



# **SUNSET Russian Tobacco Education: Evaluating Policy and Outreach Efforts**

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## Report Summary

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The SUNSET Russian Tobacco Education Project (SUNSET) has been working to educate and reduce tobacco use and exposure among the San Francisco and East Bay Russian-speaking communities for the past six years. In 2003, SUNSET decided to expand its approach to reducing secondhand smoke in the Russian-speaking community. Determined to develop and pass “voluntary smoke-free policies in at least two outdoor public areas where Russian-speakers congregate,” SUNSET designed and implemented a multi-phased educational and policy adoption process.

Working together, Korwin Consulting and SUNSET staff developed observation and interview tools, later used by staff to assess the presence of secondhand smoke within public areas frequented by Russian-speaking community members. This assessment process, coupled with educational outreach, formed the foundation of SUNSET’s approach to reducing secondhand smoke within the community.

While facing various obstacles along the way, SUNSET succeeded in garnering increased awareness of secondhand smoke, and orchestrating passage of two voluntary policies and supporting passage of another in San Francisco.

*But did the process unfold as anticipated?* Not exactly. SUNSET envisioned that their primary policy work would focus on adoption of policies restricting smoking in public parks. However, their observation of parks did not show many Russian-speakers smoking, and the adoption of a more comprehensive smoke-free park policy by a San Francisco Supervisor, caused SUNSET to rethink their policy focus.

SUNSET targeted their efforts on reducing secondhand smoke exposure in front of housing and health and human service agencies frequented by Russian-speakers. This emphasis was in keeping with staff’s observation of more individuals smoking outside of these buildings than they observed in the parks. Following these site observations, SUNSET disseminated letters to site managers of all observation sites. This letter, sent to 25 site managers, did not yield any responses. SUNSET staff was discouraged by these findings but did not let this experience derail their efforts.

Findings from SUNSET’s earlier key informant interviews highlighted the importance of conducting a community-wide educational campaign aimed at increasing the Russian community’s understanding about the impact of secondhand smoke. SUNSET recognized that without this understanding, they would face continued opposition to their efforts.

SUNSET staff believes that their community-wide educational work was actually the most important work of all. They reached 58 different individuals through their outreach in the parks, at health clinics, and in ESL classes. Through this outreach, they provided educational packets about the harmful consequences of smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke.

Ultimately, SUNSET staff relied upon existing relationships to advocate for passage of smoke-free entrance policies at two health agencies serving Russian immigrants. While these outcomes are certainly desirable, SUNSET’s experience does not necessarily provide a replicable model for policy-adoption. In ruminating on these findings, SUNSET staff believes that they do not have adequate staff to successfully accomplish the policy objectives that they had targeted. They also came to learn or (relearn) the importance of building a basis of support and acceptance within the Russian community before pursuing a restrictive policy that may retrigger community members’ earlier experiences under Soviet rule.

## Project Description

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The SUNSET Russian Tobacco Project has been working to educate and reduce tobacco use and exposure among the San Francisco and East Bay Russian-speaking communities for the past six years. Through a combination of smoking cessation classes, secondhand smoke workshops, and merchant education, SUNSET has begun to increase the Russian-speaking community's understanding of tobacco's impact on both the individual and the community.

In 2003, SUNSET decided to expand its approach to reducing secondhand smoke in the Russian-speaking community. Determined to develop and pass "voluntary smoke-free policies in at least two outdoor public areas where Russian-speakers congregate," SUNSET designed and implemented a multi-phase educational and policy process.

SUNSET staff conducted the following activities to achieve their objectives:

- Observed public areas where Russian-speakers congregate to assess their exposure to secondhand smoke,
- Conducted face-to-face interviews with seven community leaders to learn their impressions of the presence and impact of secondhand smoke exposure on the Russian-speaking community,
- Developed educational materials for the Russian-speaking community regarding the dangers of secondhand smoke,
- Mailed observational site managers educational materials regarding secondhand smoke and educational assistance available through SUNSET,
- Conducted one-on-one educational outreach with Russian community members regarding the impact of exposure to secondhand smoke,
- Disseminated press releases to Russian media aimed at promoting their educational message regarding secondhand smoke and voluntary policies, and
- Conducted targeted policy-related outreach to select health sites.

## Evaluation Methods

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Korwin Consulting worked closely with SUNSET to design and conduct a case study evaluation of their voluntary smoke-free policy initiative. We chose the case study approach as it has a distinct advantage over other research strategies. According to Robert K. Yin, in *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, the case study is best used when "a 'how' or 'why' question is being asked about a contemporary set of events, over which the investigator has little or no control."

In addition, Korwin Consulting and SUNSET recognized at the onset that this policy initiative would offer insight into unique cultural conditions and challenges—namely, introducing a "restrictive" policy on a community that has a history of living under considerable control. As expressed by one interviewee later in the report, "the Russian community has an attitude about any kind of authority. This attitude has been developed as a consequence of living under the rule of the Soviet Union. Russian people have a rebellious attitude toward anything that comes from authority and restricts their freedom."

