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LITTER PREVENTION GRANT 2006-07 FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Project Title: “Don’t Be A Tosser” Tertiary Butt Litter Campaign

Organisation Name: Barwon RWMG – in partnership with Calder RWMG and Highlands RWMG

Date:

THE PROJECT

The big picture goal

This project’s ultimate goal was to reduce cigarette butt litter at tertiary campuses, and contribute to reduced cigarette butt litter outside pubs and clubs frequented by tertiary students. This was based on the assumption that tertiary students make up a significant portion of pub and club patrons.

Smoking bans were introduced on 1 July 07 and it was therefore anticipated that there would be increased cigarette butt litter outside licensed venues.

Consultation with tertiary campuses indicated that tertiary institutions have significant butt litter problems. This project worked to tackle the issue of butt litter on campus- targeting students and staff to promote a culture of ‘butt it and bin it’ on campus. By students and staff taking responsibility for correct disposal of their butt bins on campus, it was anticipated that they will maintain this behaviour in other localities.

This was achieved by engaging students during O week with free lunch and entertainment, dissemination of personal ashtrays and the promotion of the “Don’t Be a Tosser” message; and through the Don’t Be a Tosser message promoted by the lead singers of the bands and comedians during the o-week activities.

Intermediate Outcomes

This project aimed to assist and encourage smokers to take responsibility for their cigarette butt litter, through an integrated program of Education, Infrastructure and Enforcement.

The aim was to help smokers to be aware that cigarette butts are litter and that by simply not being a “tosser” they can have a positive impact on the environment.

This was achieved through an education campaign involving posters, O-week stalls, announcements at band nights, media releases and the handing out of personal ashtrays; infrastructure improvement and enforcement.

Immediate Outcomes

This project specifically targeted tertiary students at University and TAFE campuses in Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo. This was achieved through Free Lunch and entertainment, dissemination of personal ashtrays and the promotion of the Tosser message.

Students were engaged in conversation about the environmental impact and the potential for fines for littering cigarette butts during the dissemination of personal ashtrays over lunch.

To engage the student associations on campus prior to the campaign and to ensure the message was promoted on the day (each Regional Education Officer facilitated the project within their region).

Cross-regional partnerships provide the opportunity to not only share the load and brainstorm ideas, but, where synergies exist, provide the opportunity to replicate activities across a broad area. University contacts provided local knowledge of smoker’s hangouts and ‘manpower’ for the distribution of posters and access to student mass marketing.

Intermediate Outcomes – Project activities

- > Tosser Posters displaying the potential fines incurred for littering cigarette butts, media releases, campus magazine articles, Tosser Stickers produced for film canisters (that were made up as personal ashtrays).
- > Free lunch days- information displays, personal ashtray giveaways, and student educators engaging in one-on-one conversations.
- > Entertainment (bands and/or comedian) promoting the Don't Be A Tosser message during o-week.
- > Local laws officers from local council attended o-week activities and promoted the Don't Be a Tosser message and the local laws and fines that apply.
- > Talking to and engaging the grounds staff in identifying litter hotspots.

MONITORING and EVALUATION

Project activities succeeded in gaining seven hits in campus news and local papers – all positive (across the three regions).

Approximately 3000 personal ashtrays, 60 t-shirts, 1500 stickers, and 90 posters were distributed across six tertiary campuses.

Litter audits using nominated sites and photographs were conducted on campuses prior to the project and after the project had been completed. The audit methodology varied slightly between regions- a summary of the key findings from these audits is outlined below.

BARWON REGION

Four audit sites were selected on both campuses- sites were approximately 1 square metre. Pre audits were conducted in September 2007 these consisted of a clean of the sites and then an audit being conducted two days later- audits captured 2 days worth of cigarette butt litter. Post audits, utilising the same methodology were conducted in April 2008.

Photos of the pre and post audits for two of the sites.



Pre Audit



Post Audit



Pre Audit



Post Audit

Counts were conducted- pre audit data indicates an average of 5 butts per site- post audit data indicates an average of 2 butts per site. This is an average litter reduction of 60%.

CALDER REGION

Four audit sites were selected on both campuses- sites were approximately 1 square metre.

Pre audits were undertaken 1 week prior to the free lunches. Post audits were taken 6 weeks after free lunches.

