



A Tobacco-Free Nation through Health Education



Planning Your NHEW:
Tips From the Society for Public
Health Education

National Health Education Week 2010



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Introduction

Since 1995, **National Health Education Week (NHEW)** has been celebrated during the third week of October. This celebration focuses national attention on a major public health issue and promotes consumers' understanding of the role of health education in promoting the public's health. The event is sponsored by the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE).

The 2010 National Health Education Week focuses on the theme *A Tobacco-Free Nation Through Health Education*.

Each day, the week will highlight a different theme:

- *Monday: Tobacco Prevention at a Community Level*
- *Tuesday: Evidence-Based & Successful Approaches to Tobacco Control & Prevention*
- *Wednesday: Tobacco & Health Disparities*
- *Thursday: Preventing Tobacco use among Youth*
- *Friday: Global Trends in Tobacco Adoption and Marketing*

The following pages will provide tips and resources for planning and promoting your NHEW activities.



The Role of the Health Education Specialist

In efforts to address the nation's health challenges, health education specialists plan and direct programs, design workshops and forums, work closely with community groups, and otherwise serve a broad public health agenda. They may also conduct studies of public health education needs, evaluate the materials and methods used in programs, determine program effectiveness, and strive to improve the overall health of communities.

The role of the health education specialist, then, is to take this message of tobacco prevention to the populations that they work with on a daily basis. Health education specialists are every where; they are in cities, and they are in rural areas. They are in elementary schools, and they are in retirement homes. They reach a variety of people in a variety of settings across the globe. Health education specialists play an integral role in developing and distributing accessible, appropriate messages regarding tobacco cessation, prevention and control.

As we celebrate this year's National Health Education Week, we also promote the field of health education and honor our health education specialists. In honor of this week, be sure to recognize health education specialists, not only for their many contributions to improving the public's health by promoting tobacco control, prevention & cessation, but also for all they do every day to sustain programs and services for this population.

What is Health Education?

Health education is a social science that draws from the biological, environmental, psychological, physical, and medical sciences. It aims to promote health and prevent disease, disability, and premature death through theory-based voluntary behavior change activities, programs, campaigns, and research. Health education is an essential public health service that requires the practice of three core functions of public health: assessment, policy development, and quality assurance. By focusing on prevention, health education reduces the financial and human costs that individuals, employers, medical facilities, insurance companies, and the nation would spend on healthcare and medical treatment.

In practice, health education adopts a broad, ecological approach in an effort to create healthy communities. Health education specialists work at the individual, group, institutional, community, and systemic levels to improve health knowledge, attitudes, and skills for the purpose of changing or encouraging behaviors that result in optimal health status. The field provides a scientific backdrop that has established strong theories for disease prevention and health enhancing behaviors.

What is a Health Education Specialist?

**Advocating for healthier individuals, families, and communities:
health education specialists**



Where Do Health Education Specialists Work?

According to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Health Statistics 2008 Census, there are more than 66,200 health educators (SOC Code 21-1091) working in the following settings:

- ◆ **Business/Industry:** To improve the health of employees. Chronic diseases and unhealthy behaviors affect the ability to work and increase employers' workers' compensation and health care costs, work-related injuries, absenteeism, as well as decreased productivity.¹
- ◆ **Hospitals, Clinics and Health Plans:** To promote healthy lifestyles, help patients and families recover from illness and manage their condition, and provide training
- ◆ **Municipal/County/State Public Health Departments:** To promote and protect the health of all populations living in their geographic area and achieve public health goals.
- ◆ **Nonprofit/Voluntary Organizations:** To provide education and services related to a particular disease or priority population.
- ◆ **Schools & Universities:** To assist students adopt healthful behaviors thereby improving academic performance.²
- ◆ **Universities:** To provide specialized curricula and instruction for future health educators and to conduct research on effective programs, policies and interventions.

What Services and Value Do Health Education Specialists Provide?