**The Tools.** Korwin Consulting developed the following policy advocacy evaluation tools to use in assessing whether and where SUNSET might best focus its policy efforts:

- **Outdoor Area Observation Tool:** Provides the SUNSET Community Health Outreach Workers (CHOWs) with key observational questions to answer regarding tobacco use in public spaces under observation. Staff record tobacco use patterns such as number of people smoking, description of smokers, location of smoking,

number of cigarettes smoked, and where the cigarette butt(s) are discarded. In addition, staff observe whether there was any tobacco advertising (such as brand logos, labels, posters or billboards) in the area, signs prohibiting or limiting tobacco use in the area, availability of ashtrays, and anything else that they deem relevant. (A copy of the tool is attached in the Appendix.)

- **Interview Protocol for Smoke-Free Public Spaces Policy Adoption:** Provides the SUNSET Community Health Outreach team members an interview protocol to use when meeting with community leaders to discuss secondhand smoking in areas where Russian speakers gather. This interview protocol captures interviewees' impressions of the level and impact of smoking in public parks, public housing and near other public buildings. In addition, interviewees' are asked to identify any existing policies prohibiting smoking in these areas, their support for developing new policies, any perceived obstacles to enacting new policies, and recommendations for other strategies other than policy changes, to reduce the Russian-speaking community's exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke in or near public areas.
- **Staff Interview Protocols:** Every other month, Korwin Consulting developed interview questions to ask of staff in order to capture the policy initiative's progress.

In March 2004, Korwin Consulting trained SUNSET staff in techniques for effectively observing and completing the outdoor area observation tool for public spaces they observe. In addition, Korwin Consulting trained staff in effective interviewing techniques and how best to conduct interviews with community leaders using the key informant interview tool. In addition, Korwin Consulting met with staff every other month and conducted an interview with them to track their progress on their policy initiative.

## Presentation of Results

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### ***Phase One: Determining the Need for Policy Change***

Is there a need to establish smoke-free policies in outdoor public areas where Russian-speakers congregate? If so, where is this need greatest? What are the challenges or barriers in passing these policies? These are just some of the questions faced by SUNSET as they set out to reduce secondhand smoke exposure through changes in public smoking-related policies. SUNSET staff conducted the following activities,

### **Outdoor Observation**

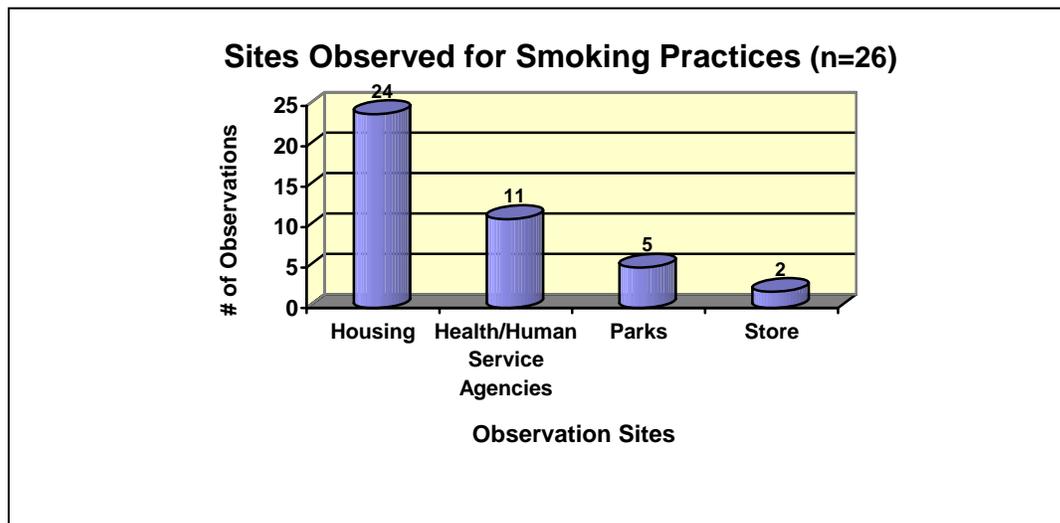
**The Process.** SUNSET's CHOWs set out to observe outdoor public gathering places of the Russian community to identify sites most in need of policies that restrict tobacco use. According to SUNSET's proposal to TCS, their intention was to:

Assess approximately 10-25 outdoor public gathering places of the Russian community (primarily Richmond and Sunset districts of SF and identified sites in the East Bay) to identify common sites. This will be done through processes such as discussion with community members and service providers (convenience sample), observations of the community sites, community walk-throughs, etc. Attention will be paid to when community members gathers there, what type of members, what they do and inquiries will be made to determine who manages the site. Based on information gathered, at least ten sites will be selected to approach and advocate for adopting a limited or smoke-free policy. Priority will be on sites with higher numbers of Russians and those that have children and adults interacting.

Through their own experience as members of the Russian community and in discussion with other Russian community members, the CHOWs identified various locations, including parks, social service agencies and housing complexes to observe.

