

TASKFORCESUBMISSION: submission

NAME: Fiona Phillips

POSITION: Smarter than Smoking Project Coordinator

ORGANISATION: C/- Heart Foundation

SUBMISSION1: This submission is provided by the Smarter than Smoking Project (StS), a multi-strategy intervention which aims to prevent the uptake of smoking among 10 to 15-year-old Western Australians. The project is funded by the Western Australian Health Promotion Foundation (Healthway) and implemented by the National Heart Foundation (Western Australian Division) in collaboration with other key tobacco control agencies in Western Australia (WA). Since 1995, StS is the only project in WA targeting young people exclusively.

This submission provides comments in regard to section three of the discussion paper, 'The case for prevention: tobacco' and 'Technical Report No 2, Tobacco Control in Australia: making smoking history'.

StS is highly supportive of the discussion paper's emphasis on tobacco control as one of the key areas of focus required to improve Australia's health, as well as its acknowledgement that achieving the 2020 target will require a dramatic reduction in the number of children taking up smoking (as well as a doubling of the percentage of smokers trying to quit).

In addition, the project supports the priority areas for action proposed to achieve the 9% (or less) target of daily smoking by 2020, specifically;

- Progressively increasing the tax on tobacco products - Australian research has confirmed that 'affordability' is one of the factors in influencing children's decisions to smoke. Therefore, at the very least, tax on tobacco products should be raised to bring Australia into line with international best practice.
- Investing \$40-50 million a year in public education campaigns - Given the inadequate level of current federal funding for tobacco control, StS supports an increase in funding of public education campaigns to at least, \$40-50 million a year.

Should frequency, reach and intensity of public education campaigns be increased, campaigns with messages relevant to young people to further prevent the uptake of smoking should be considered. The recently released publication, 'Tobacco in Australia: Fact and Issues' (<http://www.tobaccoinaustralia.org.au/chapter-5-uptake/5-21-mass-media-strategies-campaigns>), shows that recent reviews of the evidence conclude that media campaigns targeting young

people can be effective, however, they are most effective when complemented by congruent school and community-based strategies and supported by a comprehensive tobacco control program.

In addition, school-based interventions should compliment messages in public education campaigns. 'Tobacco in Australia: Fact and Issues' (<http://www.tobaccoinaustralia.org.au/chapter-5-uptake/5-23-school-based-interventions>), acknowledges that when implemented as part of a comprehensive approach, school programs can play a vital role in delivering smoking prevention messages to school aged children. Existing strategies to engage schools in smoking prevention education in states and territories is extensive and should be continued, if not enhanced, to ensure a consistent and comprehensive approach nationally, to complement other tobacco control measures.

Prohibiting all remaining forms of promotion of tobacco products and mandate plain packaging - By prohibiting the promotion of tobacco products the uptake of smoking among young people can be prevented. Therefore StS supports the abolition of all forms of tobacco advertising including internet and cable television tobacco promotions, below-the-line marketing of tobacco products at youth-related events and shows and the mandate of plain packaging of tobacco products. Also, all forms of display of tobacco products at point of sale in retail outlets should be removed in all states and territories.

Protecting children and adults from exposure to second-hand smoke - To protect children against the dangers of second hand smoke, StS is highly supportive of legislation to extend smoke free areas to crowded outdoor areas and cars that carry children.

PRIVACY: yes

SUBMIT: Submit