Site	Pre Audit	Post Audit
La Trobe Site 1	7	12
La Trobe Site 2	12	4
La Trobe Site 3	5	7
La Trobe Site 4	3	2
BRIT Site A	13	4
BRIT Site B	8	2
BRIT Site C	14	5
BRIT Site D	5	4

At one site there was an actual increase in the amount of cigarette butt litter. Discussions with the Grounds Manager indicated the increase would be due to the return of staff and students; this obviously has impacted on the results. Prior to O Week the numbers of staff and students would be relatively low and the free lunch was held during O Week. The pre audits at BRIT however were taken when there were significant numbers of staff and students on campus and the results appear to reflect this, with an overall reduction of 31% across three of the sites.

HIGHLANDS REGION

Detailed before and after photos were taken of selected sites. Sites were assessed using an adaptation of CCAT i.e. the general sense of amenity of the area; BINfrastructure waste/recycling/butt bins; degree of butt littering. A five point scale was used - 1(bad) to 5(excellent).

SMB (12 sites)

Before	1	7	2	1	1	
After	1	4	3	2	2	modest improvement in usage of butt bins, generally where the BINfrastructure was appropriate and usage improved

UB Mt Helen (14 sites)

Before	3	7	3	-	1	
After	5	5	2	1	1	trend backwards, although the rain the morning of the assessment washed butts into clumps they still had to have been littered. The BINfrastructure was noticeably absent or sub-standard and this is reflected in the assessment scores for the sites.



Pre Audit rated 1



Post Audit rated 1 no improvement



Pre Audit rated 3



Post Audit rated 5

Face to face interviews were conducted casually at the o-week activities on all campuses, these were educational not evaluative. This was an opportunity to clarify any issues with the campaign message and raise awareness off butt litter fines.

MILESTONES ACHIEVED

A reduction of cigarette butt litter at Universities and TAFE's was achieved as indicated by our litter audit photos, counts and ground staffs observations.

Student understanding, that dropping cigarette butts is littering, was intended to be measured by an online survey, due to the reduction in funding this activity was unable to be conducted.

An ongoing demand for personal ashtrays on some campuses indicates that the disposing of butt litter responsibly is becoming a social norm and a part of student culture.

What did the program achieve in terms of behaviour change/attitudinal change/capacity building?

Anecdotal evidence suggests that students understood that butt litter has an environmental impact and that disposing of butts responsibly is important. The majority of students spoken to indicated they were not aware they could be fined for dropping cigarette butt litter and indicated they would like more information on the environmental impacts of cigarette butt litter – graphic images of damage to water ways and fauna.

LESSONS LEARNED

Consider the lessons learned in terms of:

The project-

There was a noticeable difference in the smoking culture between the University and the TAFE, with there being many more smokers on TAFE campuses- these students were also much more receptive to our engagement strategies. They were noticeably more interested in the personal ashtrays.

The process –

Weather seemed to be a critical factor in the location of hot spots, sheltered spots are favoured. There was also a correlation between the use of tan bark/mulch and the frequency of butt litter. We assume, that smokers believe that they can hide the butt in the tan bark and also it is a popular misconception that cigarette butts are biodegradable.

What worked?

The film canisters are more durable and practical and easier to use than the custom made butt bins.

The relationships developed with the students associations and the grounds-staff for this project has lead to further involvement in other projects.

Involving local laws officers as educators during o-week provided an 'authority' presence and was an effective engagement strategy.

What didn't work?

There was some confusion with the slogan, with some students taking the sexual connotation and assuming that it was a safe sex campaign not a litter one.

What would be changed for next time?

There was a noticeable difference in the commitment and involvement by the student association on campus. The TAFE campuses had paid staff members that were extremely committed and active in supporting the project. The University student associations have student volunteers that are not so committed or reliable. This along with staff changes that occurred mid project resulted in the on campus activities varying between campuses, and some of the original activities planned did not eventuate.

For future project we recommend getting a detailed MOU agreement signed between project partners, so that staff changes and staff commitment is consistent.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Are there any plans to extend or continue this project? Not at this stage,

What was learnt from this project that can be applied to other areas within your organisation? The need for written MOU agreements to be considered for other projects.

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APPENDIX 1: Resources developed-

POSTER



APPENDIX 2: OTHER PHOTOS

