

# THE NEED TO KNOW GUIDE

## AN INTRODUCTION FOR NEW STAFF



TO THE WORLD OF

HEALTHY

MAINE

PARTNERSHIP

## YOUTH ADVOCACY PROGRAMS

*Created for Healthy Maine Partnerships by the Maine Youth Action Network (MYAN), in partnership with the Department of Health & Human Services (Maine Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (MCDC) and Office of Substance Abuse (OSA)).  
2008*



Department of Health  
and Human Services  
*Maine People Living  
Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives*

John E. Baldacci, Governor

Brenda M. Harvey, Commissioner



**Healthy Maine Partnerships**  
The people dedicated to helping us live longer and healthier.

Maine Department of Health and Human Services  
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention

Maine Youth Action Network

**MYAN**

a program of **PRO**

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"Young people should be at the forefront of global change and innovation. Empowered, they can be key agents for development and peace. If, however, they are left on society's margins, all of us will be impoverished. Let us ensure that all young people have every opportunity to participate fully in the lives of their societies."

~Kofi Annan

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2008***

MYAN is a program of PROP. The Peoples Regional Opportunity Program is a non-profit, multi-service, community action agency committed to transforming our community by helping people in need build better lives. MYAN is funded by a collaborative effort of the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention and Office of Substance Abuse) and the Department of Education, supported primarily by the Fund for Healthy Maine and state general funds that match the Maternal and Child Health Block Grant.

[www.myan.org](http://www.myan.org)

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John E. Baldacci, Governor

Brenda M. Harvey, Commissioner



# Healthy Maine Partnership **History & Goals**

In November 1998, Maine along with 45 other states across the country sued the tobacco companies for the recovery of the states' Medicaid health care costs attributed to tobacco use. As a result of the Master Settlement Agreement the industry committed to paying the states approximately \$206 billion over the next 25 years. Of that total, it is estimated that Maine will receive approximately \$50 million per year.

Healthy Maine Partnerships (HMP) was originally developed in response to the Fund for Healthy Maine legislation and tobacco settlement funding. **HMP is an initiative that links and coordinates Maine CDC efforts with the related health promotion efforts of the Department of Education and with the Maine Office of Substance Abuse.**

**The initiative combines the work of eight programs:** Partnership For A Tobacco-Free Maine, the Office of Substance Abuse Prevention program, the Maine Cardiovascular Health Program, the Physical Activity and Nutrition program, the Maine Diabetes Control program, the Maine Asthma Control program, the Maine Comprehensive Cancer program and the Coordinated School Health program. The state-level HMP supports and coordinates the work of 28 local Healthy Maine Partnerships covering the entire geography of Maine. Current funding for the HMP comes from Fund for Healthy Maine, Federal CDC categorical funds, SPF-SIG funds from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and Department of Agriculture Food Stamp Nutrition and Education funds.

**The local Healthy Maine Partnerships are an integral part of the local Public Health infrastructure and from a categorical perspective, are community-based health promotion and health education programs dedicated to policy and environmental change.** The categorical work of the HMPs is dedicated to reducing the prevalence of tobacco and substance abuse, and to address chronic disease through developing and implementing comprehensive community-level interventions as well as promote and support increased physical activity and healthy eating.

Each of the Healthy Maine Partnerships has **three primary goals:**

**Goal #1 — Ensure that Maine has the lowest smoking rates in the Nation.**

**Goal #2—Prevent the development and progression of obesity, substance abuse, and chronic diseases related to or affected by tobacco use.**

**Goal #3—Optimize the capacity of Maine's cities, towns and schools to provide health promotion, prevention, health education, and self-management of health.**

# What is a Youth Advocacy Program (YAP) and How is it Connected to the HMP?

The concept of the Youth Advocacy Program (YAP) was created as the grassroots youth component of the Healthy Maine Partnerships (HMPs). YAPs were initially created solely to develop, implement and support local youth-driven advocacy programs for promoting anti-tobacco efforts. HMP later expanded the YAP efforts to include substance abuse prevention and the promotion of physical activity and healthy eating in their local communities.

