

No Menthol

SUNDAY

BOLD AWARENESS:

FIGHT TO THE FINISH

The Center for Black Health & Equity
Faith-based Initiatives
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THE CENTER FOR
BLACK HEALTH & EQUITY

Introduction & Theme

A FIGHT TO THE FINISH

The Center for Black Health & Equity's No Menthol Sunday is an annual opportunity to engage faith communities in tough conversations about how menthol and tobacco addiction have robbed us of our health for generations. The tobacco industry has stripped our community's finances, engaged in targeted predatory marketing, and attempted to dupe young people with flavors like menthol. Their industry execs have once said that they don't smoke their own deadly products--they reserve that right for "the young, the poor, the Black and stupid."

Those are fighting words.

So after a decades-long battle for health justice in tobacco control, we are embarking upon a major win. In 2022, we anticipate that the Food & Drug Administration will finally issue standard regulations that will prohibit the sale of tobacco products with any characterizing flavors including menthol. This is historic! Just as it was written in Isaiah 55:11, we are now seeing the fulfillment of what we had long set out to accomplish.

While we expect total victory, we know we can also expect opposition from every side. That means we must prepare for a bare knuckle final fight to the finish. This year, Faith communities must secure support from African American stakeholders and ensure they understand the benefits of the new law.

We speak loudly against social, economic and governmental systems that perpetuate health disparities and keep tobacco use at status quo.

No Menthol Sunday serves to raise our consciousness about important issues in Black health. When people of faith remain vigilant, educate youth, and inspire community action, we will begin to move toward total health justice. It's a new day!

So shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

- Isaiah 55:11 (ESV)



FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT

After a 10-year fight, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Youth Tobacco Epidemic Act in 2020. This was a major win as it eliminated the sale of most flavored tobacco products including mint and menthol! But now a total ban on menthol is in the hands of the Food & Drug Administration. FDA). They know that African Americans smoke less but die more from smoking-related illness. They know that menthol makes it harder to start smoking and more difficult to quit. And they know that 85% of African American smokers choose menthols. Yet, they have not instituted a ban.

The FDA has been issued a court order to respond to a petition for a menthol ban. You can join the fight by asking your local representatives to support a ban on menthol.

MENTHOL:

ESSENTIAL TALKING POINTS

Menthol is a minty flavor that makes it easier to start smoking and harder to quit.

- Most African American smokers smoke menthols (85%).
- Most minorities who are smokers smoke menthols.
- Most kids who start smoking try menthols first.

The tobacco industry intentionally tries to get African Americans to buy menthol cigarettes.

- Menthol cigarettes cost less in Black communities
- There are more and larger advertisements for menthols in Black communities
- The tobacco industry pays many Black political leaders, and sponsors HBCUs, festivals, Black-owned newspapers and other prominent civil rights organizations.

The FDA has the power to ban menthol from tobacco products, but they have spent years deciding.

- Banning menthol would save Black lives.
- If menthol were banned, a lot of people would never start smoking.

The tobacco industry pays Black leaders to say that a ban on menthol would criminalize African Americans, but this is not true.

- A menthol ban would prohibit selling menthols, not possession them.

No Menthol Sunday Abstinence Pledge

In observance of No Menthol Sunday
on May 15, 2022

I do hereby resolve to protect my health, the health of my
family, and the health of my community by pledging to
abstain from tobacco products for:

_____ 24 hours

_____ 3 days

_____ 1 week

By taking this pledge, I hope to stand as a model to my
family and my faith community.

Print Name

Signature

Date

Take the Citywide or Statewide Pledge

No Menthol Sunday is a unique way to engage your area coalitions in tobacco control efforts. It is an excellent opportunity to build a faith-based network and get to know key leaders and influencers within your state's African American communities. In addition, there are many ways to promote No Menthol Sunday and use the observance day activities to build awareness about important tobacco-related community initiatives. It is even possible to use No Menthol Sunday to create buy-in for a new policy or reinforce an existing one.

Consider the many ways you may coordinate No Menthol Sunday events across your city or state. Keep in mind that participation in No Menthol Sunday is partnership activity with The Center for Black Health & Equity, will fulfill requirements of RFA-DP20-2001.

Our goal is to see participation in all 50 states.

Submit your city or state pledge to participate and register your events at NoMentholSunday.org.

There are many ways for states to observe the day:

- Build your network of faith-based organizations to educate communities about importance of tobacco-free policies
- Offer free NRT during the week of No Menthol Sunday
- Promote your state's 1-800-QUIT-NOW phone line and take note of calls during No Menthol Sunday
- Promote the COVID-19 Big Quit sharing information about the ways in which smoking and vaping can increase your risk of severe COVID-19 infection and event death

Contact Greg Bolden at gbolden@centerforblackhealth.org to confirm your intention to participate!

After No Menthol Sunday: Advocacy

In order to create or change a policy, such as Tobacco-Free Church Grounds, you must first develop and implement a strategic advocacy campaign. This is a quick guide to developing an effective advocacy campaign to achieve public health policy change in your church or your community.

1. Gather background information

Before you begin an advocacy campaign, do your research. You need to be certain that policy change is the best way to solve the problem. You'll also need to know the latest science and evidence in support of your public health issue, the current laws and regulations, and what gaps may exist. Research any past advocacy efforts on the same issue, so you know what worked... and what didn't.

