

Let's Talk Secondhand Smoke: A Gitxsan TRYAMP Project

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a place of mind
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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How the Project Came to Be

- Community concerns:
 - BC YOUTH Smoking Survey (2000) high rates of smoking among Aboriginal youth
 - SHS exposure for mothers & young children
- Discussions with Gitxsan Health Society and Gitsegukla Health Services
 - Interest in research partnership
 - Community identified focus
 - Grant application



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TRYAMP Project

- Tobacco Reduction for Young Aboriginal Mothers and Families

• Team:

- Joan Bottorff (UBC)
- Joy Johnson (UBC)
- Debbie Sullivan & Wanda Williams (Gitsegukla Health)
- Colleen Varcoe (UBC)
- Dennis Wardman (HC)



- Research Staff: Roberta Mowatt (Gitanmaax), Peter Hutchinson (UBC), Joanne Carey (UBC)

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Purpose of the Project

- To study the things that influence cigarette smoking practices & secondhand smoke exposure that place young Aboriginal women and their children at risk
- To engage the community:
 - in exploring the issue
 - developing strategies to support tobacco reduction and increase smoke-free spaces



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Community-based research



Methods

- Data collection
 - Young women - interviews and FG
 - Key informant interviews
 - Elders FG
 - Surveys & observations
- Collaborative data analysis
- Reciprocal learning



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April 2006
Hazelton ←

June 2008
Hazelton →

Nov 2006
Hazelton ↑

June 2007
Vancouver ← →

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SSH as part of everyday life

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Experiences of Young Mothers

- **Maintaining relationships with friends and family highly valued**
 - Socializing often resulted in exposure to SHS and smoking
 - Limited options for smoke-free events
 - Avoiding events where smoking allowed – increased isolation
- **Lack of options for childcare, limited transportation and housing shortages**
 - Limited ability to control exposure to SHS
 - Difficulty accessing smoke-free activities

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The presence of a child

“When I was pregnant, they smoked in the house. They asked me if I wanted them to smoke outside but its their house. I can’t just say nope, you gotta smoke outside. I could have and would have but... it just didn’t feel it was my place to tell them what to do. But once I had a baby they started smoking outside.”
(23 year old, occasional smoker)



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Enlisting partner support

“I just tried to get (partner) to talk to them but he said he can’t really do anything cause it’s their house. And for a while they went in their bedroom but when the door opens just a big cloud of smoke comes out and goes everywhere in the house again.”
(19 yrs, occasional smoker)



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Women’s Efforts....

- Faced with negotiating competing demands:
 - Preserving family relationships
 - Respecting others need to smoke
 - Protecting children and themselves from SHS
- Some made sacrifices



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The beginnings of change.....

- Band councils support smoke-free family public events
- Emerging “new norm” of smoke-free homes
- Some women began to ask family members not to smoke in front of their children



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Women’s Suggestions for Change

- Elders and community leaders to be more involved in supporting SF spaces
- Improve access to housing
- Improve opportunities for childcare
- Stop tobacco sales to minors
- Smoke-free sporting events
- Family oriented social/recreational activities
- Encourage intergenerational relationships



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Women and SHS



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The Role of Elders

We smoke fish, not tobacco



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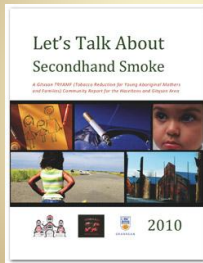
Elders: Potential Source of Leadership

- Viewed as important allies in dealing with SHS
 - Some had direct experience of health effects
 - Role model non-smoking or respectful smoking
 - Teach broad traditions



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Continuing the dialogue



Available from:

www.ubc.ca/okanagan/ihtcdp/

and www.cyhnet.ca/

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Let's Talk Secondhand Smoke

Examples of Discussion Questions

- What have you observed about SHS?
- Where is SHS a problem in this community?
- Who are the key people that need to be involved?
- Who benefits from continued smoking at events?
- What can be done to help women who want to make their homes smoke-free?
- What are other sources of revenue that would help reduce dependence on revenues from cigarette sales?



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 - Gitksan Health Society and Gitsegukla Health Services
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Thank you

Let's talk....



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