



CUSTOMERS

COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

ENGAGING GAMING WORKERS



Focus on the Customers: Giving the Players and Patrons a Voice

Most casinos have a player's club. Casino player's club members are repeat customers who are invested in their particular casinos and brands. Casinos offer special rewards and incentives to keep their player's club members satisfied and coming back for more gaming or entertainment experiences, including dining, shows, hotel upgrades, and so forth. Therefore, it is important to engage casino patrons (including potential customers) and player's club members in the conversation about the need and desire for a smokefree casino. **Their input will be crucial to help support a smokefree policy. This is something to consider carefully.**

In reality, the majority of casino customers (4 out of 5) do not smoke¹ and nationally, 8 out of 10 adults do not smoke.² Tobacco odors and eye-burning chemicals reduce or eliminate customer traffic by people who are sensitive to these substances. Many people who are elderly or who have asthma cannot even step into a smoke-filled casino, much less spend money there. Here are a few tips on how to give casino players and patrons a bigger voice for a smokefree policy.



TIPS FOR HOW TO EDUCATE AND ENGAGE WITH CASINO PATRONS AND PLAYERS

If smokefree supporters are a silent majority, then the casino management will only hear from the tobacco industry and a handful of negative people who want to keep smoking in the casino. Positive comments about smokefree policies help management know that the policy is popular despite the occasional negative comments they may get from disgruntled smokers or from the tobacco industry and its allies. It is important to develop local or regional strategies to cultivate a base of support with the many people who enjoy

casino entertainment but also want to breathe smokefree air. Ask people to help support the goal for smokefree indoor air in casinos and outline the variety of ways they can help show that support. Below are a few ideas for how to activate support:

- Join the casino's player's club program and become familiar with what it offers. Almost all player's clubs are free and do not have a cost or betting requirement. Even people who regularly go to a casino primarily for nongaming activities, such as dining or shows, may still be part of the player's club.
- You can encourage player's club members to express their expectation for smokefree air to casino management through a variety of channels, such as e-mail, providing positive smokefree comments on the casino's Facebook page or Twitter account, or in person by something as simple as wearing a smokefree casino sticker.
- Even though patrons have to be 18, 19 or 21 years of age (depending on your state) to gamble, casinos are often a main entertainment destination for families, especially in a casino community. In educational presentations to civic, health, and community groups around your city, be sure to stress the importance of a smokefree casino environment that covers the entire airspace, not just sections.
- Casino customers come in a range of demographics that might be helpful to consider for identifying educational outreach opportunities. For example, women aged 50–80 years are often considered a core slot machine clientele.



"I love to play poker but hate to breathe secondhand smoke every time I walk into a casino. Casinos need to be smoke free!"

~Paul Wasicka, 2006 2nd Place World Series of Poker
Main Event Winner

Casinos will often be more sensitive to feedback from their customers and player's club members.

Other groups to consider include young adults, families, convention attendees, poker players, and more. What type of customers does the casino in your area seek to attract?

- What kind of organizations schedule meetings or conventions in the casino? Perhaps those groups or their conference attendees could provide positive smokefree feedback, or other organizations could indicate in a letter to casino management that they are not considering the property as a meeting site because of the secondhand smoke.
- In your meetings with casino management, ask whether they would like to know their patrons' preferences for smokefree air.

HOW TO SURVEY PATRONS AND PLAYER'S CLUB MEMBERS ABOUT THEIR PREFERENCES

Several casinos have recently collaborated with local public health professionals in surveying their player's club members about their preference for smokefree air. It is important in a marketing sense for casino management to know what their

patrons like and appreciate and what they do not care for in their gaming experience. This helps with making decisions and maintaining a happy clientele.

When proposing a customer or player's club survey to casino management, suggest they offer \$10 in free play as an incentive to return the survey. Even though the \$10 free play is a cost to the casino, survey results can give valuable marketing information.

When designing the survey, try to add additional questions that casino management might want to know, such as "What games do you play when you gamble at the casino?" or "What one game do you play most often or do you play them all equally?"

