allies in the community, updating them, and asking for their help by contacting the Mayor's office by phone, fax, or email and request that the Mayor add the amendments proposed by TURF. The advocates attached a one-pager (see p. 10) to their email, which contained information about the campaign and talking points for supporters to use when they contacted the Mayor's office about the proposed legislation.

The Mayor's proposed legislation was heard before the City Operations and Neighborhood Services (CONS) Committee of the Board of Supervisors on April 26, 2010. Just days before the CONS hearing, the Mayor included a late amendment that would exclude smoke shops and bars from any restrictions within 1,000 feet of schools. This amendment resulted in redirecting the focus from *eliminating* the presence of tobacco around schools to *preventing* youth from buying tobacco that would be available near schools. The CONS committee eventually sent the legislation to the full Board with a "Do Not Pass" recommendation.

The Board considered the Mayor's legislation in May, and unanimously voted to refer the legislation back to the CONS committee for further discussion about enforcement of existing laws prevention the sale of tobacco to minors and how to develop an approach to minimize the sale of tobacco in San Francisco. One supervisor also urged that the anti-smoking advocates who were working to strengthen provisions limiting the sale of tobacco be a part of the discussion. The CONS committee has not yet scheduled a review of the re-referred legislation.

Figure 2. Comparison of Policies		
TURF policy proposal 12/2/09	**Supervisor's proposal 12/11/09**	**Mayor's legislation Introduced 1/26/10**
Cap on tobacco permits. No new permits will be issued in any supervisorial district with more than 35 permits.	**No new permits.** As of the effective date of the ordinance, no additional permits will be issued anywhere in San Francisco.	----
Density near schools/hospitals. No new permits would be issued in locations within 750 feet of schools/hospitals. 35 cap does not apply.	**Density near schools.** Permits in locations that are within 750 feet of schools would not be renewed.	**Density near schools.** No new tobacco sales permits would be issued in locations within 1,000 feet of public or private schools.
Delayed implementation. New permit for existing location with permit on basis of change of ownership within 2 years and not within 750 feet of a school may be issued.	**Delayed implementation.** New permit for existing location with permit on basis of change of ownership within 2 years and not within 750 feet of a school may be issued.	---
---	**Spouse/domestic partner/child.** Transfer of permit to child, spouse, or domestic partner permitted indefinitely except outlets within 750 feet of a school.	**Spouse/domestic partner/child.** Transfer of permit to child, spouse, or domestic partner is permitted.
---	**Retail over $2 million.** Non-renewal for retail with sales over $2 million.	---
Revocation. Revocation is option for 4th and subsequent violations within 5 years of prior violation.	---	---

5. Enforce and Maintain the Action

The formal TURF project ended on July 1. In June, TURF continued to meet with stakeholders to discuss strategies and approaches to move the policy forward. At the end of the project, TURF presented a set of recommendations to their allies and stakeholders about what next steps should be taken in the coming year to realize the policy they worked towards.

CHALLENGES

Supporting young people to engage in policy advocacy is challenging. The legislation that was proposed had significant economic impacts, so there were bound to be many

political issues. “We took on a serious and significant policy legislation, and exposed ourselves to the complexities that doing that policy work means.”

It is also a challenge to undertake this type of work with young people and maintain a strong partnership so they feel a sense of ownership and commitment which takes a significants amount of energy, time, love, and training!

This type of issue is not very “sexy” from the perspective of youth. Supporting the advocates and the community in terms that resonated with them was challenging.

Undertaking effective policy advocacy around difficult and complex issue means strong base building, outreach, networking, and awareness raising. These are all challenges, especially from a logistical perspective. The policy development process became very detailed, took a lot longer than expected, and drew the group’s energy away from what is more appealing to young people, e.g., connecting with other youth and stakeholders to talk about the issues.

The complexities of the project required considerable amount of work from adult staff, which diverted time away from work the TURF team is more effective at – engaging and connecting with people in the community.

Finally, and outside of the control of the TURF project, and the SFTFP, the Mayor’s proposed legislation shifted the original TURF focus of this effort (to reduce the disproportionate exposure of all communities in SF to tobacco density) to a focus on limiting access to tobacco near youth at schools. For the members of the Board of Supervisors the legislation was seen as an issue of enforcement of existing laws that prohibit the sale of tobacco to minors. This is unfortunate since TURF’s focus on addressing disparities in exposure, and the overall goal of the cities desire to denormalize the presence of tobacco in vulnerable communities was lost.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Young people can be engaged in high-level tobacco policy making.
- Policy change means being prepared to stay with the process for a long haul.
- Being creative about how to keep energy going among young people is key.
- Having some success has a lot to do with the good allies you have, e.g., DPH.
- It is important to tap into young people’s strengths and assets, and being sure they are connected with other youth.
- Youth move on to college, jobs, etc. over the course of a 2-year project. It would have helped to minimize the turnover if the project had started with a larger group of advocates.

- Using a “top down” approach to pass legislation that significantly changes the proposal that is opposed by the community without negotiating with the community was ineffective.

The Tobacco Use Reduction Force (TURF) is a group of young leaders from all over San Francisco who are committed to protect the city's health by advocating for fewer stores that sell tobacco especially those in low-income communities where high populations of youth live and go to school.

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT TO TAKE OUR TURF BACK...

The 411 about Tobacco in Your Community:

- There are over 1,000 stores that sell tobacco in SF, most of them are in low-income communities where people of color and high populations of youth live.
- This is a SOCIAL JUSTICE issue. It's not fair that low-income communities where people of color live are plagued with up to 5 times more stores that sell tobacco than where most wealthy people live.
- Research shows: communities that have higher density of stores have more smokers and more sick folks. Also, the more stores that sell cigs are near schools, the more likely students will start smoking.
- 80% of the 300 people we surveyed support a policy to limit tobacco retailers in low-income communities with high populations of youth.

More Tobacco Stores = More Smokers = More Disease and Death!!!

Where We Are at Now:
The Mayor just put out his own idea to reduce the # of stores that sell tobacco near schools. TURF has met with his staff and provided some recommendations to make the proposal stronger.

What We Want:
Get the city to pass a law that reduces the # of stores that sell smokes, especially in low-income neighborhoods and around schools. If this happens, we'll definitely have healthier communities

Why We Need You:

Mayor Newsom also is interested in dealing with this issue, but his plan is to SLOWLY get rid of all stores within 1000 ft of all schools. He's got the right idea, but his law needs to be strengthened to really work. We also want to make sure that neighborhoods which are NOT near schools don't get slammed with more stores that sell cigs. TURF has already shared its ideas with the Mayor, but our voice alone won't be enough. That's why we need your support.

How Can You Support US:

- Write Letters to the Mayor! - Back us up at City Hall during Public Hearing! - Write a Resolution! - Give us names of youth & adults who might want to support us!

For more info or to find out how you can help, please contact Matt Rosen at mrosen@yli.org or (415) 836-9160 X 240

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