At the individual and population-based levels, health education specialists:

- ⇒ promote healthy lifestyles for individuals, families and communities.
- ⇒ partner with appropriate providers to plan, conduct and evaluate programs designed to improve health outcomes.
- ⇒ design and implement evidence based, cost effective programs that assist individuals, families and the community.
- ⇒ exhibit technical competency in the assessment of needs and the impact on the individual, family and community.
- ⇒ advocate for and implement changes in health policies, procedures, and services.

Where Are Health Education Specialists Trained?

More than 250 professional preparation programs around the country provide formal degrees in school and community/public health education at the baccalaureate, masters and doctoral levels. Many health education specialists hold master's degrees from schools and programs in public health. Curricula include a unique combination of instruction from the behavioral/social, epidemiological, environmental, and biomedical sciences, as well as health administration and public policy.

What is a Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) or (MCHES)?

The CHES designation signifies that an individual has met eligibility requirements for and has successfully passed a competency-based examination demonstrating skill and knowledge of the [Seven Areas of Responsibility of Health Education Specialists](#), upon which the credential is based. MCHES, the masters level certification, includes a set of advanced eligibility requirements. Certification is provided by the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, which has an ongoing commitment to continuing education.

Employment of health educators is expected to grow by 18 percent, which is faster than the average for all occupations through 2018. Growth will result from the rising cost of healthcare.

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2010-11 Edition*, Health Educators, on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos063.htm> (visited February 27, 2010).

Why Are Health Education Specialists Vital to the Nation?

- ◆ Health education improves the health status of individuals, communities, states, and the nation; enhances the quality of life for all people; and reduces costly premature deaths and disability.
- ◆ By focusing on prevention, health education reduces the costs (both financial and human) spent on medical treatment. Chronic conditions, such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer, consume more than 75 percent of the \$2.2 trillion spent on health care in the United States each year - the equivalent of about 2.5 economic "bailout" packages.³ Spending as little as \$10 per person on proven preventive interventions could save the country over \$16 billion in just five years.⁴
- ◆ Health education specialists offer knowledge, skills and training that complement those of health care providers, policy makers, educational experts, human resource personnel and many other professionals whose work impacts human health.
- ◆ Addressing a single risk factor (e.g., smoking) influences outcomes across multiple diseases, from preterm birth to lung disease and cancer. Addressing obesity in today's children alters the prevalence of many diseases (e.g. heart disease, cancer, diabetes, arthritis) that may be encountered decades later.⁵

1. National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (2009). School Resources, Worksite Resources and Community Resources. Accessed on February 17, 2009 at <http://www.achievecommunities.org/nacddresources.cfm>.

2. Centers for Disease Control, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Student Health and Academic Achievement. Accessed on February 27, 2010 at http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/health_and_academics/index.htm

3. Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease (2009). January 27, 2009 press release. Access on February 13, 2009 at <http://www.fightchronicdisease.org/media/statements/pfcd/Stimuluspackage.cfm>.

4. Trust for America's Health (2008). *Prevention for a Healthier America: Investments in Disease Prevention Yield Significant Savings, Stronger Communities*. June, TFAH.

5. California Department of Personnel Administration (2009). Worksite Resources. Accessed on February 19, 2009 at <http://www.dpa.ca.gov/benefits/health/wellness/guide/guidetoc.htm>.

Planning Your NHEW Activity

Remember that programs, activities, and collaborations can extend beyond NHEW. Collaborate with local, state, and national partners to build sustainable programs.

Forming a Planning Committee

Setting aside sufficient planning time for your campaign will help you produce a successful and meaningful outcome. One way to structure this process is to form a planning committee.

When recruiting a planning committee, consider a diversity of strengths and talents that individuals might bring to the group. These include leadership skills, technical skills, promotional skills, subject area expertise, or access to particular communities or organizations. You should also include members of your target population in your efforts. That way you can better understand their specific interests, needs, and wants.

Besides in-person meetings and conference calls, use creative ways to meet with the planning committee to keep them engaged. Use web cams, set up an online discussion forum (i.e. Google Groups), and/or create a blog to keep members up-to-date with events.