The intention is for each HMP to have a program that actively involves youth in making positive changes in their communities around physical activity, healthy eating, substance abuse prevention, and tobacco prevention and control. The purpose of involving youth is primarily to engage youth as effective agents for change by contributing their unique perspectives, fresh energy and desire to take action. Secondly, active involvement of youth gives them an opportunity to be integrally involved in community life across multiple sectors and promotes the development of new leaders and concerned citizens. With an emphasis on looking at health disparities through the lens of social justice, youth develop skills that inspire them to advocate for changes that promote health in their communities.

HMPs' Youth Advocacy Programs reach out to and engage high school and middle school age students. The intention for the YAPs is for youth to design and participate in a wide variety of activities including:

- advocating for policies to make their schools and communities healthier places to live,
- writing articles for school and community papers,
- creating presentations and performing for younger students,
- planning and leading their schools in activities to coincide with the Great American Smoke-Out and Kick Butts Day,
- volunteering time and talents to projects that improve the lives of people in their communities, and
- attending health fairs.

For a more comprehensive list of suggested activities for YAPs, please see the HMP Youth Activity Resource Guide, available for download on [www.myan.org](http://www.myan.org) or by contacting MYAN (see page 10).

## REQUIREMENTS FOR YAPs

Several expectations for YAPs were outlined in the RFP for the second HMP grant cycle.

- Grantees are expected to continue and expand the Youth Advocacy Program started in the first HMP grant cycle.
- Youth involvement should employ best practices in youth/adult partnerships so that involving youth in the work of the HMP benefits both the community and the youth.
- This work will take on a renewed focus in actively involving youth in the categorical policy and environmental work of the HMP. Particular attention must be paid to tobacco, physical activity, nutrition and substance abuse in this work.
- YAP groups may be located in either school or community settings. HMPs and/or schools may leverage resources by having school health coordinators or other staff to act as the YAP coordinators, but *full-time* School Health Coordinators may not also serve as a YAP Coordinator.
- The work of the YAP groups should connect with and support other youth (empowerment/service learning) initiatives and projects within the Local Service Area, and possibly within the region.



## **ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR YAPs (from RFP)**

- **Strengthen HMP advocacy, policy and environmental change efforts by meaningfully integrating youth and creating a youth voice within the work of the HMP.** *Engage selected youth as change agents in the community, with community level outcomes, rather than just individual level outcomes for youth*
- **Work with formal and informal youth leaders and natural youth networks to reach more youth.** *Youth acting as change agents among their peers, changing social norms.*
- **Develop protective factors in youth through engagement:** *Track outcomes for individual youth—on-going recruitment of youth is highly desired.*
- **Share power with the youth, while keeping a clear focus on our purpose.** *In the first year, HMPs should work with a variety of youth to rework purpose statements so that they are meaningful to both youth and adults (at both local and state levels). Include youth in further development of monitoring and evaluation.*
- **Each HMP should develop at least one YAP group that includes both High School and Middle School aged youth.** *HMPs are encouraged to have multiple groups if this makes the groups more accessible to youth. HMPs might consider separate groups in different parts of their service area, as well as separate High School and Middle School groups. YAP may choose to engage different youth for different projects, as well, although the depth of youth involvement should not be sacrificed for numbers alone.*
- **Each HMP must have YAP participation in at least two of the HMP's chosen policy and/or environmental change oriented projects each year (using the same "menu" that the HMPs are given).** *Each separate group must participate in at least one of the HMP's chosen policy and/or environmental change oriented projects each year. One of these projects should be a tobacco-related project, while the other may be substance abuse, physical activity or nutrition related. Multiple groups may or may not be engaged in the same projects. It is expected that High School groups will be able to participate in more projects than Middle School groups. YAPs are encouraged to consider school-based projects as possibilities in addition to community-based projects.*
- **Additional activities that are peer-focused or involving a broader set of issues.** *YAPs should be able to articulate the connection between their activities and the HMP objectives. Peer-focused activities should be longer-term engagement of peers, rather than one-time presentations. Youth generated media projects need to be "pre-approved" and coordinated with the HMP media contractor.*
- **YAP projects will be monitored in the same way that the HMP projects are monitored.** *YAP projects will be identified and integrated into the HMP/OSA monitoring system in such a way as to clearly indicate the YAP role.*
- **Coordination with the School Health Coordinators, including in the recruitment and support of youth members of the school health leadership team.** *Coordination should include regular YAP coordinator representation on the HMP Action Team and include staff meetings.*
- **YAP coordinators are recommended to attend state-wide HMP meetings.** *Separate track/meeting time may be provided for YAP coordinators. Additional training may be provided, depending on YAP coordinator needs and the frequency of the state-level HMP meetings.*