Between April and July 2004, the CHOWs identified and conducted 42 observations at 26 different sites, 16 sites of which they observed twice. They observed these sites at different times of the day and on different days of the week. Spending an hour at each location, staff recorded key observations as described above.

The CHOWs observed 13 different housing complexes, eight different health and human service agencies, one store, and three parks either housing, serving or frequented by the Russian community. (A table providing observation details is available in the Appendix.)



**What they Observed.** The CHOWs observed individuals' smoking at 17 of their 26 observation sites. In most instances, they observed one or two people either smoking on the sidewalk or near the door of a housing complex, or they witnessed someone smoking as she or he walked around the lake. Mostly, they saw individuals smoking one cigarette during the hour in which they observed that site. In several instances, they observed two people smoking and talking with one another.

Staff admit being surprised at their findings. They anticipated seeing large numbers of people smoking in locations where Russians congregate. That was not the case. They did however discover that Russian community members may be experiencing greater exposure to secondhand smoke near their housing complexes and or health and human service agencies than in the parks.

### Key Informant Interviews

**The Process.** Following the observations, the SUNSET team used the interview protocol described above to conduct face-to-face interviews with Russian community members and leaders including:

- Irina Genkina, Community Member
- Mila Gornitsky, Social Worker
- Yuriy Lapis, Landlord
- Boris Nisenzon, Advisory Board Member
- Alyonik Hrushow, SF Tobacco Free Project Director
- Victoria Royzina, Social Worker
- Zhanna Sladkova, Community Member

**What they Learned.** All of the interviewees had visited public parks, buildings and housing complexes over the past year where they witnessed people smoking in or near

these places. However, when questioned as to the import of this, the results were mixed.

***Is secondhand smoke exposure among Russian speakers a problem in the city's public areas?***

Interviewees were divided over whether they believed that exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke among Russian speakers is a problem in the City's public areas. Four of the seven interviewees said that it was indeed a problem citing the following reasons: "Some Russian immigrants gather in Golden Gate Park where smokers and non-smokers have joint activities. Non-smokers are exposed to secondhand tobacco smoke during these meetings," "Because the exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke hurts people who are non-smokers. Their health is put at danger just because somebody around them smokes."

"Russian people have the right to smoke anywhere because it's their choice to smoke and it should not be violated."

The remaining three interviewees did not think that Russian-speakers' exposure to secondhand smoke in public places was a problem. One interviewee explained, "Russian people have the right to smoke anywhere because it's their choice to smoke and it should not be violated."

***Would interviewees be in favor of policies prohibiting smoking in public parks?***

Interviewees were again divided over whether they would "be in favor of policies prohibiting smoking in public parks" or policies requiring "smoke-free entryways to public housing and other public buildings."

Four out of the seven interviewees would support policies prohibiting smoking in public parks, two would not, and one was "not sure." The undecided interviewee explains: "Maybe only in the areas where people congregate and gather together but not in the whole park since it's really difficult to incorporate in all areas of any park."

Interviewees show slightly more support for policies requiring "smoke-free entryways to public housing and other public buildings." Five were in support, one was opposed, and one was "not sure." Of those five in favor of policy adoption, all would be likely to support a "policy that restricts people from smoking more than 15 feet from doorways," the most restrictive policy proposed to the interviewees.

***What obstacles might "someone" face if they were to pursue these policies?***

The interviewees identify several obstacles that SUNSET or others interested in passing policies prohibiting or limiting smoking in public places might face. Again, an interviewee raised the notion that Russians from the former Soviet Union would oppose any policies that restrict their "rights." As stated, "[an obstacle would be] Russian-speaking people's rejection and intolerance when something is imposed on them." Others indicate potential opposition from tobacco companies and smokers. They also discuss the challenge in knowing "where to find people who would actively spread these policies," as well as the energy and time required to pass a policy. "Well, since there is no opposition to the state laws it will be much easier to incorporate [a local policy]. The best way is to work on the ordinance for policies prohibiting smoking when entering public housing. It's all a prolonged process which can take years. It takes a lot of energy and time." And another suggests, "Generally, there is not opposition to the state laws. The best way is to come up with an ordinance that will prohibit smoking in public housing. Many years will pass until the local government will take action." One interviewee cautions that any successful policy effort must be tied to a message about the importance of these policies to the health and well-being of community members. S/he states, "The public has to believe that they need these policies in their community."

***Who would support or oppose efforts to pursue a policy?***

The interviewees identify different potential supporters and opponents to a restricted or no smoking policy in the public places (e.g., parks, housing and other public buildings) cited. They believe that tenants might be a possible source of support for housing-related policies especially “Russian elders living in apartment buildings” as well as “people with health problems.” One interviewee states, “I think in public housing tenants should push the local governments to pass the policies.” In addition, one interviewee suggests that ‘the Rent Control Board can be helpful’ in passing a policy.”