2. Set clear policy objectives

A successful campaign starts with clear objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. Make sure your objectives are linked to policy change and existing evidence, and that they include the following: a policy actor(s) or decision-maker(s), the action or decision you want them to take, and a timeline by which you want them to act or decide.

3. Build strong partnerships

Working in coalition or partnership with others is the best way to demonstrate support for your issue. Identify a core group of organizations that will work together to drive the campaign forward on a day-to-day basis. Next, identify a range of old and new allies willing to speak out in favor of your objectives. To identify those allies, look to civil society and professional or business groups from the health, education, and economic and scientific sectors.

4. Know the political landscape

Understanding the policy-making process and which decision-makers and influencers to target is key to achieving your objectives. Once you understand the political landscape, strategize about when during the process you can successfully engage, intervene, and influence your targets. You will also need to know decision-makers' positions on your policy change objectives and identify any opposition you will encounter

5. Help develop legislation or regulations

Early on in the process, you'll want to prioritize drafting of the actual policy, using the strongest wording possible. As an advocate, the role that you will play during this phase is likely to vary. Having a lawyer or policy expert as a resource is very important. At a minimum, they can help you analyze the strengths and weaknesses of existing or emerging policies in accordance with evidence-based best practices.

6. Determine what is non-negotiable

Compromise is sometimes necessary in advocacy. However, it is important to know your limits. You won't necessarily help your cause if you support the passage of weak policies. You and your core partners will need to determine together what is non-negotiable, ideally early in the advocacy process.

7. Identify legislative sponsors and policy champions Strong

Strong sponsors willing to champion a policy throughout the process are valuable assets for any campaign. Seek out influential and respected policymakers on relevant committees or in key positions who you can trust to act as loyal partners and effective champions. Remember that it takes time to cultivate such champions. Meet with them regularly to understand their concerns and needs, agree on how best to work together, and share information. Always be available to act as a resource for your champion.

8. Develop your key strategies

Persuading decision-makers to take action is essential for affecting changes in policy. There are many ways this can be done, but most successful campaigns employ some combination of the following three strategies: 1) direct interaction with decision-makers and influencers, 2) using media and social media to influence decision-makers and the public, and 3) grassroots mobilization to engage a strong base of supporters and organizational allies to encourage change and counter opposition or indifference.

9. Prepare to communicate effectively

Effective communication underpins every successful advocacy campaign. First, define your different audiences and work to understand their information needs, interests, concerns, and the best communication channels to reach them. Using this information, you can then design targeted, persuasive messages and identify the most compelling messengers and spokespeople. Finally, it's important to monitor media and social media engagement on your issue so you know what is being said about your campaign and can respond quickly

10. Formulate your campaign action plan

The campaign action plan is your roadmap for the campaign, leading from objectives to strategies and then to messages. Carefully consider all the elements of your plan in collaboration with your core group of partners. In addition to key activities, the action plan should also outline the necessary resources, responsible persons, and timeline. Remember that your plan is a living document that should be reviewed regularly and updated as the political landscape changes.

11. Run your campaign

With a detailed plan in place, it's time to implement. Keep in mind that a successful campaign requires strategic planning alongside strategic implementation. The campaign process is dynamic and ever changing, and every campaign will require you to respond to unanticipated events, disagreements within your network, changing decision-makers and new opposition. Don't be afraid to be flexible, revisit your plan and update it as needed.

12. Monitor and evaluate progress

Monitoring and evaluating implementation of your advocacy plan will be one of the most critical activities of your campaign, but is often overlooked. Reviewing your progress at regular points will not only help to hold you and your partners accountable for planned actions, but will also reveal whether or not your actions are accomplishing your goals. If your campaign is not making progress, you'll need to reassess and adjust your plan.

13. Celebrate success and remain engaged

Successful advocacy campaigns take time. Even if you don't secure your policy change right away, you will have made progress in educating decision-makers, the media, and the public on your issue. Celebrate milestones both big and small, and make sure you thank supporters for their ongoing commitment. Once you have achieved your policy change, ensuring successful implementation is the next objective. A campaign doesn't end with the change in law or policy change: Now it's time to push for implementation

Advocacy Tools. (2019, August 20). <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/advocacy-tools>



AFTER NO MENTHOL SUNDAY: SUPPORT

- Encourage tobacco users to call 1-800-Quit-Now. They can talk to a Quit Line coach who can help develop a plan for quitting. Callers may also receive free Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT).
- Get involved by spreading the word about the harms of menthol. This may be through social media or by continuing to provide our tools and information at your services.
- Build relationships with local officials who are interested in supporting the health marginalized communities. Ask them to support measures that are proven to reduce tobacco use such as restricting the sale of mentholated tobacco products within 500 feet of a school.
- Support congregants who want to quite tobacco with prayer and patience. Help members to reduce stress and find ways to join in on efforts to be healthier.
- Talk to youth about the importance of staying tobacco free and living out the values they believe in. Encourage them to check out the Fresh Empire campaign on Twitter.

If you have any additional questions or would like to start a community- wide movement, **visit www.centerforblackhealth.org**. Join The Center for Black Health & Equity's mailing list and follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

An annual report is a comprehensive report on a company's activities throughout the preceding year. Annual reports are intended to give shareholders and other interested people information about the company's activities and financial performance. They may be considered as grey literature. Most jurisdictions require companies to prepare and disclose annual reports, and many require the annual report to be filed at the company's registry. Companies listed on a stock exchange are also required to report at more frequent intervals (depending upon the rules of the stock exchange involved).

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