Most importantly, add questions that determine the economic benefits of going smokefree:

- "Does the smoke in the casino bother you?"
- "Do you believe secondhand smoke is dangerous to your health?"
- "All things being equal in terms of size, gaming options, and distance from your home, would you be more likely or less likely to visit the casino if smoking were prohibited on the gaming floor, or does it matter?"
- "Have you reduced the number of trips to the casino due to any of the following: Cost of gasoline, income, health, bills, job, cost of living, other"

It is vital to ensure survey participant anonymity is assured and preserved. Names or other identifying information should not be shared or distributed.



Working in a smoky venue literally makes me sick!

Lastly, be sure to present the data collected from customer surveys to casino management in a way that makes the survey results easy to understand and demonstrates public support for smokefree casinos.

Remember: Casinos will often be more sensitive to feedback from their customers and players' club members than they are from public health professionals.

See page 28 of the workbook in the main folder for a sample patron survey (adapted from one developed by the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council). Feel free to contact ANR for assistance in designing, implementing, and analyzing a casino patron survey.

Focus on Community Stakeholders: Growing Support for Smokefree Casinos

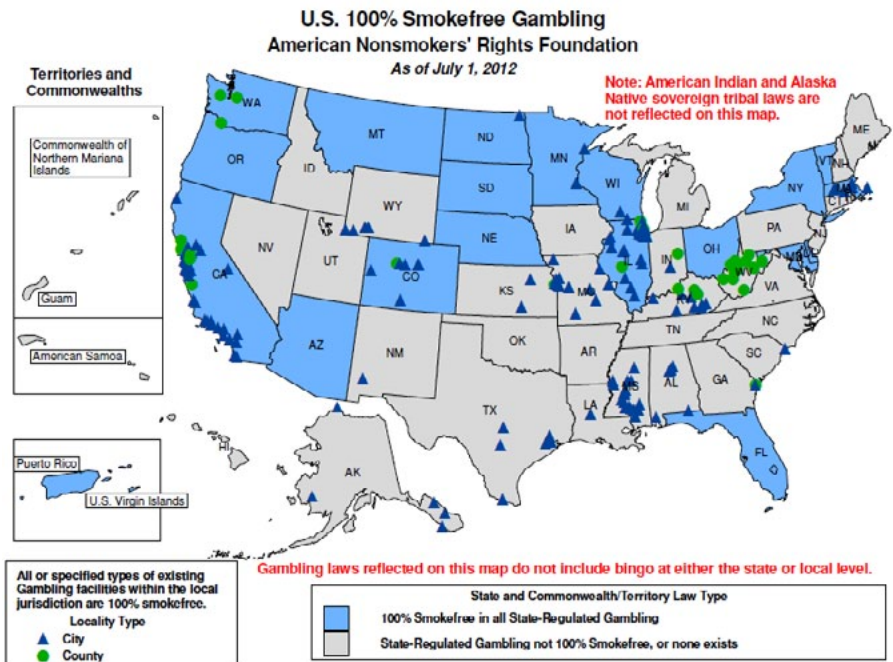
More casinos are opening as smokefree in the United States and internationally. Twenty states plus American Samoa; Washington, DC; Puerto Rico; and the U.S. Virgin Islands have 100% smokefree indoor gaming laws (see map below). Other casinos have become smokefree by passing their own worksite policies.

Casinos can bring thousands of jobs to a region. But job creation shouldn't sicken the very people and communities those jobs are intended to help.

Most casinos strive to be seen as “good neighbors” and employers in the community. Casino management often sits on multiple local boards and committees; host a myriad of fundraisers; donate to special events and charities; and contribute services in-kind for advancing a healthier, stronger community as a whole. It is in a casino’s best interest to be located in a healthy, fun, vibrant community that supports a healthy workforce and attracts visitors. This means that casinos also are sensitive to feedback from key casino community stakeholders, including local leaders, organizations, media, shareholders, and of customers. Who are the individuals, organizations, and media in your area to which casino companies might be most attuned? Sometimes your stakeholders might even be potential visitors from neighboring states.