Interviewees suggest that non-smokers are natural allies in the pursuit of restricted smoking policies. They believe that “non-smokers and those who suffer from secondhand smoke” would support the policies.

They recommend working with the Parks and Recreation Commission to pursue passage of policies in the parks. “I believe the Parks and Recreation Commission would support these policies.” They suggest that the Board of Supervisors would be the entity to turn to for restricting smoking in front of public buildings.

Four interviewees express their interest in helping to get the policies passed, and three indicate that they are not interested in assisting in these efforts

Not surprisingly, interviewees view smokers as the most likely opponents to these policies. They believe that smokers will oppose the policies and “feel that their rights are being violated.” Another echoes this sentiment, “the Russian community has an attitude about any kind of authority. This attitude has been developed as a consequence of living under the rule of the Soviet Union. Russian people have a rebellious attitude toward anything that comes from authority and restricts their freedom.”

***What solutions, other than policy changes, would be most effective in reducing the Russian community's exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke in or near public areas?***

SUNSET staff questioned interviewees about different strategies other than policy changes they believe would be most effective in reducing the Russian community's exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke in or near public areas.

The interviewees suggest that education about the harmful consequences of secondhand smoke is needed within the Russian-speaking community. They suggest that, “educating people about the consequences of smoking to their own health and to the health of others,” “distributing appropriate information in Russian on these subjects,” and making people aware “that smoking is not only bad for them but for the environment,” would be effective strategies.

***What kinds of information do people in the Russian community need regarding exposure to secondhand smoke in or near public areas?***

The interviewees offer many suggestions for the type and dissemination of health information geared toward educating the Russian community about exposure to secondhand smoke. They suggest distributing “informational fact sheets with statistical information about secondhand smoke,” “Russian language materials on smoking and cessation,” and “[disseminating] comprehensive information in Russian.” They recommend using the media to get the word out as well as displaying health information on public billboards, sponsor educational workshops where Russian people gather, purchase space in Russian newspapers, and create either a documentary or songs conveying the impact of secondhand smoke exposure.

Several talk about the importance of developing relationships with Russian community members as a means toward creating greater receptivity on the parts of these members.

One states that “the best way to deliver information is to make friendships with members of the community.”

## **Participation in the San Francisco Tobacco Free Coalition**

At the same time that SUNSET staff was observing city parks to determine whether there was a need for a “smoke-free” or “restricted smoking” park policy, a San Francisco Supervisor had independently made the decision to promote passage of a smoke-free parks policy. SUNSET’s Project Director, as a member of the San Francisco Tobacco Free Coalition, participated in a discussion with the Coalition regarding this proposed ordinance. Normally tobacco-related city ordinances originate from this Coalition. Having a tobacco ordinance originate from a Supervisor took them by surprise. Coalition members’ questioned the motivation behind this proposal. The Coalition decided to meet with the Supervisor to discuss the proposed ordinance.

SUNSET’s Project Director joined the delegation who met with the Supervisor’s aide. They learned that the impetus behind the ordinance was initially “littering.” On a recent Park Cleanup Day, they found mostly discarded cigarettes. The Supervisor and her team thought about the negative impact of secondhand smoke on health, the negative consequences of littering, and the positive impact of modeling positive behaviors around children and decided to propose a smoke-free public places ordinance.

Following introduction of the ordinance concept, a group by the name of *Friends of the Parks* indicated their support for a limited policy on tobacco use in public places. Namely, they indicated that they would agree to a ban on smoking in playgrounds and picnic areas. They felt that the ordinance as currently worded was too far reaching. Members of the Coalition felt that as well. San Francisco is unique in that it is home to Golden Gate Park—a much larger park than is found in other communities. The Coalition members agreed to talk with different groups such as the “marijuana community” to get their take on the ordinance. The Coalition indicated their willingness to support an ordinance if it can be changed to be more amenable to other groups. The Supervisor encouraged the Coalition to attend an October 28<sup>th</sup> hearing to express their concerns and propose changes.

According to SUNSET’s Project Director, SUNSET as a program targeting the Russian-speaking community was in an interesting and challenging position. While a strong supporter of reducing secondhand smoke in public places, SUNSET is also sensitive to the cultural and political history of the Russian-speaking community. SUNSET staff convened their Advisory Committee to discuss this proposed ordinance as well as the findings from their observations and key informant interviews.

## ***Phase Two: Developing a Strategy***

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SUNSET staff convened and participated in several internal and external meetings with their evaluator, with members of the San Francisco Tobacco Free Coalition, and ultimately with their Advisory Committee to review the findings from both site observations, key informant interviews and the proposed smoke-free citywide ordinance. They developed a strategy based upon a review and discussion of these findings.

**Advisory Committee completes the Midwestern Academy Strategy Chart:** SUNSET staff convened its Advisory Committee to conduct a Midwestern Academy strategic planning session. Eight advisory members plus staff completed a MWA Strategy Chart at its October 2004 meeting. The Committee members reviewed SUNSET’s policy work conducted to date—their observations of smoking in parks, low-income housing and in entrances to social service agencies. They used the MWA Strategy Chart to review each of those.