### **Notes on the YAP Coordinator Role**

Each HMP is encouraged to have someone dedicated to Youth Involvement Guidance, with the intention of:

- ensuring that youth are recruited, organized and motivated to participate in the work of the HMP as agents of change, particularly in the areas of prevention and health promotion related to tobacco, alcohol, and physical activity and nutrition;
- facilitating a relationship between Youth Advocacy Program (YAP) groups and the HMP Action Team;
- providing guidance for YAP groups around implementing effective strategies to contribute to the objectives in the CDC HMP and OSA SPF-SIG workplans;
- participating in trainings provided to strengthen youth-adult partnerships;
- working with the HMP Action Team to reduce barriers to effective youth participation in Action Team planning work;
- facilitating youth participation in available trainings and other statewide or regional events;
- coordinating connections with other youth groups working on related issues;
- assisting youth with development of skills necessary to serve as effective agents of change.

Full time School Health Coordinators may not also serve as a YAP coordinator.

# HMP Position Paper on Youth Engagement

(Written and authorized by Maine Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and the Office of Substance Abuse, and included in the RFP for the second round of HMP funding, 2007)



Experience and research in a variety of youth-related fields clearly demonstrate that youth-adult partnerships can increase the effectiveness of youth-focused initiatives. Youth involvement creates benefits for the youth involved, for the program and those it serves and for the adults involved. Developmentally, young people need services, supports, and opportunities.<sup>xix</sup> Meaningful opportunities to contribute help youth gain skills, positive attitudes and confidence. Organizations involving youth at different levels of decision-making are more likely to achieve outcomes, create better

connections between the organization's governance and initiatives, and energizes the organization.<sup>xx</sup> Adults who work in partnership with youth are more likely to see youth as assets and let go of negative stereotypes, and have increased confidence and effectiveness is working with youth.<sup>xxi</sup> Feedback from the Healthy Maine Partnership (HMP) Youth Advocacy Program (YAP) program has demonstrated that the current program shows some of these strengths and could be improved to increase others. A few HMPs showcased YAP accomplishments and youth involvement in the HMP at public events, and some youth have been asked to get involved in state-level advocacy. The YAP coordinators show a great appreciation for the energy and enthusiasm of the youth they work with, recognize their potential and clearly enjoy the work they are doing.

However, in their current configuration, the YAPs have been separated from the HMPs. YAP coordinators have felt that their work is not counted or valued equally with other HMP outcomes. Youth feel some connection to the overall HMP, but are frequently perceived as an add-on. Despite the fact that many YAPs are school-based, they are often not seen as contributing to the school health outcomes of the HMPs. The YAP coordinators have struggled to understand and communicate to youth the purpose of the YAPs and seek more direction. Evaluation of other youth adult partnerships identified joint youth-adult work as a strength in that it forces youth to deal with the limitations and constraints of the "adult world" and builds intergenerational relationships.<sup>xxii</sup> In addition, it is also important to recognize the limitations for what the YAPs can do. First, in a complete youth-empowerment model, the youth would be given full reign to determine the needs and strategies. However, youth must be educated (just like other HMP stakeholders and partners) on the limitations of funding and other constraints. There must be clear guidance that their scope of work must directly affect tobacco use and other objectives in the HMP Minimum Common Program. Second, quality partnerships with youth within our existing budget will not enable YAPs to work directly with all youth. Recruitment challenges have been noted, and the youth most likely to be passionate about the HMP objectives may not be the youth who are most likely to be engaging in risky behaviors. Social justice messages may help youth be motivated, but the true reach in the program is most likely to be in the policy and environmental changes. It is nevertheless, important to not over-estimate the effect on individual youth. Only those youth actively involved will realize the full benefits of youth involvement.