The committee will be charged with:

- ◆ Establishing the goals and objectives of the campaign
- ◆ Developing a plan of action and activities to accomplish the objectives
- ◆ Creating a timeline
- ◆ Identifying responsibilities
- ◆ Evaluating progress
- ◆ Addressing obstacles
- ◆ Evaluating outcomes

Establishing Goals and Objectives

The overall goal of National Health Education Week 2010 is to promote a tobacco-free society through education and prevention. However, the specific objectives for your campaign can be determined locally, based on the interests and needs of community members.

Examples of objectives for National Health Education Week 2009 might include:

By the end of NHEW 2010, at least X% percent of Community X will have been exposed to at least one educational material regarding tobacco cessation.

By the end of the NHEW 2010 Community Center X's Advocacy Day, at least 80% of participants will write the largest employers in the region in support of employee cessation services.

By the end of the year 2010, at least "X%" of school-aged children in Community X will receive information about why they should be tobacco-free.

Get Your Message Heard: Inform the Public

A crucial step to engaging your target audience for National Health Education Week is getting the message out there. Spreading the word can be done in many ways—by visiting the target population, by word of mouth, or through written correspondence. You can do this through traditional media (newspapers, radio, television), or propagate your message through social media (Twitter, Facebook, Flickr). Depending on your target audience, you might write a feature article about your event for the local paper or use Facebook to create an invitation.

Media Outlets

Newspapers

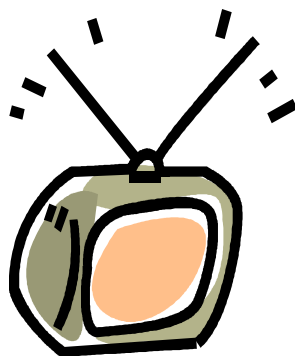
Newspapers remain popular venues through which individuals can share facts, resources, and opinions (although there is currently a trend toward strictly online status, which reduces the diversity of readers to those with internet access). When advocating for a particular health issue, consider the following: feature articles, op-eds, letters to the editor, “Dear Abby,” advertisements, and adding your event to a community calendar.

Newsletters

Newsletters provide a smaller forum through which readers can learn about specific issues, events, or services being offered. If you know of associations or organizations that may have members who are interested in tobacco prevention, submit a blurb about your National Health Education Week event or activity. They are more likely to include your write-up in a newsletter if it is well-written and ready for publication!



Television



Based on figures from the US Census Bureau, Americans spend over 4 hours watching television per day, which makes it an excellent marketing tool. If your organization has enough money to fund a television campaign or a public service announcement (PSA), this media option can be quite fruitful. If not, there are several ways that you can engage your local television stations. Many television stations include a segment during the morning or evening news that focuses on a health issue. Research who covers these segments and inform that individual of your National Health Education Week event or activity.

Radio

While not as popular as television, radio can also be an effective way to market a message. Press releases can be read over the air to spread the word. Depending on your target population, try local stations, regional stations, or even National Public Radio.

Blogs



Million of Americans maintain blogs (contraction of the term “weblog”), posting over 1 million new entries every day, which are read by over 50 million Americans. With so many conversations taking place online each day, this outlet can play a critical role in conveying your message.

Things you should know about blogs:

- ◆ **Blogging is personal.** Bloggers have more freedom than journalist (no newspaper guidelines to stay within) and often their entries are more personal, offering viewers both opinion and perspective on controversial issues.
- ◆ **Real time reporting.** Unlike newspapers and other print media, blogging offers real-time reporting of news as blog entries can be posted at any time of the day or night.
- ◆ **Cordial and timely correspondence.** Since bloggers follow a faster pace than the print world, it is important to provide information and respond to questions quickly.

Twitter

Twitter is a social media site that has become increasingly popular as a venue for exchanging thoughts and information. In 140 characters, you have the opportunity to promote an event, share a link, or simply initiate dialogue about a certain topic.

In order to be an effective “tweeter,” your Twitter account must maintain visibility. By using the “#” symbol for keywords, your tweets become part of a streaming dialogue about a specific topic, which increases the visibility of a tweet.