Advisory members felt that the proposed citywide ordinance was too far reaching and infringing on individual rights. They were more comfortable supporting a more limited ordinance such as no-smoking in picnic areas and playgrounds than the broader smoke-free policy on the table. SUNSET's Project Director explains that this was a culturally important finding. In their meeting with the Supervisor's aide, the aide acknowledged that the proposed ordinance might be a hardship for immigrant communities. SUNSET's Project Director felt that this was especially true in recognition of the Russian government's history of having significant control over its citizens. This proposal seemed to generate a lot of discomfort for the Advisory Committee members, most of whom are Russian-speakers.

After much discussion, the Advisory Committee decided that SUNSET will not be an active promoter in passing this ordinance. However, if the ordinance passes, SUNSET would help to translate ordinance-related materials into Russian. As a TCS-funded project and as members of the San Francisco Coalition, they would provide support to any reasonable tobacco control ordinance and help generate community support if it was passed.

The Advisory Committee encouraged the SUNSET staff to focus its efforts on education and outreach to low-income housing developments and social services agencies as observational visits showed a higher smoking presence at these sites. The Committee agreed that SUNSET should:

- **Conduct Broad-based Community Outreach.** Staff were encouraged to “do a lot of education and obtain broad-based support for creating smoke-free areas.” Incorporating a variety of outreach methods (e.g., media outreach, client education, outreach to religious leaders, and development of an educational outreach package) the Advisory Committee sought to create broad-based support within the Russian-speaking community for creating smoke-free areas.
- **Conduct Targeted Educational Outreach.** Conduct informal educational meetings with identified “targets” to find out what their roles are within housing and social service agencies, and whether they are open to introducing a restricted smoking policy at the site. The Committee recommended that SUNSET develop “smoke free educational packets” to disseminate through one-on-one outreach contacts in the parks and near social service agencies. In addition, they identified key Russian business organizations including “Baraban.com and Rabota,” the Russian language newspaper “Kstati” and other media resources to support these outreach efforts.
- **Conduct Outreach to Housing Site Managers.** Staff were encouraged to select and meet with housing site managers to educate them about secondhand smoke and discuss introduction of a possible smoking restriction policy. (Committee members suggested that staff find an ally in the building such as a tenant or tenants to join SUNSET in their meeting with management.) Another suggestion was to conduct a survey of tenants to assess interest in a smoking restriction policy, or interest in conducting a quit clinic on site. Staff were encouraged to conduct a media campaign and disseminate secondhand smoke posters. The Committee members believed that it was important to do a lot of education and have tenants within the building work on meetings. They were concerned that it would be too difficult for SUNSET to “come in as an outsider.”

### ***Phase Three: Building Support for Smoke-Free Public Spaces***

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SUNSET staff implemented a multi-thronged educational outreach campaign aimed at creating broad-based support within the Russian-speaking community for the creation of smoke-free areas.

## Key Strategies:

- **SUNSET staff developed educational materials including:**
  - Educational packets for Russian community members and site management to educate them about secondhand smoke, existing policies in outdoor public areas such as parks, the benefits of smoke-free public places, and local/state “no smoking” ordinances.
  - Bilingual brochures, posters, and flyers educating Russian-speakers about the impact of smoking and secondhand smoke.
- **SUNSET staff mailed site managers educational materials.** In June 2004, SUNSET staff mailed the secondhand smoke educational packets to site managers at 25 observation sites. In the mailing’s cover letter, staff requested the opportunity to meet with the site managers to discuss SUNSET’s work. Unfortunately, none of the site managers contacted SUNSET in response to this letter. In discussion with other San Francisco-based tobacco prevention specialists, SUNSET staff claim to learn that it is nearly impossible for an organization the size of SUNSET’s to successfully understand and then impact smoking policies within housing complexes. They explained that there are organizations dedicated primarily to this task and that it takes years and a great deal of effort to move the issue forward even a few steps. They explain further that it would help to be working from the “inside” like some of the tenant advocacy groups funded to do this type of work.
- **SUNSET staff conducted one-on-one educational outreach.** Based on these findings, and their own experiences to date, SUNSET staff chose to refocus their efforts primarily on creating a “climate change” within the Russian-speaking community toward smoking-related policies.

The SUNSET CHOWs conducted one-on-one outreach in the parks, at the refugee medical clinic, and through presentations at Citizenship classes at the International Institute, all venues frequented by Russian-speakers.

They distributed educational packets to 58 individuals. Recognizing that “people from the former USSR are not open to talking to strangers,” SUNSET employed CHOWs who are a part of the Russian-speaking community and familiar with many members of this community. As indicated in their progress report to TCS, “most of the people we talked to were not complete strangers to us. We somehow got acquainted with them, or saw them at Russian events or we knew their kids and grandkids.” Staff believes that this familiarity was a key to their success. The CHOWs found the “young generation more open to hearing about smoking in public areas and sharing their thoughts and opinions. The older generation...[was] concerned about the younger generation and their health.” Through these outreach discussions, the CHOWs learned that “overall, Russian-speaking people are concerned about health and the health of their loved ones.” They learned that “different age groups and educational levels require different ways of presenting educational materials related to health and smoking. Youngsters and teenagers need a more picturesque way of explaining smoking-related issues while the older generation requires more detailed information.”