# The ABC's of HMPs

We know all those acronyms & terms can be overwhelming! Here's a list we suggest you become familiar with so that when they're thrown around in meetings you can be in the know. And don't hesitate to remind those acronym addicts to slow down and spell 'em out for you!

**CDC or MCDC = Centers for Disease Control & Prevention/Maine Centers for Disease Control & Prevention.** *A program within the Department for Health & Human Services. These folks are important because many of the programs that give money to or help with the planning for the Healthy Maine Partnership initiative are programs within the MCDC umbrella.*

**CD&M = CD&M Communications.** *The company that handles media and marketing for the Partnership For A Tobacco-Free Maine.*

**CSHP = Coordinating School Health Program.** *The Coordinating School Health Programs initiative is a joint collaboration between the Maine Department of Education and the Maine Department of Health and Human Services. A Coordinated School Health Program is an effective system designed to connect health with education. Visit [www.maineishp.com](http://www.maineishp.com) for more info.*

**CTI = Center for Tobacco Independence.** *CTI developed and manages Maine's comprehensive, statewide tobacco treatment initiative, supported by the Partnership for A Tobacco-Free Maine (includes the Maine Tobacco HelpLine and Tobacco Medication and Tobacco Training programs). <http://www.tobaccoindependence.org/>.*

**DOE = Department of Education.** *The government branch that oversees education in Maine.*

**DHHS = Department of Health & Human Services.** *The government branch that oversees the MCDC and OSA, among other programs.*

**Fund for Healthy Maine =** *The fund created with Maine's share of the tobacco settlement money. This fund provides most of the funding for the Healthy Maine partnership initiative. It is money set aside for prevention programs, but it can be assigned to other purposes if the legislature authorizes it, and the fund is often in danger during state budget shortfalls.*

**HMP = Healthy Maine Partnership.** *HMP is sometimes used to refer to a local Healthy Maine Partnership, or can be used when referring to the state level Healthy Maine Partnership Initiative.*

**HPP = Health Policy Partners of Maine.** *An organization that lobbies on behalf of the Fund for Healthy Maine, and in favor of legislation related to tobacco use prevention and cessation, and obesity prevention and treatment. They were formerly known as the **Maine Coalition on Smoking or Health (MCSOH)**, which is a name still used to co-brand the organization.*

**IRC = Information Resource Center.** *The IRC is a program of the Office of Substance Abuse that collects and distributes handouts and brochures on a wide range of health topics.*

**KIT=** *The database used to collect data about progress toward HMP objectives. It is an evaluation tool created and managed by the Office of Substance Abuse.*

**Minimum Common Program =** *Refers to the collection of grant objectives on which all HMPs are required to work.*

**MCHP = Maine Cardiovascular Health Program.** *A program of the Maine CDC that works to prevent death and disability from heart disease and stroke in Maine.*

