A Ranking of State-Level Policies Targeting Youth Behaviors that Increase the Risk of Cancer

Jamie Weinstein, M.P.H., Liza Fues, J.D., Regina el Arculli, M.A.

Presented at the American Public Health Association Annual Meeting • San Francisco, California • October 29, 2012

The MayTech Corporation 
National Cancer Institute

Background

Young people engage in behaviors associated with an increased risk of cancer, such as:

- Tobacco use
- Physical inactivity
- Excessive exposure to artificial ultraviolet (UV) rays
- Risky sexual behavior leading to infection with human papillomavirus (HPV)

States are enacting laws to counter these risk behaviors. Fifty-one states have enacted laws imposing excise taxes on cigarettes, 46 have enacted laws addressing physical activity in and around schools, 31 have enacted laws restricting minors' access to tanning facilities, and 19 have enacted laws addressing HPV vaccination.

Methodology

All 50 states and the District of Columbia were rated on the stringency of their laws in four dimensions of youth risk behavior. The ratings scale was 0 to 4, with 0 indicating no law and 4 indicating the most comprehensive provisions of law.

Examples of Relevant State Laws

- Access to tanning facilities
- HPV vaccination
- Physical activity in and around schools
- Cigarette Excise Taxes

The Database

Since 1999, the National Cancer Institute and NCLEX/CED Program has monitored laws and resolutions covering numerous cancer-related topics. As of August 31, 2012, the database contained more than 9,000 legislative abstracts. The Web site is located at www.ced-net.org. The Web site is current through August 31, 2012 and will not be updated after this date.

Contacts

Regina el Arculli, M.A.
National Cancer Institute
Office of Government and Congressional Relations
Building 31, Room 1044B
31 Center Drive, MSC 2590
Bethesda, MD 20892-2590
Phone: 301-496-5217
Fax: 301-435-3931
e-mail: darciell@nci.nih.gov

Jamie Weinstein, M.P.H.
Center for Health Policy and Legislative Analysis
The MayTech Corporation
1100 Wayne Avenue, Suite 225
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Phone: 301-587-1600
Fax: 301-587-0709
e-mail: jweinstein@maytech.com