- **SUNSET staff sought media coverage to promote their message.** SUNSET staff developed and disseminated a press release regarding secondhand smoke to five Russian community media sources in the early part of this year. These materials publicized SUNSET’s secondhand smoke campaign while at the same time were designed to educate the Russian-speaking community about the negative effects of tobacco, the benefits of smoke-free public places, and encouraged sites to adopt

smoke free policies. Unfortunately, none of the media sources ran the press releases. According to staff, Russian media are more likely to run a press release or story if a program purchases ad space. SUNSET has written an article that they are planning to disseminate to media sources in the future.

➤ **SUNSET staff conducted targeted policy-related outreach.**

SUNSET staff targeted three sites for adoption of a smoke-free or restricted smoking policy. These included the Ocean Park Health Center, the Russian Center

**Press Releases Disseminated**

Date	Type of Media	Source
June 2004	Newspaper	Kstatie
June 2004	Newspaper	East West
June 2004	Newspaper	Vzglyad
June 2004	Newspaper	New Life
June 2004	Website/Newspaper	Baraban

for Emotional Support, and a public housing landlord. Staff conducted meetings with representatives from each organization.

- **Ocean Park Health Center.** SUNSET staff are housed within the Ocean Park Health Center, a facility that serves a large number of Russian-speakers daily. One of SUNSET’s first policy-related efforts was to approach the Center’s administration and advocate on behalf of passage of a voluntary smoke-free within 20 feet of the entrance policy. The administration agreed. SUNSET assisted the Center in drafting the language for this policy as well as furnished them with translated signs to post outside of the Center communicating this policy.
- **The Russian Center for Emotional Support.** One of SUNSET’s Advisory Committee members works with the newly formed Russian Center for Emotional Support. After discussion with and support from SUNSET staff, this individual agreed to talk with the Rabbi in charge of the nonprofit about passing a smoke-free within 20 feet of the entrance policy. The Rabbi agreed. SUNSET assisted the Center in drafting the language for this policy as well as furnished them with both English and Russian “no smoking signs” to post at the Center.
- **San Francisco Smoke-Free City Parks.** As described above, SUNSET’s staff, its Advisory Committee, as well as other immigrant community leaders were concerned that the “smoke-free park ordinance” proposed by a San Francisco Supervisor would be too far reaching. In response, SUNSET’s Project Director as a member of the San Francisco Tobacco Free Coalition participated in educating the Supervisor about San Francisco’s Russian-speaking community and the potential impact of the ordinance on this community while also supporting the idea of smoke-free public places and offering the coalition’s support. While acknowledging SUNSET’s and others’ concerns, the Supervisor decided to pursue the ordinance. The ordinance was adopted by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors on February 4, 2005 and will go into effect on July 1, 2005. SUNSET staff are prepared to work with City officials to translate the ordinance language and signage into Russian. Their interest is to ensure that the Russian community is well-informed about the ordinance and the consequences to them if not followed. At the same time, they are committed to using this as an opportunity to continue educating the community about the negative consequences of secondhand smoke.

- **A Public Housing Corporation:** SUNSET staff followed up with a Public Housing Corporation regarding a tenant's complaint about smoke coming into her apartment through the building's ventilation system. The main administrative office directed SUNSET staff to the site manager. The site manager indicated that he has been getting calls from a lot of tobacco groups and that they are in compliance with the law. "People are not allowed to smoke in public places but we cannot stop tenants from smoking in their own units." The SUNSET staff member explained how the smoke is coming through the ventilation system. The manager indicated that there is a special ventilation system that his company can install in the tenant's unit (Crystal Air Fresher ventilation system). He also invited SUNSET to bring by SUNSET's Russian-language flyers for posting and distribution in the building.

SUNSET staff followed up with the tenant to explain the solution being offered by the site manager. Unfortunately, the tenant did not want to be identified to the site manager. According to SUNSET staff, the tenant was afraid that she might suffer negative consequences as a result of her complaint. This is an important finding for organizations seeking to engage tenants as advocates in their own buildings as a strategy for creating smoke-free housing policies.

## Discussion and Recommendations

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SUNSET began this policy initiative with the intention of reducing the Russian community's exposure to secondhand smoke through changes in public smoking-related policies. Specifically, they were interested in

...at least two outdoor public areas where Russian-speakers congregate adopting a voluntary smoke-free policy such as no smoking in partially enclosed areas in parks, no-smoking 15 feet from public building doorways or no smoking areas in public housing buildings.

They were able to accomplish this objective: Both the Ocean Park Health Center and the Russian Center for Emotional Health have passed "no-smoking 15 feet from public building doorway" policies for their Centers as a response to SUNSET's advocacy efforts.

