

Tobacco **FACTS**

SOCIAL MARKETING AND TOBACCO CONTROL

WHY IS SOCIAL MARKETING IMPORTANT?

Social marketing is an integral component of any comprehensive tobacco control strategy. Effectively developed and implemented mass media campaigns can reduce adult smoking prevalence and increase quitting activity. They also prompt calls to cessation services such as Quitlines.

“Well-funded, sustained media campaigns rank second only to price as a key to reducing smoking”

National Preventative Health Taskforce 2009

In 2006, a survey found that more former smokers who had quit within the past 5 years were helped by anti-smoking advertisements when deciding to quit, than by any other influences (such as smoking bans, graphic health warnings on cigarette packs and advice from health professionals). The report provided solid support for tobacco control strategies to contain a strong element of emotive anti-smoking commercials that alert smokers to the negative consequences of smoking.

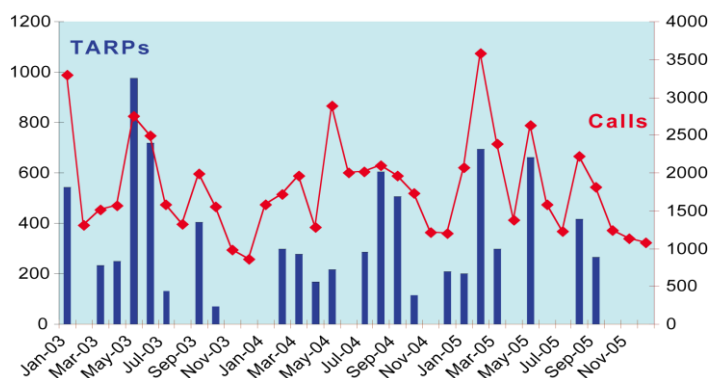
A more recent study published in 2008 showed that increases in the cost of cigarettes and increases in effective televised antismoking advertising were both effective means of reducing smoking prevalence.

Quit smoking television advertisements have been a key feature in the continued effort to bring smoking rates down in Australia for the last 30 years.

The Centre for Behavioural Research in Cancer (CBRC) has undertaken a number of studies regarding the effectiveness of social marketing as a smoking cessation intervention. This research clearly shows that advertising results in substantial quitting contemplation and activity among smokers.

One indicator of cessation behaviour is the number of calls to the Quitline. Calls to the Quitline increase markedly during periods of advertising and mirror the level of advertising TARPS (Target Audience Rating Points) for the campaign. That is, the higher the TARPS, the higher the number of calls.

Calls to Quitline vs Target Audience Rating Points



Evaluations of the first and second phases of Australia's National Tobacco Campaign (1997-1998) showed an overall reduction of around 1.8% in the estimated adult prevalence of smoking over the 18 months from the campaign's launch. The results of phase two showed that the early gains were largely maintained; but further reductions in prevalence were not evident and the evaluation warned that further improvement would require new campaign material and greater media exposure.

This evidence shows the importance of ongoing adequately funded media campaigns in preventing the erosion or stalling of decreases in smoking prevalence made through initial campaigns.

IMPACT ON CHILDREN

A correlation between the level of expenditure on antismoking social marketing campaigns and smoking prevalence among secondary students is also apparent.

Uptake in children in periods of high vs. low media intensity

	1987-1990 moderate activity Phase 1 (%)	1990-1996 low activity Phase 2 %	1996-2005 high activity Phase 3 %
Absolute change in prevalence in monthly smokers			
Most disadvantaged	-1	+6	-12
Second	-2	+3	-10
Third	0	+1	-12
Most advantaged	-1	+1	-13

Source: White, Hayman & Hill 2008

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More info: Anne Jones annej@ashaust.org.au
Indra Haslam Indra.Haslam@cancervic.org.au



Action on Smoking and Health

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The preceding table compares smoking prevalence among students in periods of higher and lower quit smoking media activity. Generally, smoking rose and fell at similar rates for students across different areas; but from 1990-1996, with low media activity, prevalence increased dramatically in the most disadvantaged areas.

This suggests that, although the NTC (1997-1998) was aimed at adults, it also had some impact on youth - in all areas, but particularly in the most disadvantaged. It is not necessary to have specifically "youth" campaigns to make an impact on youth smoking prevalence and uptake.

WHAT TYPES OF CAMPAIGNS WORK?

Quit smoking advertisements that invoke strong negative emotions are more effective than those that do not. A recent Monograph from the National Cancer Institute in the US on the role of media in reducing tobacco use found that the most effective ads are those that use negative emotion to communicate the serious health consequences of smoking, and that such messages perform well across

different age and race/ethnic groups.

Social marketing campaigns should be a mix of graphic health effects and emotional motivators, with new creative executions and regular rotation of older messages to avoid fatigue of the message.

TV ads created to appeal to the widest

possible group of smokers ensure maximum return on investment. General-audience campaigns produced to convey key messages likely to resonate with all, but not specific to smaller groups (e.g. pregnant smokers) provides significantly more value than designing ad messages, settings and talent to multiple specific population sub-groups. The latter strategy would not be cost-effective, as it needs funding of multiple campaigns to convey a variety of tailored messages or versions.

Social marketing campaigns developed by an expert group and run in collaboration with state Quit agencies have proven successful in the past – e.g. the National Tobacco Campaign's iconic 'Every cigarette is doing you damage'.



A GREAT RETURN ON INVESTMENT

The NTC, developed in very close consultation with tobacco control experts from around Australia, prevented almost 60,000 deaths and ensured over 10,000 cases of lung cancer and 10,000 cases of heart attack were avoided, according to research published by the international journal *Tobacco Control* in 2008.

The research also showed the NTC, which began more than ten years ago and cost around \$9m, is predicted to save \$740.6m in national healthcare costs. Lead author of its report, Prof Susan Hurley, noted that as well as reducing smoking rates, the NTC was unequivocally cost-effective.

The study found the health benefits and health care cost savings related to the first phase of the NTC were far greater than previously estimated. The campaign resulted in 190,000 people quitting smoking and a 1.4% drop in smoking rates, and this decline has translated into an immense cost saving to the Australian health care system.

By using mass media campaigns to encourage people to quit smoking, millions of healthcare dollars will be saved and even more importantly the burden of smoking disease on individual Australians and their families will be eased.

HOW MUCH IS NEEDED?

The US NCI monograph concluded that media spending on Quit campaigns should be high enough to achieve at least 700 TARPs per month. To achieve an average of 700 TARPs a month in Australia would cost around \$40m per year. This amount is also likely to increase as media costs increase over time.

To be effective, mass media campaigns need to reach their target audiences with sufficient frequency and over a sustained period.

MASS MEDIA CAMPAIGNS NECESSARY TO MEET TREATY OBLIGATIONS

Under the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control ratified by Australia: www.who.int/fctc

- Article 4 says every person should be informed of the mortal threat posed by tobacco use
- Article 12 on education, communication, training and public awareness requires parties to promote sustainable national tobacco control programs for all.

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