A WORD ABOUT ROLES

This section of the toolkit offers suggestions to public health professionals for engaging with community groups to help create awareness of the problem of secondhand smoke and support a casinos smokefree worksite policy. As public health professionals, your role is to provide education and information about the need and benefit of smokefree worksites for everyone, including casino workers and patrons. Your local tobacco-free community coalition, healthy communities group, or voluntary health organizations may be interested in promoting communitywide smokefree workplace protections and policies.



A Marathon, Not a Sprint

Working toward the worthy goal of smokefree casinos will take time. A norm change like this will not be done quickly if it is to be done well. Be patient. Know that every step you take toward the goal of smokefree casinos is a step in the right direction that will eventually take you and your community to the finish line: healthy work environments for everyone.

Tips for Building Community Engagement and Support

As you raise awareness in your community about the need for smokefree casinos and gaming facilities, consider some of the following activities for educating and engaging the community and casino management.

- **Make a point to visit a smokefree casino.** Tell workers, managers, and everyone how much you like visiting a smokefree casino. Consider wearing an “I “heart” Smokefree Casinos” sticker (or make your own local version) to help further convey support in a



positive, visible way to management, workers, and other customers. You can order stickers from ANR at www.smokefreecasinos.org or use home office sticker templates to create your own. If the casino is already smokefree, ongoing positive feedback is still important and can be provided via the casino's Facebook page, comment cards, or through the casino's player's club. If you visit a smoky casino, fill out a comment card with something like, "My visit would have been much more enjoyable if the casino was smokefree."

- **Visit ANR's smokefree casinos web page** at www.smokefreecasinos.org and watch the documentary, Fighting for Smokefree Air. Review all the great studies and fact sheets in the Related Topics box on that web page.



Fighting for Smokefree Air. Documentary

- **Always include casinos in your discussions and/or presentations** to community organizations about smokefree workplaces. Any workplace that has employees should be smokefree, including bars, casinos, and warehouses.
- **Educate community members** about the facts. Provide education about the benefits of smokefree workplaces through presentations to organizations, businesses, casino employees and management, and citizen groups. Offer to be a presenter at various community groups such as the Kiwanis Club, Elks and Rotary Clubs, and more. Once educated, community coalitions may then want to cultivate a network of supporters, such as employees, players,

and other customers (or potential customers who currently won't go into smoky casinos) to voice support for 100% smokefree air in casinos. It's helpful to demonstrate this support in a publicly visible way, such as through social media, letters to the editor, radio announcements, and public statements.

- **Be sure to keep the public conversation focused on the health and safety** of the employees, customers, and the community. Every worker deserves the right to breathe smokefree air, and casino workers are exposed to this serious workplace health hazard. Ventilation alone doesn't eliminate the health hazards of secondhand smoke.

- **Empower more messengers.** In particular, seek to have current or former casino workers and their families tell their personal stories (including the positive stories of working in smokefree environments). This helps to humanize the issue. Find out more about engaging these workers in the section of this toolkit, titled: Focus on Engaging Gaming Workers. Other important messengers to consider engaging include leaders of local organizations, physicians, respiratory specialists, and other stakeholders interested in having a healthy, vibrant community. Consider posting a note on social media sites or hospital bulletin boards asking for volunteers to contact you to get more involved.

- **Connect with other public health groups** to learn about positive smokefree casino examples and engagement strategies.

- **Create and maintain Facebook pages** or other Web and social media tools with information about secondhand smoke, smokefree policies, and quitting smoking. This might be an activity that your partner organizations (e.g., American Cancer Society, American Lung Association, American Heart Association) can help with posting. Encourage community members to post comments on the

Most casinos strive to be seen as "good neighbors" and employers in the community.

casino's Facebook site showing support for a smokefree gaming experience. If smokefree supporters are a silent majority, then the casino management will only hear from the tobacco industry and a handful of disgruntled smokers. Positive comments about smokefree policies help management know that the policy is popular.