*But did the process unfold as anticipated?* No. SUNSET envisioned that their primary policy work would focus on adoption of policies restricting smoking in public parks. As described above, their observation of parks did not show many Russian-speakers smoking, and the adoption of a more comprehensive smoke-free park policy by a San Francisco Supervisor, reduced the number of places they could approach and caused SUNSET to rethink their policy focus.

SUNSET targeted their efforts on reducing secondhand smoke exposure in front of housing and health and human service agencies frequented by Russian-speakers. This emphasis was in keeping with staff's observation of more individuals smoking outside of these buildings than they observed in the parks. Following these site observations, SUNSET disseminated letters to site managers in which they observed smoking outside of their building. The letter requested "a meeting with you to discuss the benefits of creating areas at your site that could be designated smoke-free and to tell you about our services." As reported above, this letter, sent to 25 site managers, did not yield any responses. SUNSET staff was discouraged by these findings but did not let this experience derail their efforts.

Findings from SUNSET's earlier key informant interviews highlighted the importance of conducting a community-wide educational campaign aimed at increasing the Russian community's understanding about the impact of secondhand smoke. SUNSET recognized that without this understanding, they would face continued opposition to their efforts.

SUNSET staff believes that their community education work was actually the most important work of all. They reached 58 different individuals through their outreach in the parks, at health clinics, and in ESL classes. Through this outreach, they provided educational packets about the harmful consequences of smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke. CHOWs conducted this outreach in pairs, engaging Russian community members in an easy and open dialogue about these issues.

Ultimately, SUNSET staff relied upon existing relationships to advocate for passage of smoke-free entrance policies at two health agencies serving Russian immigrants. They also ultimately provided assistance as coalition members in the passage of the San Francisco smoke-free parks ordinance. Although depending on existing relationships could prove to be a difficult model for policy adoption, it does underscore what SUNSET has learned about working with this community. Namely, that you accomplish things in this community through your relationships and that community norms are still resistant to policies which may seem authoritarian. SUNSET staff does see the passage of these voluntary policies as huge accomplishments for a community that has only had a tobacco education program for five years. When they started they could not imagine doing any policy work. This experience has led them to believe the community will be more open to policy, and they have created a work plan for the next 3 years with a policy focus tied to extensive community education.

## Appendix

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- Site Observation Checklist
- Key Informant Interview Protocol
- Staff Interview Protocol
- Site Observation Chart

## **SUNSET Outdoor Observation Information Sheet (March 2004)**

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### ***General Tips for Observing Outdoor Areas...***

1. Develop a list of all relevant outdoor public areas including parks, public housing and other public buildings frequented by the Russian community.
2. Schedule dates and times to observe tobacco-related practices at these public areas. Ideally, you should try to observe the same areas at different times of the day and perhaps different days of the week to get as clear a picture of secondhand smoke exposure as possible.
3. Ideally you should observe each site for approximately the same amount of time. In this way we can get a sense of the presence and prevalence of secondhand smoke exposure.

### ***Completing the Outdoor Area Observation Form***

4. Please fill out the top section of the form so that we will know where you made your observation and when.
5. Please complete each question as thoroughly as possible. You are the "witnesses" of the secondhand exposure. It is important that you describe the situation as clearly as you see it.
6. Please be sure to keep all completed observations in one folder. Linette will explain the procedure to you.

## SUNSET Russian Tobacco Education Project Outdoor Area Observation

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Type of Public Area:

Park       Public Housing       Other (please specify: \_\_\_\_\_)

Location of Public Area (street address, City): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time (e.g., 8:00 am): \_\_\_\_\_

Day of the week: \_\_\_\_\_ Length of observation (# of minutes): \_\_\_\_\_

Observer: \_\_\_\_\_

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1. Describe the area (e.g. Are there tables? Areas of green space? Playground? etc.)

2. Describe who is there (e.g. Approximate number of individuals, by age/gender. Number of Russian individuals? What are individuals doing?)

3. Describe the patterns of smoking in the area.

a. How many people smoked during your observation? \_\_\_\_\_

b. Briefly describe smokers, by age/gender/Russian: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. Where did they smoke? (e.g., sidewalk, near door, playground) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

d. # of cigarettes smoked during observation? \_\_\_\_\_

e. How was cigarette butt extinguished? \_\_\_\_\_

f. Was cigarette butt left behind?       Yes       No

4. Do you notice tobacco advertising (brand logos, labels, posters, billboards) in the area?

Yes             No

a. If yes, what advertising do you notice?

b. Where is the advertising located?

