

# Helping Young Smokers Quit: Program Recruitment for Evaluation

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Identifying Best Practices for Tobacco Cessation



Health Research and Policy Centers



## Introduction

The Helping Young Smokers Quit initiative (HYSQ) is a four-year, two-phase project that addresses the critical need to develop and disseminate effective, developmentally appropriate cessation programs for adolescent smokers. While a growing number of teen cessation programs are available, little is known about: how many programs exist, where they are located, what services they offer, what populations they serve, or how they provide treatment. Moreover, only a handful of such programs have been evaluated.

Through national surveillance, HYSQ identified and characterized 591 youth smoking cessation programs in Phase I. This descriptive study was used to guide program evaluation for the second phase of HYSQ.

In Phase II, standard measures and methods are designed to conduct 50–60 program evaluations of practices now being used by youth cessation programs across the U.S. Through a tiered national recruitment strategy, HYSQ opened the application to all youth cessation programs. Applications were accepted during a 9-week period (March 15 – May 15, 2004). One hundred and seven applications were submitted.

HYSQ is a national program of The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation with support from the National Cancer Institute, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

### Primary goal of the Phase II program recruitment:

Encourage a large and diverse set of youth tobacco cessation programs from across the country to apply for participation in the HYSQ evaluation.

## Web-based Application: A 3-Step Process

### Objectives and Benefits

- Utilize the HYSQ web site as a mode of communication to fully inform program applicants of all that the evaluation will entail.
- Provide a user-friendly application with readily available technical assistance.
- Ensure receipt of complete applications by the deadline with automated email confirmation to applicants.
- Establish standardized review procedures and expedited application review.

### Step 1 Applicant Registration

- Offered interested programs the opportunity to review program eligibility criteria prior to completing the application.
- Established user name and password offering the option to complete and save sections of the application at different times before a final submission.
- Collected contact information to be used for technical assistance and recruitment to follow-up with programs that had not fully completed the application by the deadline.

### Step 2 On-line Application

- Sections could be saved independently, so the entire application did not need to be completed in one session.
- Print/review function allowed applicants to review and edit the saved sections prior to final submission.

### Step 3 Letter of Organizational Support

- Provides a written confirmation that the organizational leaders are aware of the evaluation in an attempt to validate the applications.

## Program Recruitment: Reach and Resources

### Objectives

- Increase awareness of HYSQ and the evaluation application among national and state tobacco key informants.
- Utilize existing dissemination channels by collaborating with national and state organizations to inform youth tobacco cessation programs at the community, organizational, and program levels about the opportunity to participate in the HYSQ evaluation ("Outreach").
- Benefit from the Phase I efforts by directly contacting the programs identified to inform them of the evaluation opportunity and application process ("In-reach").

### Dissemination

#### Goal:

Reach potential applicants to direct them to the HYSQ web site information resources.

#### Outreach:

- Key contacts in 3 types of organizations were called and asked to disseminate the HYSQ Phase II Call for Applications through their usual communication channels: web sites, listservs, email lists, newsletters, etc.

#### In-reach:

- 836 youth tobacco cessation programs identified in Phase I were directly contacted by letter to inform of the Phase II application opportunity.
- At the application period mid-point, targeted in-reach phone calls were made to select Phase I programs that were identified as meeting the Phase II eligibility criteria.
- 112 programs were targeted
- Contact was established with 106
- 58 program leaders were reached directly

Organization Type	Total Number of Organizations	Number of Organizations Contacted by Phone	No Contact (no answer or average daily)	Agreed	Refused	Referrals
Nonprofit	22	12	6	12	1	0
State Tobacco Control Coordinator	174	43	11	32	1	0
State Department of Education	174	33	12	21	1	0

\* The 50 main and Contact of Colorado.  
\*\* Most states refer you to the State Tobacco Control Coordinator

### Applicant Resources

- Technical assistance support via email and toll-free phone number
- Frequently asked questions available on the HYSQ evaluation website with periodic updates based on TA inquiries
- Live webcast presentation of HYSQ with a period of questions and answers
  - Held on April 21, 2004
  - Archived on HYSQ website, including slide presentation and transcript



WWW.HYSQ.ORG

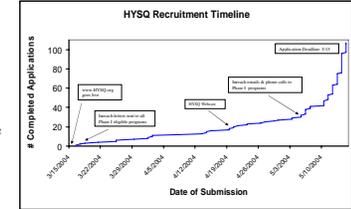
## Recruitment Outcomes

### Dissemination

- Applicants heard about the HYSQ evaluation primarily from:
  - Colleagues 37%
  - HYSQ staff 20%
  - Other sources included: departments of health and education, Safe and Drug Free Schools Coordinators, national organization representative, and friends.
- 63% of the applicants were informed through an electronic listserv or newsletter.

### Resources

- HYSQ Support Staff received and responded to 152 inquiries
  - 56% by phone
  - 44% by email



- 40% of the inquiries were received in the final 10 days of the application period.
- Most frequent topics of inquiry were:
  - Application process
  - Program eligibility
  - Technical difficulty

## Applicant Characteristics

	Phase I Programs	Phase II Applicants
School Setting	90%	82%
Staff	Mean = 1.07	Mean = 2.32
Program Development:		
• Internally	63%	60%
• External	13%	9%
Formats: (non-independent)		
• Group	95%	96%
• Individual Counseling	61%	28%
• Phone	16%	10%
• Internet	7%	3%
• Self-help	48%	29%
Recruitment:		
• Any Mandatory	44%	38%
Parental Consent Required	22%	19%
Treatment Strategies:		
• Treat diet	78%	79%
• Practice coping	99%	99%
• Sign contracts with rewards	48%	48%
• Change diet	68%	75%
• Speak to younger children about not smoking	39%	29%
• Invite family participation	42%	40%
• Address depression	56%	63%

- 107 applications were submitted by programs from 33 states, representing every region of the country.
- 22% from rural counties
- 9% from counties with "low" socioeconomic status (>20% living below the federal poverty level)
- 24% from program identified and characterized in Phase I

### Summary

- The web-based application process successfully captured program information offering contact information for any follow-up needs and program details for a comprehensive eligibility review.
- The dissemination strategies were successful in reaching a large number of programs that did not participate in HYSQ Phase I.
- The program applicants resemble the Phase I profiled programs on many levels.
- The percentage of Phase I programs that applied (24%) is consistent with the percentage in the Phase I sample (26%) that meet the Phase II program eligibility criteria.