- **Host a town hall meeting** about smokefree casinos. These types of meetings have the benefit of educating casino management and the general public at the same time. Be sure to have respected speakers, such as physicians, talk about the negative health effects of secondhand smoke. Include respected researchers or business leaders and have them address the economic benefits of implementing smokefree worksites. It is important during these meetings to address the significance and efficacy of tobacco control programs in your community. For a successful town hall meeting, recruit a variety of individuals, including casino workers, from multiple sectors who have personal stories to share. Feel free to contact NR, at www.no-smoke.org or by phone at (510) 841-3032 for technical assistance in hosting a town hall meeting.

- **Coordinate an educational speaking tour.** Educational speaking tours feature a trusted professional, such as a doctor, researcher, or someone affected by secondhand smoke like a

"We decided to run full-page newspaper ads in two local communities in Nevada working on smokefree laws to highlight both residents and business owners in those communities that were supportive of our smokefree efforts. Each week for the entire summer, we would feature a resident and a quote from that resident, explaining how they were impacted by smoking in public places. The response was overwhelming. At first, it was a little more difficult to get business owners on board, but once they saw the essentially free advertising they could get for their business, they were calling us and asking to be featured. We found it also generated dialogue in each of the small communities about smokefree public places."

~ Nicole Truax Chacon, MEd, CHES, Tobacco Control
Health Educator II, Southern Nevada

casino worker, who goes to different places and talks to community members about the issue. For example, in Nevada, a well-known physician spoke to multiple community groups and health care sites about secondhand smoke's impact on the heart and shared evidence on reductions in heart attack rates at worksites that went smokefree. This generated a lot of media attention.

• **In American Indian communities,** consider hosting a community event to talk about traditional sacred tobacco use and follow up with a presentation about the benefits of workplaces and casinos free of secondhand smoke from commercial tobacco products. These community events are often held in tribal chapterhouses or tribal meeting places and are educational in nature. The Cheyenne River Sioux Nation, Lac du Flambeau Nation, and several tribes in New Mexico held community events that educated many tribal elders and members about the dangers of secondhand smoke. The primary goal of these community events is to educate tribal membership, whereas the goal of a town hall meeting is to encourage and demonstrate support for implementing smokefree policies.

• **Mail educational postcards** to community citizens regarding the dangers of secondhand smoke and the

importance of smokefree places; feature quotes and photos of prominent local residents.

• **In American Indian communities, it is important to talk first to spiritual leaders** and get their support and guidance. Spiritual and cultural leaders and elders can be influential in helping to preserve the sacred status of traditional tobacco and its ceremonial and sacred uses. Order ANRF's Smokefree Tribal Gaming booklet for your coalition members from www.no-smoke.org/aboutus.php?id=440 for more information about this approach.

• **Tribal members need to know about the health risks** of secondhand smoke, as well as revenue loss due to illness. Visit with tribal members often to talk about secondhand smoke dangers from commercial tobacco use.

• **Generate letters to the editor** and other earned or free media showing support for smokefree worksites, including casinos. Earned media refers to favorable publicity gained through promotional efforts other than advertising, as opposed to paid media.

• **Raise awareness and support** by conducting a Tobacco Walk and Talk through town. The Cheyenne River


Sioux Canli Coalition successfully brought together elders, musicians, drummers, children, and workers for a walk through town showing their support for smokefree workplaces.

• **In tribal communities, it is important to also survey tribal membership** about their support for smokefree casinos. See page 33 of the workbook in the main folder for a sample tribal membership survey (adapted from one created by the California Clean Air Project). With permission from your tribal council, you can mail this survey to all tribal members and collect their responses to share in aggregate, anonymous form with the council.

• **Run educational ads on the radio** and in newspapers promoting the value of smokefree places; feature individuals and business owners expressing their desire for smokefree worksites and smokefree casinos. (See the following example from Mesquite, Nevada.)

