

Case Study Brief
Eastern Washington University
Tobacco Survivor Challenge

Public university located in Cheney, Washington

Enrollment: 8,934 (7,958 undergraduates)

Type/Category: Cessation and Education Program

Program: In winter 2001, Eastern Washington University (EWU) offered a quarter-long Tobacco Survivor Challenge program. The tobacco cessation program, based on popular reality television concepts, was designed so that EWU students could track the experiences of selected student participants as they tried to quit using tobacco products. The program was designed to target a large campus audience including current tobacco users who want to quit, past smokers, and non-tobacco users who may face pressures to start smoking. The Challenge was promoted by posters, flyers, advertisements, and articles in campus publications inviting students to participate. Health, Wellness & Prevention, Student Life, Residential Life, Spokane Regional Health District, and the Substance Abuse Prevention Program were all involved in the program's design and implementation.

The Challenge required participants to:

- ◆ Participate in weekly interviews that were recorded and later broadcast on campus
- ◆ Attend support meetings that included cessation curriculum
- ◆ Take part in weekly "challenges" that put them in situations to test their self-identified tobacco triggers. For example, one challenge required each participant to watch someone else use tobacco and record their feelings about the experience.
- ◆ Be honest about their experience during their interviews, even if they relapsed
- ◆ Staff a smoking cessation table at EWU's Health, Wellness, and Clean Air Expo

Throughout the quarter, posters with supportive messages and the challengers' pictures were distributed around campus. The Challenge received continuing attention through the local media, and through advertisements and articles in campus publications. Participants received \$250 for completing the Challenge program. Participants were not monitored or otherwise required to stay tobacco-free. Success was determined by their honest sharing during interviews and participation in all meetings, events, and challenges.

Results: All participants agreed that the Challenge and the exposure they received helped them to quit or cut down on their tobacco use.

Future: The event has been repeated and will take place during the 2003-2004 academic year. Health, Wellness & Prevention will organize and lead the program, with the cooperation of the Student Health Advisory Council and the Fred Hutchinson Campus Health Action on Tobacco (CHAT) study, a national study focusing on college students' opinions about smoking and awareness of cessation services.

The event takes place during the spring quarter, but preparation begins the summer before and continues thorough the year. The project timeline is as follows:

- ◆ Summer quarter—Institutional Review Board submission, printed material and logo development, strategic planning
- ◆ Fall quarter—hire videographers, finalize printed material and applications for the project, finalize budget and tasks
- ◆ Winter quarter—advertise and select challengers, begin interviews, finalize planning for cessation classes or programs and challenges, begin cessation classes prior to spring break
- ◆ Spring quarter—cessation, interviews, and documentation begin, publicity peaks, weekly challenges begin; the challenge ends at the annual campus health fair prior to the end of the academic year

Cost: EWU received \$5,000 from the Spokane Regional Health District for the program. A minimum of \$3,000 is recommended to cover promotional materials, the challenge events, and final prizes for participants.

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