

# **Public Relations Strategic Plan** **Public Awareness/Education Campaign**

Coalition for a Healthy New York  
(Center for a Tobacco Free New York)

November 13, 2001

## I. Objectives

As stated in your strategic plan, the Coalition for a Healthy New York's overall objectives are as follows:

- Enact statewide regulations on smoking in public places. This objective begins with incremental progress at the state and local level and a major push to enact the Paulin/Spano and Grannis/Fuschillo bills in 2002.
- Ensure that the state's tobacco control program is funded in line with the CDC Best Practice Guidelines, making it a better-funded, more aggressive program.
- Enhance the public health impact of the tobacco tax by supporting policies that reduce tax avoidance.

As we discussed in our strategy summit on September 26, the attacks in New York City and Washington will impact the legislative priorities this year. Because the coalition is unsure of the next step legislatively, we think it makes best sense to focus our immediate efforts on educating the public at large about the hazards of secondhand smoke. We need to first educate the public about secondhand smoke so that later we can ask them to show their support for restrictions on smoking in public places.

**The Primary objective for phase I of the CTFNY public relations plan is to:**

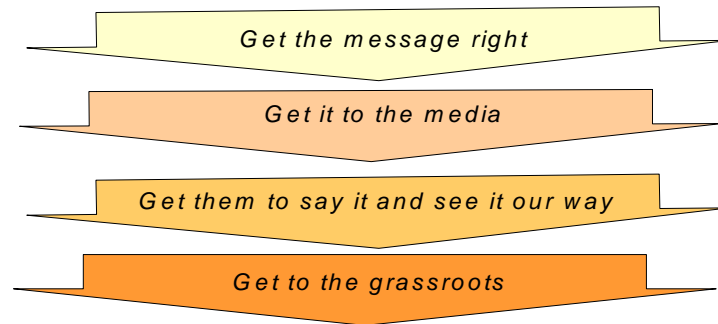
**Raise awareness among New Yorkers about the dangers of secondhand smoke.**

By raising public awareness and understanding of secondhand smoke, this initiative will raise the seriousness of the issue and build an environment that is conducive to legislative change. This will lay the groundwork for later strengthening New York state clean air legislation.

When the time is right, the agency will broaden its efforts to specifically address the pending legislation and the economic impact clean air legislation will have on New York state businesses. In fact, as you will see in this plan, some of these messages can be woven into our communications during this phase by way of by-lined pieces, letters to the editor and meetings/speaking opportunities. It is imperative that our messages relating to this legislation are clear and consistent even at this stage.

## II. Strategies

The strategic approach we recommend is displayed in the diagram below.



### **Step One: Get the message right.**

#### Sponsoring Organization

The State Lobby Commission may interpret the educational activities of the coalition as falling under its definition of lobbying. Because no one member can accept the liability of reporting on lobbying efforts for all coalition members associated with the project, care will be taken to avoid using the name of the coalition or any other umbrella organization. EMA will develop a campaign name representing the interests of the coalition to use in marketing the educational effort, rather than an organizational title. All coalition members who choose to participate in a given project will be included in all references to the project and on all printed materials. Coalition members will approve their inclusion on a case by case basis. Where appropriate, EMA will call on coalition members and other interested corporate community leaders to lend their name to by-lined pieces and letters to the editor mentioned later in this plan.

#### Campaign Theme and Logo

To launch a campaign with impact and strength, we recommend developing a campaign theme and identity. This theme and logo will bring recognition to the campaign across the state. We can examine what has been used in other states to see if there is something we can borrow or EMA can develop these pieces for our New York state campaign. This identity should be used on electronic letterhead and press kit folders as well. Again, coalition members will be given the option of participating in each project on a case by case basis and all electronic materials will be adjusted accordingly.

### Focus Group Research/Copy Testing

We recommend using existing research to refine the messages we communicate throughout this phase of the campaign. The agency will review the available research and develop a variety of persuasive messages relating to the hazards of secondhand smoke. At this time, we feel that it is most cost-efficient to hold off on this focus group research until our messages become more complicated later in the process. When we start to deliver messages relating to clean air laws and the impact on New York state consumers and businesses, that may very well be the right time to message test. We will also want to consider testing advertising materials.