Mesquite


Live, Work, Play.
A Clean Getaway.



"We are long time residents of Mesquite and we enjoy our time playing in the casinos. But because of our separate breathing problems and the overwhelming tobacco smoke, we usually have to leave early."

- Marshall & Joyce Meland

Everyone has the right to breathe clean indoor air



www.smokefreemesquite.org
Made possible by funding from the Department of Health and Human Services

SPOTLIGHT ON THE GREAT LAKES INTER-TRIBAL COUNCIL:

The Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council supported the formation of a local smokefree coalition via its health coalition called Minobimaadiziwin (which means “good way of life” in Ojibwe). The newly formed Asema gikinoo-amaagewin coalition (which translates to “traditional teaching on tobacco”) educated tribal members about the importance of going smokefree in all workplaces, including casinos. Educational efforts included multiple mailings to every home on the reservation talking about dangers of secondhand smoke; tabling several events including Powwows and family and community health fairs; creating a website and Facebook page; running online ads to draw people to watch the culturally relevant video about the need for smokefree worksites, including casinos; and hosting a town hall meeting. Dr. Patricia Nez Henderson was the keynote speaker at a town hall event attended by 20 people from three different tribal nations. A panel of speakers during the event was made up of local tribal or community members who led a discussion about where the community is at and what needs to take place to achieve 100% smokefree workplaces for everyone, including casino workers.



Focus on Engaging Gaming Workers: Amplifying the Workers' Voice

Like flight attendants 20 years ago, casino workers do their job in a contained environment where they stay in a small area for many hours just a foot or two away from burning cigarettes. Because of their exposure at work, gaming employees are at 50% greater risk for developing heart disease and cancers.³

Before recruiting more gaming workers to the effort, keep in mind that, like all other coalition partners, gaming employees' participation increases as relationships are built and strengthened. It is rare that an employee will become a smokefree spokesperson after just one or two meetings. Have confidence. Be persistent. Ask questions. And, most importantly, be respectful of their anonymity. Most gaming workers are concerned about job security and potential employer retaliation, so **maintaining their anonymity is of the utmost importance**. Public health professionals should know that several casinos include a right to work clause in contracts—waiving employees' right to organize or challenge termination. However, a recent National

Labor Relations Board ruling found that workers (even in nonunion worksites) have the right to speak up about their working conditions through social media without retaliation.⁴

As you think about smokefree casinos, ask yourself: How can we make it easy for casino employees to get involved? Are you communicating that their anonymity is paramount? Casino workers and casino patrons often have great ideas and connections for reaching workers willing to share their feedback about secondhand smoke. Health groups have also found it helpful to bring on current casino patrons/players as a consultant to help with outreach to others in the casino community in a culturally competent way.

REACHING OUT AND RECRUITING: BASIC STRATEGIES AND BEYOND

Letters to the editor

Maintain a constant flow of letters to the editor about the issue in your local papers. After reading a letter to the editor in his local paper on how casino employees are being left behind in smokefree protections, former floor supervisor Vinny Rennich got involved in the smokefree movement. It is also helpful to include contact information in all earned or paid media so that employees will know where to get more information.



Websites

Create a place for casino workers to tell their secondhand smoke stories on your health department's website. Tailor your website to a worker audience. Incorporate "Tell Your Story" and "Get Involved" tabs to allow smokefree proponents to build a database of supporters. Smokefree Atlantic City's website accumulated more than 9,000 signatures in support of smokefree casinos in New Jersey via its website. Casino employees can also share their stories about secondhand smoke and smokefree air with ANR at www.smokefreecasinos.org.