TIP: Follow @SOPHEtweets to keep up-to-date with SOPHE and NHEW related news.

Example of NHEW tweets:

- ◆ This week is National Health Education Week (#NHEW) - See www.sophe.org to learn more
- ◆ We will be at this week’s #publichealth fair discussing how to be tobacco-free #NHEW
- ◆ What are you doing to promote tobacco prevention this National Health Education Week (#NHEW)?
- ◆ Why are you tobacco-free? #NHEW

Facebook

With more than 400 million active users, Facebook provides an excellent opportunity for getting your message out:

- ◆ Using the Event Invitation application, you can invite Facebook friends to an upcoming event and ask them to pass along the invitation.
- ◆ Also use the “What’s on your mind?” box at the top of your homepage to notify fellow Facebookers about upcoming National Health Education Week events. Individuals can also become creative with these “status updates” by providing a different tobacco-related or health education related fact each day of National Health Education Week.
- ◆ If your organization has a Facebook page, also be sure to utilize the discussion section to not only publicize events, but also to engage your “Facebook fans” in dialogue by asking questions related to tobacco cessation & prevention and health education.



TIP: Visit SOPHE’s Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Society-for-Public-Health-Education/217171689055> to share & see NHEW related news and information.

Flickr

Flickr is an online community forum for sharing photos and videos. The web site is commonly used by bloggers as a source of images—meaning wider exposure to your events and activities. Choose “tags” (keywords) for your photos that will generate interest, such as “National Health Education Week,” “public health education,” and “tobacco-free.” By sharing photos of your National Health Education Week events and activities, you will generate interest in the work that you do and gain a wider audience for your organization. Be sure to add SOPHE’s Flickr Account as one of your contacts.



TIP: Visit SOPHE’s Flickr account at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/sophepics> to share & see NHEW related photos.

Youtube

From beaming babies to singing seniors, Youtube features videos of individuals from various populations worldwide. By taking short video segments during your event, you can generate interest even once it is over. If you are not holding an event, you can also create video clips of members of your community talking about why they are tobacco-free.



Try one or a variety of the above options. The key is magnitude. The more people you reach, the more successful your event and/or intervention will be.



Steps toward a Successful Marketing Campaign

Whichever media outlet you choose, there are similar steps to successfully market your message.

Step 1: Identify your key audiences.

You may have different key messages for specific communities as well as a general set of messages for the general population.

Step 2: Decide upon key message(s)

You can find a message relating to the overall theme, A Tobacco Free Nation through Health Education, or develop a key message based around one of the day's themes:

- Monday: Tobacco Prevention at a Community Level
- Tuesday: Innovative Approaches to Tobacco Cessation: What's Working & With Whom?
- Wednesday: Tobacco & Health Disparities
- Thursday: Preventing Tobacco use among Youth
- Friday: Global Trends in Tobacco Adoption and Marketing

Step 3: Get the facts

Research the facts that support your key message(s). Many tobacco-related facts can be found throughout this document. Also check out www.sophe.org/nhew.cfm for additional resources and links to organizations.

Step 4: Decide which media outlets you want to utilize

A video on Youtube? A spotlight on the 6 o'clock news? Narrow down how you want your message to be disseminated.

Step 5: Develop a current media contact list

Include local and regional radio, television, print outlets and key health journalists. Also identify relevant blogs and make contact with the blogger (to start your search, check out <http://blogsearch.google.com>) Join Twitter and follow groups with related messages to network and increase visibility.

Step 6: Develop a press release (Refer to the sample press release.)

- Include a background page about National Health Education Week and tobacco prevention. The background page can include key facts, statistics, and information resources.
- Identify a member of your organization as a local spokesperson to answer journalist questions.
- Identify examples of effective tobacco education programming in your community to pitch to journalists and bloggers for coverage.