### Quantitative Proof Re: Secondhand Smoke

As part of our overall strategy, we recommend that the coalition prove how uneducated New Yorkers are about the impact of secondhand smoke. Rather than initiating a study for this reason, it would be very cost-effective to add a question(s) to the public opinion poll currently being drafted. This quantitative proof would serve as a perfect news hook to why the media should give attention to this topic.

### Copy Points

From the evaluation of all available research, the agency will develop some copy points relating to the hazards of secondhand smoke that will be used in all communications during phase I of the campaign. These copy points will be relayed via press releases, fact sheets, opinion articles, letters to the editor and through talking points by various spokespeople throughout the campaign.

**Step two and step three: Get to the media. Get them to say it and see it our way.**

### Press Conference(s)

The public education/awareness campaign will kick off with a press conference during the fourth or fifth week of January 2002. This timeframe was selected due to its close proximity to the New York State Tobacco Awareness Week, which is held in mid to late January, and American Heart Month, which takes place annually in February. We recommend holding a press conference or arranging for a media visit/tour in each of the major cities across the state for maximum impact. Later on we will look for additional press conference opportunities such as to announce key partnerships such as one with the Hospitality Workers' Union.

### Ongoing Newsbureau

An ongoing newsbureau is the focal point of our recommendation at this time. Our objective is to disseminate as much information about the negative effects of secondhand

smoke as possible. This information would be generated aggressively, aiming for media hits each month. By distributing information on a regular basis, EMA will be able to establish media relationships for the coalition.

### Refining the Media List

An important first step for this ongoing media outreach effort is to refine a targeted media list for this initiative. The agency will merge information in our proprietary, multioffice database with the coalition's current contacts and expand on the list where necessary. The agency will have the capability to send releases via broadcast fax from a computer.

### Press Kit

The agency will prepare a full press kit relating to the dangers of environmental tobacco smoke. This kit would include the following:

- Press kit folder representing the Coalition for a Healthy New York.
- Press release about the initiative to educate the public about the hazards of secondhand smoke.
- Fact sheets about secondhand smoke, the importance of clean air laws, the coalition/CTFNY.
- Bio for Russell Sciandra and others (TBD) as spokespeople
- List of supporting organizations (coalition members).
- Other pertinent research and/or data relating to this issue.
- Third-party endorsements from doctors, restaurant owners who have gone smoke-free and other people who have been affected by secondhand smoke to lend credibility to the campaign.
- Logo sheet and other useful graphics for the media to use such as a photo showing the effects of secondhand smoke.
- A list of restaurants and other public places that have voluntarily gone smoke-free in each market.

### Editorial Tour

The agency will develop a target list of news outlets the coalition wishes to meet with. We would ask for your input on who would be available to join Russ for each of the visits and EMA would also send a local representative to each meeting. After our press conference kick-off, we would initiate this tour to share the details of the statewide initiative and educate the newspapers (and public) about the often-overlooked dangers of secondhand smoke. The agency would follow up with news outlet after the meeting to encourage coverage. After an initial focus on the print medium, the agency would prepare a broadcast pitch and approach health reporters from both television and radio stations across the state. Again, the agency would ask for the coalition's input on who should participate as the guest for each appearance.

Targets would include key newspapers such as (please note that this list is not complete):

- The Buffalo News
- Rochester Democrat and Chronicle
- Syracuse Herald Journal
- Utica Observer-Dispatch
- Albany Times Union
- Schenectady Gazette
- Legislative Gazette
- Poughkeepsie Journal
- The Journal News
- Kingston Daily Freeman

Major New York City and Long Island papers would be handled by specific outreach to key reporters who might have a long-term interest in this topic.

#### Opinion Article/By-lined Articles/Letters to the Editor

The agency can prepare a series of by-lined articles and letters to the editor to use across the state. The article would be by-lined by a different coalition representative in each market. This initial round of placements would serve as a good foundation for future press coverage.

- Dangers of secondhand smoke and how uneducated the public is about this issue.
- Encouraging smoke-free policies in restaurants and public places.
- Why no one should be forced to work in a smoke-filled environment.
- Economic impact of clean air legislation.
- Rights of individual business owners to decide on smoking issues. Do we give businesses the right to decide about basic sanitary codes?

