



Tobacco Free Environments

Effective January 1, 2009

Replaces Oregon Head Start Prekindergarten Memo #016

DATE: October 30, 2008

TO: Oregon Head Start Prekindergarten Programs (OHS PreK)

RE: Tobacco Free Environments

PURPOSE: The purpose of this letter is to update OHS PreK policy regarding tobacco-free environment and to eliminate exposure to tobacco smoke by children, staff, and parents in the OHS PreK Program. This letter replaces OHS PreK Memo #016.

ORS 326.620(1) requires that "Federal Head Start program guidelines shall be considered as guidelines for the Oregon prekindergarten program." In addition, Public Law 103-227, Section 1043, requires a Smoke Free Environment for kindergarten, elementary, secondary and library services. Federal Head Start issued its Program Instruction on Smoke-Free Environment as ACYF-PI-HS-95-04. In 1996, OHS PreK Memo #016 adopted the federal Instruction for all Oregon Prekindergarten Programs.

Tobacco-free environments for Head Start centers supports goals set by national initiatives of the U.S. Surgeon General, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Department of Health Human Services to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke among children. Exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke is a risk factor for the onset of asthma. Exposure to residual smoke on clothing or other surfaces can be an asthma trigger. Research has documented that secondhand smoke outdoors (as well as indoors) can pose significant health risks to young children and others, especially for those with asthma and allergies. Exposure to tobacco smoke and asthma rates are higher in households at or below poverty level and in those with lower levels of education. According to a report issued by the DHHS Office of Inspector General in 2002, asthma is the top chronic disease among Head Start children. Tobacco-free environment policies protect children, family members, staff, and visitors from secondhand smoke, and promote healthy behavior choices and positive role modeling by prohibiting the use all tobacco products on Head Start premises.

Divergence from Head Start guidelines may occur in situations where there is a higher state standard, as is the case with Oregon's commitment to ensuring healthy school environments at all educational levels. Effective January 1, 2006 all Oregon K-12 schools became required by Oregon Administrative Rule 581-021-0110 to maintain tobacco-free school grounds. The instruction in this OHS PreK guidance letter is intended to standardize tobacco-free policies for all levels from PreK to K-12, along with specific considerations for the PreK setting.

INSTRUCTION:

Because there is considerable evidence that environmental tobacco smoke is harmful to children and adults; and because OHS PreK has the mission of promoting the healthy development of children and families the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) is requiring all grantees to work with its policy councils, Health Advisory Committees, parents, and staff in order to establish and enforce written policies which will ensure it's OHS PreK sites are tobacco-free. These policies must be established and in effect by January 1, 2009.

Revised Tobacco-Free Environment OHS PreK Policy:

- (1) For the purpose of this rule "tobacco" is defined to include any lighted or unlighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, bidi, clove cigarette, and any other smoking product, and spit tobacco, also known as smokeless, dip, chew, and snuff, in any form.
- (2) OHS PreK participants, family members, staff members, visitors and all others are not permitted to smoke, inhale, dip, or chew or sell tobacco at any time, including non-school hours, when they are in the following environments:
 - (a) In any building, facility, or vehicle owned, leased, rented, or chartered by the OHS PreK;
or
 - (b) On any OHS PreK outdoor grounds, or portions thereof, that are wholly owned and/or operated by the OHS PreK, including but not limited to playgrounds and parking lots.
- (3) OHS PreK staff and volunteers must avoid bringing or wearing clothing that smells of smoke into the center, on the playground, or in other areas where children are present.
- (4) By January 1, 2009, all OHS PreK programs must establish policies and procedures to implement and enforce this rule for Head Start participants, family members, staff, visitors, and all others.
- (5) For purposes of this rule, the term "Oregon Head Start Prekindergarten program" includes all Oregon Head Start programs receiving Oregon state funding.

Elements retained from "Smoke-free Environment" Policy (Memo #016, 1996):

OHS PreK programs must develop policies that require staff and parents to refrain from smoking during OHS PreK activities. Examples of activities include field trips, neighborhood walks or other outdoor activities. Parents, volunteers, and staff should recognize that they serve as role models for the children and should not smoke or use other tobacco products in front of them. The only situation under which this does not apply is during a presentation or field trip related to American Indian cultural customs in which tobacco is utilized.

