

WNC NOW 100% TOBACCO-FREE



SUMMARY:

Western Nevada College (WNC) provides educational opportunities in regions of Northern Nevada with dedicated campuses in Carson City, Douglas County, and Churchill County. WNC takes pride in and encourages a healthy academic environment for all students, faculty, and staff. In 2013, all campuses noticed a rise in e-cigarette use in the classroom, which resulted in the immediate prohibition of e-cigarette usage on campus. By 2014, additional complaints about tobacco use on campus were filed by faculty and students. Complaints included concerns about cigarette smoking and secondhand smoke exposure.

CHALLENGE and SOLUTION:

Challenge: Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death in the United States despite a significant decline in the number of people who use tobacco.¹ The Nevada adult smoking rate in 2016 was 16.5% resulting in 4,100 smoking-related deaths. The 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) showed more the 15% of Nevada youth use electronic vapor products, with Carson City youth reporting a use rate of 17%.² Due to a strong focus on healthy living, a tobacco-free policy was drafted and completed by November 2015 but faced implementation challenges until 2017.

Solution: At that time, there was a need for a task force to assist with the development and implementation of a policy. The WNC Healthy Campus Committee was formed and consisted of members from administration, faculty, staff, students, local health authorities, and coalitions. The creation of the committee allowed for stakeholders to convene and discuss issues and concerns related to going smoke-free. In the fall of 2016, the interim policy went into effect. A thorough campus survey of students, staff, and faculty was conducted to measure attitudes and perceptions of a tobacco-free campus. The results showed nearly 83% of campus students, staff and faculty supported a completely tobacco-free campus and policy.

SUCCESS and SUSTAINABILITY:

In the fall of 2017, WNC implemented a policy prohibiting smoking, vaping, and the use of any tobacco products on all three dedicated campus locations. The policy bans use of tobacco products at all buildings and outdoor areas at WNC. For sustainability, the Healthy Campus Task Force continues meeting to evaluate and monitor barriers to the success of the tobacco-free campus policy, enforcement, and signage.

SINCE BEING IMPLEMENTED, THE POLICY PROTECTS OVER 4,000 WNC STUDENTS, STAFF AND FACULTY FROM SECONDHAND SMOKE EXPOSURE.

References:

1. (2018, 11 9). Retrieved from CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/resource/data/cigarette-smoking-in-united-states.htm>
2. (2018, 11 9). Retrieved from CDC: www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/results.htm

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