#### Public Service Advertising

Public service advertising will be considered by the coalition in March 2002 for implementation in May of next year. EMA will conduct a careful analysis of available creative from other smokeless states grants to find the most effective campaign to educate the community about the dangers of secondhand smoke. Given your available budget, there are several approaches we could take such as:

- Focus your dollars in the Albany market (possibly only when the legislature is in session and before the clean air legislation is voted on).
- Tie the media spending to key events in our campaign such as important press conferences.
- Establish promotional relationships with broadcast media in multiple markets.
- Advertise in conjunction with a key observance (ie. The Great Smoke Out).

### Story Idea Generating Via Email

The success of this media campaign will be largely based on the involvement of the coalition members. We will be dependent on you for story ideas throughout the year. Aside from the core media relations tactics listed above, we think it is important that the group capitalize on other media opportunities on an ongoing basis. One method of doing this is via email. EMA can lead publicity topic discussion by email to the coalition. We can ask for input and discussion among members and also get consensus on various activities from the group.

### Communications Tool Kit

As we mentioned in our strategy summit, it makes sense for the coalition to assemble a communications tool kit that is available to any coalition member and county-based smokefree effort. This tool kit can consist of press kit materials and copies of the public service announcements. All of these materials could be supplied on or available upon request from the [www.tobaccofreeny.org](http://www.tobaccofreeny.org) website. Applicable research could also be made available to member organizations on-line.

## **Step four: Get it to the grassroots.**

### Community Meetings, Speakers Bureau

It is important to couple our communications campaign with personal, more-targeted communications to key audiences. These one-on-one meetings and speaking opportunities can be a joint effort by interested coalition members. EMA will work to identify a targeted list of community and opinion leaders for the coalition to meet with to further discuss the negative health impacts of secondhand smoke and other business-related impacts of no smoking policies/clean air laws. These meetings can take place with business, government and community leaders, special interest groups, parent groups, health organizations and more. While EMA will begin work on developing targeted lists for this initiative, we will focus on community meetings and a speakers bureau under the next phase of our work with the coalition.

## III. Results Measurement

EMA will send monthly status reports to the coalition to keep it updated on our activities. Results can be measured by the number of press clippings related to environmental tobacco smoke and the geographic spread of the coverage. Also, we can include a phone number and website on each of our public service announcements and press releases and can measure inquiries and hits to show the success of the campaign. If we include inquiries and hits as a method of results measurement, it will be imperative that the information is included in all communications and is brought to the forefront of each page on the [www.tobaccofreeny.org](http://www.tobaccofreeny.org) website as well. We should work together at the start of this program to clearly define our

goals in this area. We also recommend hiring a clipping service at the beginning of this program.

#### IV. Budget Summary for Agency Professional Service Time

Below are ballpark costs for most of the ideas included in this proposal. All agency time will be applied against the monthly service fee and the agency will provide routine reports of where we are against that time. The Center for a Tobacco Free New York will only be billed for actual time spent. Out-of-pocket costs, other than routine costs such as shipping, long-distance phone and copy charges, will be estimated in advance. The costs below are for planning purposes only.

We hope that as a result of this proposal, we will narrow down the agency's activities over the next six months. We can reevaluate our tactics at that time and alter them as necessary with respect to legislative concerns.

Tactic	Approximate Time	Approximate Cost
Research Review	5 hours	\$675
Public Opinion Poll Question Development	3 hours	\$405
Copy Points/Core Message Development	25 hours	\$3,375
Ongoing Newsbureau (Ongoing cost at \$135 per hour, depending on events, media opportunities. This cost will vary by month.)	Assume 40 hours per month. (From January -July 2002 = 280)	\$37,800
Media List Refinement	20 hours	\$2,700
Creative Development of logo, themeline, electronic letterhead and press kit folder. (Printing not included.)	70 hours	\$9,450
Press Material Development	70 hours	\$9,450
Launch/Editorial Tour	163 hours	\$22,005
PSA Creative Review and Estimates	15 hours	\$2,025

Tactic	Approximate Time	Approximate Cost
Advertising Media Plan Development	Covered by media commissions.	Covered by media commissions.
Speakers Bureau (Developing targeted list)	15 hours	\$2,025
* Press Clipping Service		\$3,000-\$5,000

**Total**

**\$92,910 -- \$94,910**

\* Paid for with matching funds.