Table displays

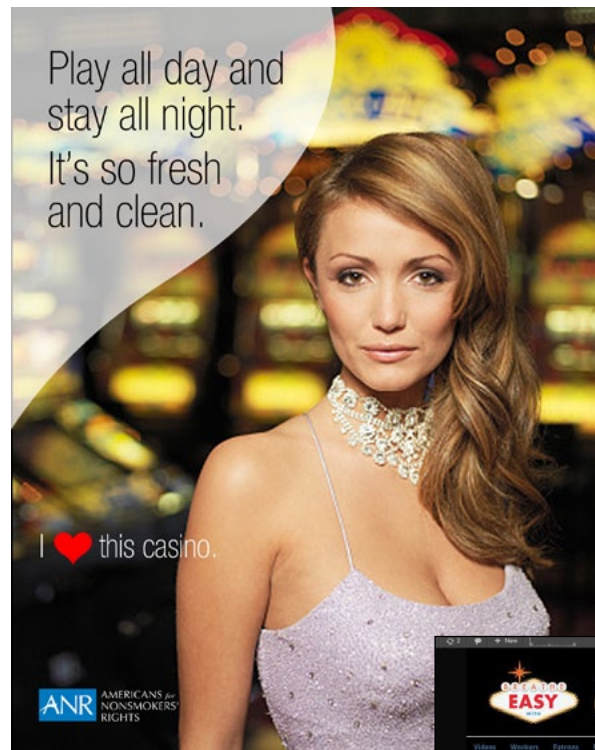
Setting up a display at a casino job fair is a great way to give out information about secondhand smoke to potential job applicants, not to mention current employees, and the direct impact it has on casino employees. In some tribal casinos, nontribal public health professionals can set up an informational display during a tribal health fair with permission from health fair organizers. These table displays/booths are also especially impactful at casino tradeshow and conventions. For more information about hosting a booth, contact ANR at 510-841-3032.

Encourage training

Gaming and hospitality training schools can be encouraged to include information about the health hazards of secondhand smoke (and the ineffectiveness of ventilation systems to address the problem) in their workplace safety curriculum. Find out whether your community has a gaming and hospitality school by contacting your chamber of commerce. Then meet with the curriculum director and recruit his or her support for adding secondhand smoke information to the training program. This might be a good way to outreach to new gaming workers.

Paid media

Print and radio ads, ads on bus shelters and billboards, and online ads on casino websites (such as www.casinojournal.com)



Sample Print Ad

are great venues for disseminating information on secondhand smoke exposure, explain the benefits of working in a smokefree environment and increase the visibility of your work. As with all other forms of education and promotion, include contact information and a website address so people can get more information and casino employees can contact you to become more involved. Several casinos distribute a free gaming magazine to patrons and employees. Advertising in these periodicals tends to be costly, but is also effective. To determine whether such a magazine exists, take a trip around the gaming floor and/or ask a gaming employee.

Toll-free number

Consider setting up a **toll-free number** for casino employees to call and leave their stories about how secondhand smoke is affecting their health and work. This was done in Kansas City recently, where employees and community members left anonymous recorded messages in the "Voices Campaign" phone bank. These testimonials and compelling personal stories were then made into a CD and sent

to decision makers as a way of letting them hear directly from casino workers, thus building awareness about the problem of secondhand smoke in casino workplaces.

Survey partner organizations

Consider sending an **educational survey to partner organizations** (such as the American Cancer Society and the American Lung Association) asking their members to self-identify or identify relatives or friends interested in speaking in support of smokefree casinos.



Sample Website Page

Post the question on casino or player's Facebook pages

Simply look up the casino name in the search feature at the top of your Facebook page. Consider purchasing Facebook ads to recruit people to submit stories about why they like smokefree casinos.

Ask for stories

During educational presentations to local groups, **ask participants** whether they have personal stories they would like to share with the media or general public. **Request** personal stories in community newsletters.

REFERENCES

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³ Gowrylow, M. , (2008, June 10). Businesses bounce back from smoking ban [Press release].Washington State Department of Revenue.

⁴ Hispanics United of Buffalo, Inc. vs. Carlos Ortiz, United States of American before the National Labor Relations Board Division of Judges, Case no. 3-CA-27872, Download at www.nlrb.gov/news-outreach/news-releases/acting-general-counsel-releases-report-employer-social-media-policies

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