- MNN = Maine Nutrition Network.** *A collaborative based out of the University of Southern Maine that coordinates, administers, and evaluates nutrition and physical activity initiatives and contributes to policies and environments that improve the health of Maine people.*
- MYAN = Maine Youth Action Network.** *MYAN is a program of the People's Regional Opportunity Program (PROP) that provides training and technical assistance to youth and adults organized to create positive change. (See page 10 for more information.)*
- OSA = Office of Substance Abuse.** *A program of DHHS responsible for planning, development, implementation, regulation, and evaluation of substance abuse services*
- PAN = Physical Activity & Nutrition.** *This term is sometimes used to refer to the subjects of physical activity and nutrition promotion in general, and sometimes used to refer to the Physical Activity, Nutrition and Healthy Weight Program, which is a part of the Maine CDC, and is responsible for coordinating state-wide efforts to support Maine people in achieving recommended levels of physical activity and proper nutrition to prevent and treat chronic diseases, including overweight and obesity.*
- Project Officer** = *Serves as the point of contact for HMP related work surrounding objectives and budgets. Contact yours with questions or for support!*
- PTM = Partnership For A Tobacco-Free Maine.** *A program of the Maine CDC responsible for state tobacco prevention and control programs.*
- SHC = School Health Coordinator.** *SHCs serve on school district administrative teams to implement coordinated school health programs and improve policies and environments in the schools to promote healthy behaviors for students and staff. They also serve as liaisons to the HMPs.*
- SPF-SIG = Strategic Prevention Framework – State Incentive Grant.** *Substance abuse prevention dollars that come with certain restrictions for how they are spent.*
- TYAHP = Teen and Young Adult Health Program.** *A program of the Maine CDC that works with communities and state agencies to assure that all adolescents have skills and access to services, information, and the supports that promote healthy life choices.*
- YAP = Youth Advocacy Program.** *A program within local Healthy Maine Partnerships designed to engage young people in creating environmental and policy change around tobacco, substance abuse, physical activity and nutrition.*
- YEPP = Youth Empowerment & Policy Project.** *A program of Adcare Educational Institute of Maine that engages young people in substance abuse issue research, and the creation of substance abuse policy recommendations.*

# Keys to Successful Youth Advocacy Programs

There is no magic formula for making a YAP work. Hard work, dedication, communication, patience and *more* patience will lead you in the right direction. Through trial and error you will find the things that work for you. When in doubt about what to do next, talk with experienced YAP coordinators or ask the youth themselves. In general, though, there are **some key factors** that are common to strong, active Youth Advocacy Programs:

## Partnership Support

- ☞ Strive for **active engagement** at all levels of the HMP in supporting youth involvement.
- ☞ See youth not only as members of the community **benefitting** from the HMP work, but members of the community who can and are **contributing** to the work.
- ☞ **Believe** in youth as leaders of tomorrow AND today.
- ☞ **Budget** appropriate funding for youth initiatives (a youth coordinator or youth liaisons, incentives, event/training fees and supplies).

## Social and Interpersonal Relationships

- ☞ **Invest time in building strong relationships with others** in your Partnership, your community, and especially with your youth. Relationships are your foundation when weathering any storms you may face.
- ☞ **Help everyone feel like they are part of the same work**, and understand each other's contributions. Youth will be more likely to work hard and stay involved with the advocacy program when they have a strong, safe, relationship with you and others in the group.

## Diversity

- ☞ **Bring together** different characteristics, skills and backgrounds (ethnic, cultural, educational, age, gender, and socioeconomic) for a strong team.
- ☞ Aim to **be representative** of the populations you serve to increase your credibility and influence.

## Networking & Collaboration

- ☞ Stay connected to **discover opportunities for collaboration** and cost-sharing.
- ☞ Collaborate outside of your HMP (with parents, community members, city officials, etc.) to **generate public support** through increased awareness of your initiatives.
- ☞ Work with other groups (such as YMCAs, Girl Scouts, Parks & Recreation departments, etc.) to **open doors** for recruiting youth.

## Youth

- ☞ **Recognize** the diverse skills and interests of your group. Youth are often active, eager, knowledgeable, and good peer and community educators.
- ☞ Maximize the **networking capabilities** of young people—they may know different people, organizations and tools for projects, recruitment and more.
- ☞ **Foster individual growth** and skill building for youth members while on your path to community change.
- ☞ **Appreciate** youth. They are often extremely busy volunteers and need to be treated with kindness, respect and patience.
- ☞ **Engage youth in all aspects** of the work, from recruiting to visioning, to increase their buy-in and the sustainability of the program.
- ☞ Youth often **want to take action**—**capitalize on this strength** to help your initiative along.

# How Can MYAN Help You?

**MYAN strongly believes in the capacity we all have to change the world we live in, and the power of youth-adult partnerships in community transformation.** We work statewide to provide training and support to youth and adults who are working to create healthier communities to help them be successful. In particular, MYAN is available as a resource for HMPs as they engage youth as partners in achieving HMP objectives for creating environmental and policy change around tobacco, physical activity, nutrition and substance abuse.