Step 7: Develop a strategy for utilizing media outlets

- See your information through the eyes of a journalist or blogger. Fashion your story to fit their needs and interests.
- Leverage local or regional media interest to promote NHEW by stressing the value of preventative health efforts as a major way to lower health care costs for your community, organization, employers, and the nation.
- Create media interest through the use of specific stories about individuals helped, health programming undertaken, and policy stands that speak to tobacco education. Identify local experts who can talk to the media about the need for tobacco prevention efforts in communities and at schools, and the role of health education specialists in preventing tobacco use in the local community.

Step 8: Disseminate your information to media outlets & priority media targets

- Include a brief cover letter with your press release.
- Mail, fax, email and telephone calls are all mechanism to get your message to media outlets. Check to see how your local journalists prefer to be contacted. They are often busy professionals who appreciate clarity and brevity.
- Don't wait for them to contact you— follow-up with a call, fax, or email.
- Follow through on media requests.
Be timely in responding to media requests for more information and connecting them to experts on the topic.

Step 9: Begin to establish a relationship with the media

- Send thank you notes to those media that covered your story.
- Add contacts to distribution lists for newsletters and other publications.
- Send additional news of interest to those media contacts.
- After the story, invite the media to cover your organization, program, and/or worksite for events.
- Follow the interests of specific journalists and send them relevant stories.
- Help establish your organization as a credible source for information on health issues.



Sample Press Release

[organization, company or program letterhead here]

[date]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[contact person name]

[telephone number]

[email address]

National Health Education Week 2010 Sets Focus on a Tobacco Free Society

[city, state] -- Taking place October 17-23, the theme of this year's National Health Education Week is *A Tobacco Free Nation through Health Education*. To promote this theme, [name of program/organization] [describe the activity/event/promotion being conducted].

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), tobacco use causes more than 5 million deaths worldwide per year¹. Additionally, tobacco-related illnesses costs the U.S. economy billions of dollars each year in lost productivity, hospitalization, and long-term disability.²

Quote from [credible organization/program individual]

Quote from [health education expert]

National Health Education Week is celebrated each year during the third week of October in an effort to focus on providing education on a major public health issue and to improve consumer understanding of health education's role in promoting the public's health. Since 1995, the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) has provided support to schools, communities, and health education professionals throughout the nation to plan and conduct activities around the designated annual theme.

SOPHE is a non-profit professional organization founded in 1950 to provide global leadership to the profession of health education and health promotion and to promote the health of society through advances in health education theory and research, excellence in professional preparation and practice, advocacy for public policies conducive to health, and the achievement of health equity for all. For more information, see www.sophe.org.

[paragraph about your organization here]

¹World Health Organization. [WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic, 2008](#). Geneva: World Health Organization; 2008 [accessed 2010 July 28].

²Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Smoking-Attributable Mortality, Years of Potential Life Lost, and Productivity Losses—United States, 2000–2004](#). Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report [serial online]. 2008;57(45):1226–1228 [accessed 2010 July 28].

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Sample Proclamation

WHEREAS, the State of [name of state, city] has a vital interest in a tobacco-free nation; and

WHEREAS, tobacco use causes more than 5 million deaths worldwide per year¹; and

WHEREAS, approximately one third of youth smokers will eventually die from a tobacco-related disease²; and

WHEREAS, cigarette smoking is the number one cause of preventable death in the U.S.³; and

WHEREAS, tobacco-related illnesses costs the U.S. economy billions of dollars each year in lost productivity, hospitalization, and long-term disability⁴; and

WHEREAS, a tobacco-free society will save both lives and money; and

WHEREAS the [name of chapter or organization] is committed to a tobacco-free nation by bringing health education ideas and principles into the legislative and public arenas; and

WHEREAS, in celebration of National Health Education Week, national, state and local collaboration are essential to support the 2010 National Health Education Week focus on tobacco prevention and cessation through the theme, “A Tobacco Free Nation through Health Education”;

NOW, THEREFORE, I [name of governor, mayor, elected official, or health commissioner] of the [name of state, city] do hereby proclaim

The Third Week of October, October 17-23, 2010

As

National Health Education Week

And urge all individuals and communities to take part in activities designed to enhance awareness of public health education messages and activities to eliminate tobacco use by supporting and encouraging participation in National Health Education Week.