Educational and wellness activities, such as tobacco cessation programs for adults and health education for children will be developed, with input from policy councils, staff and parents, to assist in carrying out tobacco-free policies.

The Oregon Smoke-free Workplace Law, effective January 1, 2009, prohibits smoking inside all worksites and within 10 feet of entrances, exits, windows that open, and ventilation intakes. For Oregon Head Start Prekindergarten programs that share a building or outside grounds with other occupants, grantees should take steps to reduce children's exposure to smoke from other sources, for example, by altering traffic patterns. Programs should also negotiate with the property manager and/or other occupants to establish tobacco-free policies covering all premises used by or traveled through by the OHS PreK participants. This would include playgrounds and parking lots.

Establishing and enforcing appropriate tobacco-free policies helps ensure that a tobacco-free environment will increasingly be recognized as a basic safety and health requirement of any program serving children.

IMPLEMENTATION:

This policy is effective January 1, 2009. Please be advised that a tobacco-free environment will be one of the requirements monitored during on-site program reviews. Evidence of compliance will include:

- Written policies, approved by Policy Councils, regarding a tobacco-free environment;
- Evidence that all staff have been informed about these policies;
- The posting of tobacco-free school signs on the premises;
- Correspondence, meeting notices, and flyers which advise parents and staff of the new policies and related activities such as tobacco cessation programs for adults and health education activities for young children;
- Evidence of compliance with a no tobacco use policy through physical inspection of the facility;
- For programs that share grounds with other occupants, evidence of efforts to limit the introduction of tobacco smoke from outside sources into areas affecting OHS PreK participants.

ODE recommends that Oregon Head Start Prekindergarten programs utilize the language from the "Tobacco-Free Environment" comprehensive model policy developed and endorsed by the Oregon Public Health Division, the American Lung Association of Oregon, and the Oregon Head Start Association. See attached model policy and checklist. This model policy includes tobacco-related elements required by this ODE as well as additional tobacco control best practices.

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT TOBACCO-FREE ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION

Through a collaborative partnership with the Oregon Public Health Division Tobacco Prevention & Education Program and the American Lung Association of Oregon, the following technical assistance and resources are available to Oregon Head Start Programs.

Note: The American Lung Association of Oregon is collecting policies from each Oregon Head Start Program. They will analyze your current policy and provide a profile sheet indicating where the policy can be strengthened. (See bottom of page for contact information.)

Tobacco-Free Policy Development

- Technical assistance from American Lung Association of Oregon (ALAO) on development of policy and procedures related to tobacco use
- ALAO/OHSA model policy and checklist for “Tobacco-Free Environment”
- Consultation by ALAO and/or local county health departments on working with property managers and occupants of shared grounds to expand tobacco-free zones outside of the direct control of the HS program

Policy Communication

- Free Tobacco-Free School signage for Head Start sites (available through ALAO)

Tobacco Prevention and Education

- Fresh Air for Little Noses, an ALAO program designed to reduce children’s exposure to secondhand smoke, help children manage their asthma, and encourage friends and loved ones to quit smoking. Educational materials are available at <http://www.lungoregon.org/tobacco/fafln.html>
- Educational materials (including materials to promote the Tobacco Quit Line) can be ordered through the Oregon Tobacco Education Clearinghouse: <http://oregon.gov/DHS/ph/tobacco/otec/index.shtml>

Tobacco Cessation Support

- Oregon Tobacco Quit Line: 1-800 QUIT-NOW
<http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/tobacco/oregonquitline.shtml>
- Brief Tobacco Intervention Skills Training (Contact Cathy Wamsley at Umatilla-Morrow Head Start, 541-564-6878 or cwamsley@umchs.org)
- Freedom from Smoking® Online: <http://www.ffsonline.org/> (web-based cessation program of the American Lung Association)
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For information on these resources, contact Sandy at the American Lung Association of Oregon, 503-718-6143 or visit <http://www.lungoregon.org/tobacco/HeadStart.html>

The attached document on Tobacco Free Environments replaces OHS PreK Memo #016. The policies outlined are effective as of January 1, 2009.



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