MYAN is a powerful tool because our community consists of individual members with their unique skills, ideas and experiences. MYAN connects people and programs throughout Maine so that we are each part of something larger than ourselves. Together we can change our state (and the world) on a larger scale than any of us can alone. Following are some of the ways that MYAN can support you in the work you are doing. We look forward to working with you! Please don't hesitate to contact us for support.

- **Our website**, [www.myan.org](http://www.myan.org), is full of tips, tools and inspiring stories. The site includes a page specifically for HMPs, as well as resources pages on teen health topics, youth & adult partnership skills, grant opportunities, and much more.
- We offer **technical support by phone or email**. MYAN staff are available to talk through challenges, offer suggestions, and connect you to handouts, articles, events and other groups. MYAN also does **targeted outreach** to our HMP contacts to connect you to relevant events, trainings & resources. Contact Molly to make sure you're on MYAN's YAP email group!
  - ⇒ Contact Molly O'Connell at **553-5920** or [moconnell@propeople.org](mailto:moconnell@propeople.org).
  - ⇒ Contact Deb Bicknell at **553-5916** or [dbicknell@propeople.org](mailto:dbicknell@propeople.org).
- **MYAN's News to Use e-newsletter** highlights inspiring examples of youth involvement and leadership and connects you to groups, tools and events. You can also find archives on our website.
- Our **Annual Peer Leadership Conference** brings together over 400 youth & adults from across the state to learn new skills, network with other groups, and find out about local and statewide initiatives and resources that can support their groups' efforts through the year. This year's event will be on **November 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>** in Bar Harbor. Visit [www.myan.org](http://www.myan.org) for more info.
- The **Annual Stop. Quit. RESIST! Anti-Tobacco Youth Summit** mobilizes youth from across Maine to come together with adult activists to fight the battle against tobacco. Attendees take part in workshops and activities to help them gain information, resources, skills and connections to take the fight back home. The 2009 Summit will be **on April 30<sup>th</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup>** at the Augusta Civic Center. More information and registration materials will be available on [www.myan.org](http://www.myan.org) early in 2009.
- In 2008-2009 MYAN will offer 4 **Youth and Adult Partnership trainings** in different parts of the state to explore the benefits and challenges of working together, and to help participants build skills to improve their partnerships. Visit [www.myan.org](http://www.myan.org) for dates & locations!
- In partnership with state HMP staff, MYAN will offer 2 **centralized HMP Youth Coordinator Meetings** at which attendees can gain new resources and skills, and connect with each other to share ideas and celebrate successes. **Dates & locations TBA.**
- MYAN **promotes opportunities for youth leadership and involvement** within Maine and nationally. We also offer opportunities for youth to develop leadership skills by encouraging young people to co-facilitate workshops & trainings, participate in the Youth Planning Teams that design the Conference and Summit, contribute to our e-newsletter, and more.

# What Other Resources Are Out There to Help Me?

The good news is that there are a ton! In addition to the list of MYAN support available (see page 10), here are some more specific tools & resources we recommend knowing about and exploring.

## HMP Youth Activity Resource Guide

This document was developed to offer ideas and support on how to connect youth with your HMP's objectives. Find:

- Maine contacts,
- links to resources & tools,
- training dates, and
- A grid of possible activities for each relevant HMP objective.

The guide can help you draw the connection between project and objectives, as well as making it easier to advocate within your HMP for how youth can be partners in reaching HMP goals. This isn't a list of required activities, but is a place to get ideas.

⇒ Go to [www.myan.org](http://www.myan.org) to the HMP YAP page to download a copy.

## MYAN Resources Pages

These pages cover a wide range of subjects, and include contact information for experts, web links, and downloadable handouts and toolkits. This is a vast library of helpful stuff—take advantage!

⇒ Visit [www.myan.org](http://www.myan.org) and look for the Resources link.

## Other YAP Coordinators

Your fellow adults who work with youth in the HMP world (these adults go by many titles and often wear many hats) are a fantastic resource! Call upon others for advice and support. MYAN distributes a YAP Contact List spreadsheet periodically.

⇒ Contact MYAN to get the most updated version (see page 10 for contact info.)

