



SMOKE-FREE  
OUTDOOR PRIDE EVENT  
TOOLKIT

FOR TOBACCO PREVENTION ADVOCATES  
HELPING LGBT PRIDE EVENTS BECOME  
SMOKE FREE

## WHAT IS A PRIDE EVENT?

Today, millions of people come together for Gay Pride events in cities large and small, all around the world.

Going to a Pride event means something different to everyone.

- Pride events are about celebration.
- They are about self-respect.
- They are about freedom and self-discovery.
- They are about politics.

Pride events are about making a statement. Rainbow flags fly at Pride events symbolizing the tremendous diversity within the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) community.

The mood at Pride events ranges from loud and proud to tentative and hopeful, depending on the political climate of the location in which the event is being held. Most Pride events start with a parade, often culminating in a celebration such as a street fair or gathering in a park. The celebration often features political speakers and performers on one or more stages.

The parade will typically be headed by a Grand Marshal, followed by politicians and great numbers of LGBT people marching, representing political, social and religious, health and sports organizations of every type.

Attendees reach out to others with a desire to learn and explore. Vendors sell trinkets, food and drink. Community groups, health advocates and civil rights activists — the heart of every Pride event — use the visibility of the event to advance their message.

Pride events are held in public spaces both large and small, and are designed to be safe spaces, free of hate and bigotry. They are intended to be accessible to all, which should encourage more groups to advocate for tobacco-free Pride events.

### STATEWIDE PRIDE CELEBRATIONS

Pride events have customarily taken place in the following California cities and counties:

- BAKERSFIELD
- CHICO
- DAVIS
- FRESNO
- HUMBOLDT COUNTY
- LONG BEACH
- LOS ANGELES/  
STUDIO CITY
- LOS ANGELES/  
WEST HOLLYWOOD
- MARIN COUNTY
- MONTEREY
- OAKLAND
- PALM SPRINGS
- PASADENA
- SAN DIEGO
- SANTA CRUZ
- SAN FRANCISCO
- SAN JOSE
- SAN LUIS OBISPO
- SONOMA
- STANISLAUS COUNTY
- VENTURA

## BREAKING THE LINK — ADVOCATING FOR A SMOKE-FREE PRIDE



At any Pride event, you will see children and young people. Some are LGBT youth and some are children of LGBT adults.

Children and young people often mirror what they see in their community. For this reason, changing the norm of tobacco-use at Pride events is vitally important.

Smoke-free Pride events will have a domino effect: Adults will see smoke-free signs at the event, notice that nobody is smoking, and refrain from smoking. In turn, children and LGBT youth will not associate smoking with the event — or their community.

“This is the number one queer event of the year,” says Ted Guggenheim of the LGBT Partnership. “It is a great place to break the link between smoking, youth and the LGBT community.”



## ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

Imagine you are at the long-awaited, annual outdoor Pride event held in your city. Thousands of people from near and far are in attendance, ready to enjoy the festivities. There are activities and booths for adults and children. There is plenty to see and do.

Then, someone, somewhere lights up a cigarette. You can't see the smoker, but you can smell the burning tobacco. The odor bothers you, but you find yourself thinking, "Well, we are outdoors."

Next time, rather than simply accepting the toxic cloud, envision an outdoor Pride event with clean air. Think about a Pride event free from tobacco smoke — a mixture of more than 4,000 toxic chemicals with more than 60 that are known or suspected to cause cancer.<sup>1</sup>

Then imagine a Pride event without the litter left behind by smokers: the trails of grimy cigarette butts, empty packs and cellophane wrappers, dead lighters, matches and matchbooks.

Imagine a Pride event where the norm is a smoke-free environment. At this event it is understood — by smokers and non-smokers — that one should no more light up here than in an elevator or theater. It is understood that if cigarettes are to be smoked, their use must not affect other attendees.

Now how do you feel about tobacco use at Pride events? How do you feel about smoke-free outdoor Pride events?

**"You can still celebrate  
without smoking."**

— Santa Cruz Pride attendee

**The aim of this toolkit is to help health officials, advocates and organizers change the norm of smoking at outdoor Pride events.**

This toolkit is broken down into small, easy-to-read sections and is full of tips, tactics and strategies for effective policy change. There is also an ample

resource section that provides the names, phone numbers and addresses of groups that can offer assistance and advice on how to create smoke-free spaces at outdoor events.