¹World Health Organization. [WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic, 2008](#). Geneva: World Health Organization; 2008 [accessed 2010 July 28].

²PERSPECTIVES in Health. Volume 2- No. 2. 1997. “Tobacco: the next World War?” Pan American Health Organization. World Health Organization website. URL: http://www.paho.org/English/DPI/Number4_article5.htm

³U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA. Executive Summary. Page 13 of 20 of PDF. URL: http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/2004/pdfs/executivesummary.pdf

⁴Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Smoking-Attributable Mortality, Years of Potential Life Lost, and Productivity Losses—United States, 2000–2004](#). Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report [serial online]. 2008;57(45):1226–1228 [accessed 2010 July 28].

Evaluation

*SOPHE would like to know how you celebrated
National Health Education Week 2010.*

Please send your completed evaluation form to:

**SOPHE
ATTN: NHEW 2010
10 G Street, NE, Suite 605
Washington, DC 20002**

National Health Education Week 2010 Evaluation Form

SOPHE would like to know how you celebrated National Health Education Week 2010.

Did you celebrate National Health Education Week (NHEW) 2010? Yes No

Did you celebrate NHEW during the week of Oct. 17-23, 2010? Yes No

Did you celebrate the theme *A Tobacco Free Nation through Health Education*? Yes No

Please check your target audiences (*Check all that apply.*)

Colleges/Universities Schools (other): Ethnic/racial groups
 Parents/Caregivers SOPHE members Health care settings
 Local businesses Community agencies Employees
 Senior Citizens Employers
 Local health experts Youth

Other (please describe):

Please check your community partner(s) (*Check all that apply.*)

Schools Colleges/Universities Parents/Caregivers
 Community agencies SOPHE Chapters Health care industry Local businesses

Other (please describe):

I did not collaborate with a community partner.

How many individuals did your program activities

... plan to reach? _____

... actually reach? _____

Which activity/activities did you use to celebrate NHEW 2010? (*Check all that apply.*)

Classroom lessons(K-12) Health fair
 Worked with the media Display booth
 Newspaper/newsletter article Community event
 Radio/Television appearance Adapted an evidence-based program
 Speak /Present at an event
 Outreach to College Students
 Social media campaign/outreach
 Outreach to Parents
 Other (please describe): _____

Circle the number that best represents your answer to the following questions.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The goals of my NHEW celebration were met	1	2	3	4	5
I plan to celebrate NHEW next year	1	2	3	4	5
SOPHE's <i>Activity Guide & Tool Kit</i> was useful to my planning	1	2	3	4	5
I plan to use SOPHE materials to plan other programs	1	2	3	4	5
Food safety was a relevant theme for this year's NHEW	1	2	3	4	5

What were your greatest strengths in planning and implementing your celebration?

- Strong interest from the community
- Past experience in campaign planning
- Strong interest from organization
- Theme relevant to organization's goals
- Available resources (please describe):
- Other (please describe):

What were your greatest obstacles in planning and implementing your celebration?

- Lack of interest from the community
- Lack of experience in campaign planning
- Lack of interest from the organization
- Theme not relevant to the organization's goals
- Lack of resources (please describe):
- Other (please describe):

In what setting(s) do you work? (Check all that apply.)

- College/University
- Health Department
- SOPHE Chapter
- Health care setting
- Community agencies
- Local business
- School
- Other (please describe): _____

What is your profession? _____

Please describe your community: ___Urban ___Suburban ___Rural

What was the most useful part of the NHEW 2010 Resources? (If used.)

What was the least useful part of the NHEW 2010 Resources? (If used.)

Please use the space below to share any additional comments or suggestions related to National Health Education Week 2010.

Please send your completed evaluation form to:

SOPHE

ATTN: NHEW 2010

10 G Street, NE, Suite 605

Washington, DC 20002

Phone: (202) 408-9804

Fax: (202) 408-9815