

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
December 16, 2009

CONTACT:
Jairo Hernandez
831-728-6300 XT 211

LOCAL SURVEY SHOWS STRONG PUBLIC AWARENESS ON THE HARMFULNESS OF OUTDOOR CIGARETTE SMOKE AND NEGATIVE IMPACT OF SMOKING

Recent findings from a public opinion poll conducted under PVPSA's tobacco education program, PASEO, early in 2009 indicated a high level of awareness of the harmfulness of outdoor cigarette smoke and the negative impact of adult smoking behavior on children.

The recent poll was conducted between the months of March 27, 2009 and June 30, 2009 by program staff and local youth volunteers. A total of 495 participants were surveyed in Watsonville. Most of the respondents live in the city of Watsonville (85.6%) while the remaining respondents were from neighboring communities including: Corralitos, Aromas, Aptos, Rio Del Mar, Salinas, Santa Cruz, and Scotts Valley.

According to the poll, 93.1% of the respondents, especially among females, agreed that secondhand smoke in outdoor areas is harmful to non-smokers. This opinion was even stronger amongst former smokers (97.9%) who made up 9.8% of the total survey. More impressively perhaps was the significant level of awareness from current smokers who made up 12.4% of the survey. According to the survey, 70.5% of smokers also believed that outdoor cigarette smoke is harmful to non-smokers. Cigarette smoke also resulted to be significantly bothersome to the majority of the participants, approximately 75.2% of the respondents said that they "had to move away or take a different route to avoid cigarette smoke outdoors".

The poll also shows a significant amount of support for smoke-free outdoor public areas. An impressive 87.6% of the respondents said that they would support not allowing smoking in outdoor public areas such as parking lots and shopping centers. The support was even greater among females, teens, seniors and former smokers. Even amongst smokers, more than half (56.7%) were also in support of not allowing smoking in parking lots and shopping centers.

Lastly, the poll revealed some consistent strong opinions regarding the negative impact of adult smoking behavior on children. An overwhelming 94.1% of the total 495 respondents agreed that smoking around children may influence them to smoke when they get older. This opinion was overwhelmingly stronger among former smokers who all, 100%, agreed that smoking among children may influence them to start smoking, followed by females 96.1% and smokers 82%.

To view the poll online please visit PVPSA's website at www.pvpsa.org or call 831-728-6300 XT 211 to request a copy.