This toolkit was researched and written by the California LGBT Tobacco Education Partnership (LGBT Partnership). This group is one of seven statewide Priority Population Partnerships funded by the California Department of Health Services/Tobacco Control Section (CDHS/TCS) — the result of Proposition 99, the Tobacco Tax Health Protection Act of 1988.

The LGBT Partnership was created in 2004 to counteract, through education and advocacy efforts, the negative impact that tobacco use has had on the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender community. One of the LGBT Partnership's goals is to provide technical assistance and training to TCS and its funded agencies. Other goals include advocating for policies to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke and to counteract pro-tobacco influences such as donations to LGBT elected officials, advertising in LGBT publications and sponsorships of LGBT community events and organizations.

## HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

Before you approach your city's Pride festival committee about banning smoking at Pride events, you must prepare. You'll need information, support and allies. This toolkit will help.

Reading this toolkit will give you the information you need to present a coherent and compelling argument.

- Familiarize yourself with statistics — numbers that show the smoking rate in the gay community, paired with illness and death rates. Gather data on the environmental costs of cigarette smoking.
- Prepare your personal story about why you care about this issue. Have you lost a family member or friend to tobacco-related disease?
- Arm yourself with responses to challenging questions, such as “What are you going to ban next, cheese?” Chances are you will face people who question your motives, so it makes sense to have some answers for them.
- Follow the step-by-step guidelines used to advocate for policy change, listed in Tools 3 and 4.
- Use the sample policy language in this toolkit found in Tool 5 as a reference when writing your own policies.
- Learn how to assess community support for smoke-free Pride events through easy-to-administer surveys.
- In Tool 3, read about pilot projects from San Francisco, Sacramento, Santa Cruz and Fresno. Can you learn anything from their experiences?

Read the toolkit, bookmark pages, write in it and make it your own.

Good luck!



“As a former smoker, when someone next to me lights up, I think, ‘Oh no, I’ve got to smell that all day.’ It’s noxious.”

– San Francisco Pride attendee

## SMOKING IN THE LGBT COMMUNITY

The following statistics are derived from the 2003 California LGBT Tobacco Survey, an extensive study funded by the California Department of Health Services, Tobacco-Control Section. According to the study sample, there are more than a million LGBT adults living in California, which amounts to 4.6 percent of California's population of 24.6 million adults.

This is the first statewide survey in the nation to consider tobacco-related behavior, attitudes and knowledge within the LGBT population. The survey of 2,287 people, conducted between July 2003 and March 2004 found:

- Smoking prevalence for the overall LGBT population is almost double that of the general population, as found in the 2002 California Tobacco Survey: 30.4 percent versus 15.4 percent.
- LGBT women's smoking prevalence is almost triple that of general population women: 32.5 percent versus 11.9 percent.
- LGBT men's smoking prevalence is about 50 percent higher than general population men: 27.4 percent versus 19.1 percent.
- Bans on smoking are less common in LGBT households (67.9 percent) than in the general population (76.9 percent).
- Young adults aged 18 to 24 have a smoking rate of 18 percent, according to the 2002 California Tobacco Survey. Whereas 18 to 24 year olds who identify as LGBT have an extremely high smoking rate of 43.7 percent.

# statistics



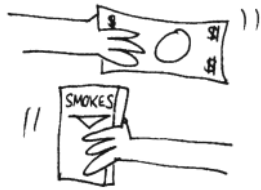
“Every once in a while  
I get nauseated  
when cigarette smoke  
hits me in the face.”

- Santa Cruz Pride attendee

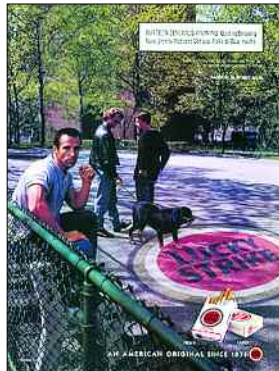
# WHAT LINKS THE LGBT COMMUNITY AND THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY?

In recent years, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender community has grown in visibility and influence.

LGBT organizations have emerged in cities large and small to address a variety of health, social and advocacy needs. Although a significant amount of progress has been made in serving LGBT communities, funding can often be hard to come by.



In its quest to portray itself as a community-minded, charitable entity, the tobacco industry has used its profits to fund LGBT projects, services and events. Tobacco companies offer funding in exchange for visibility at special events. This is a dangerous precedent to set in the LGBT community, where tobacco use is higher than in the general population.



“Pride is about being proud of who you are. How can you be proud of who you are when you’re supporting tobacco companies?”

—Santa Cruz Pride attendee