## Healthy Maine Partnership Website

This website was created & maintained by the state level funders of the HMP world. This is a great place to go for general info about the HMP world and programs.

⇒ Visit [www.healthymainepartnerships.org](http://www.healthymainepartnerships.org).

## Event Calendars

Visit [www.myan.org](http://www.myan.org) and look for a link to the events calendar to access a list of cool trainings and events for youth and adults in the field of youth development.

Visit the Maine Prevention Calendar at [www.maine-prevention-calendar.org](http://www.maine-prevention-calendar.org) for a list of events and trainings related to tobacco use prevention and cessation, physical activity and nutrition promotion, substance abuse prevention and much more.

## Free Stuff

*See the HMP Youth Activity Resource Guide for other sources, too!*

- **Substance Abuse Prevention**—You can order resources on substance abuse prevention topics as well as a wide range of other health topics from OSA's Information Resource Center (IRC). <http://maine.gov/dhhs/osa/irc/index.htm>.
- **Anti-Tobacco**—Visit [www.tobaccofreemaine.org](http://www.tobaccofreemaine.org) to find various resources, toolkits and handouts you can order through your HMP Director and forwarded to your Project Officer.
- **Physical Activity & Nutrition Promotion**—A materials order form can be found on [www.healthymainepartnerships.org/panp/](http://www.healthymainepartnerships.org/panp/).

# Why Evaluate?

Evaluation doesn't have to be a dreaded word—when done well it will help you! Reflecting on what went well and what didn't helps you **strengthen your program**. Collecting information about your programming **helps you brag to the world about the amazing things you're doing** and the change you're making, which in turn **helps you gather support** (money, people, group members, etc.). If you don't have data and stories to share about the importance and successes of youth involvement, other people won't know! It's important to state HMP partners to know how youth are involved, what kinds of change they're helping to make, and in what ways they are benefitting from their involvement. **Here's the skinny on some ways that YAP work is evaluated and reported.**

## Take a Step Back

- Do regular reflection within your HMP and your groups. It's important to take time to talk about what's going well and what's not so you can continually strengthen your team and your work. There are lots of way to do creative reflection. Contact MYAN for ideas (*see page 10 for contact info!*)
- Always be thinking about how you will capture and share key moments and successes.

## KIT

- KIT is the program that HMPs use to report on their work related to HMP objectives (what objectives are being worked on, what progress there has been toward reaching each objective, and what objectives youth are involved in). You may or may not be the person who is entering data into KIT, but it's important to know that it exists, and to **find out who in your HMP does the reporting**.
- Starting in Fall 2008, there will be a tool available for you to use to help you gather the kinds of information that can get reported in KIT. Look for this tool on [www.healthymainepartnerships.org](http://www.healthymainepartnerships.org), or contact Marco to get a copy. Fill it out each time you do an event or activity and then use it to report in KIT (or pass it along to whoever does your KIT reporting.)

## Earned Media

- Keep track of any media buzz you generate! Clippings show the highlights of your work and a binder of media about your group or your HMP can be a good tool for promoting your successes to others.
- State partners are interested in your earned media, too! The evaluation team is looking into ways to connect with District Tobacco Coordinators to help gather info on your earned media - print, radio & TV
- You may also want to send a clipping to your local legislators to make sure they are aware of how youth are involved in creating change in your community.

## Story Telling

- Don't keep inspiring moments to yourself! Tell your legislator, present to others in your community, email the YAP coordinator list to share ideas, email Marco, share your story at an HMP Youth Coordinator Meeting etc.
- Keep your eye out for "Calls for Stories" from Marco or others at the Maine Center for Public Health who want to know your stories so they can report out about why youth involvement is powerful and effective.

## Youth Feedback

- The Maine Center for Public Health and a group of coordinators are working on an exit interview tool for HMPs to use to collect information about young people's experiences with YAPs/HMPs. Keep your eye out for emails with more information. Information will also be posted on [www.healthymainepartnerships.org](http://www.healthymainepartnerships.org) once available.

### WHO WHO'S

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**MCPH is responsible for  
evaluating the Youth Advocacy  
Program as part of the statewide  
HMP evaluation.**