5. Do you notice any sign prohibiting or limiting tobacco use in the area?

Yes             No

6. Do you see ashtrays in the area?

Yes             No

a. If yes, where are the ashtrays located?

b. Are the ashtrays?     Empty             Somewhat Full             Completely Full

7. Anything else observed?

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## SUNSET Community Survey Information Sheet (March 2004)

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### *General Tips for Surveying Community Members...*

7. Start by reading off the top portion of the survey that begins with the words:  
**Interviewer Reads**
8. Ask the community leader his or her name, title, agency, phone number, and e-mail address. Fill this information on to the form. You should know the "respondent type" prior to the call. Please check off the appropriate selection in the **Respondent Type** box.
9. This survey is confidential. Please let the community members know that we will be interviewing numerous community leaders and looking at their responses to this survey as a group. We will not share their individual survey answers with anyone outside of the project.
10. Let the community members know that they are free to not answer any question that they are uncomfortable answering. In those cases, please write "no answer" next to the question. In this way we will know that you didn't forget to ask the question but instead that the community member chose not to answer it.
- 11. Please be sure to fully read aloud each survey question to each community member as written on the survey.**
12. Anything in italics is there for your view and use only. Please do not read this information out loud to the interviewees.
13. Ask each **yes/no** question as though you do not have a set of preprinted answers, giving the community members the chance to provide their own answers. For example, in question 1, you want to ask the question "during the past 12 months, have you visited any of the following public areas. Have you visited public parks? Let the respondents say **yes** or **no**. Check off the response given on the survey form. Ask all yes or no questions in this same way.
14. Questions 3 and 4, ask interviewees to provide a number between one and four to represent how serious they believe exposure to secondhand smoke is in the city's public areas. You should read this sentence as it is written on the survey. It is okay to repeat the scale to the respondent if they appear confused. For example you can repeat at the end of your sentence "Again not at all serious equals 1 and very serious equals 4."
15. Note under question 5, you ask interviewees to answer yes or no to this question and then you ask why. Be sure to ask "why" to all interviewees not just those that say yes.
16. In question 6, we want interviewees who answer "yes" to then answer the following questions 6 a-c. For those that answer "no" you should skip to question 7 and not ask question 6 a-c. Treat question 7 the same way as question 6.
17. In question 10, we are interested in learning to whether community members would support a smoke-free entryway policy. If the interviewee says "yes" then go on to ask them question 10a.
18. In question 10a, please read aloud the question and each of the following responses. Check the one that the interviewee agrees with. If the interviewee does not agree with any of the responses, check off the last option "would not support any of these options"
19. Please be sure to keep all completed surveys in one folder. Linette will explain the procedure to you.

**Interview Protocol for Smoke-Free Public Spaces Policy Adoption**

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**Interviewer Reads:**

*We are interviewing community leaders about second hand smoking in areas where Russian speakers gather. We are interested in learning what you think about current smoking practices among Russian speakers in public areas such as parks and public buildings.*

*The interview should take about 15 to 20 minutes to complete. Is this a good time? Your answers will be confidential.*

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Respondent Type: (check one)</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Government official	<input type="checkbox"/> Site Management
<input type="checkbox"/> Law enforcement	<input type="checkbox"/> Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Health Organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Media
<input type="checkbox"/> Business	<input type="checkbox"/> Youth Organization
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Service Agency	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Member
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify: _____)	

Russian speaker:  Yes  No  
all

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**Tobacco Smoke in Public Areas**

1. During the past 12 months, have you visited any of the following public areas:

- have you visited public parks?  Yes  No
- have you visited public housing?  Yes  No
- have you visited public buildings?  Yes  No

2. Do you remember seeing people smoking in or near these public areas?

- Yes  No

3. On a four-point scale, with 1 being *not at all serious* to 4 being *very serious*, how serious do you think exposure to secondhand smoke is in the City's public areas?

not at all serious very serious

1 2 3 4

4. On a four-point scale, with 1 being *not at all serious* to 4 being *very serious*, how serious do you think **the Russian community** views exposure to secondhand smoke in the City's public areas to be?

not at all serious very serious

1 2 3 4

5. Do you think that exposure to second hand tobacco smoke among Russian speakers is a problem in our City's **public areas**?

Yes             No

a. Why?

6. Do you know if there are current policies prohibiting smoking in parks?

Yes (if yes, ask questions a-c below)

No (if no, skip to question 7)

a. Of the tobacco-related policies that do exist, how and who enforces them?

b. Please give the names and contact information for people responsible for the enforcement of tobacco policies.

c. What are the consequences for violating the policy?

7. Do you know if there are current policies prohibiting smoking in or near public housing or other public buildings?

Yes (if yes, ask questions a-c below)

No (if no, skip to question 8)

- a. Of the tobacco-related policies that do exist, how and who enforces them?
  
- b. Please give the names and contact information for people responsible for the enforcement of tobacco policies.
  
- c. What are the consequences for violating the policy?

8. On a four-point scale, with 1 being "very weak" to 4 being "very strong", how supportive are community leaders to take action to reduce exposure to second hand tobacco smoke in or near public areas? Remember 1="very weak support" and 4="very strong support"

Very weak don't know				Very strong
1	2	3		4

9. Would you be in favor of policies prohibiting smoking in public parks?

- Yes       No       Not Sure

10. Would you support a policy requiring smoke-free entryways to public housing and other public buildings?

- Yes       No (skip to question 11)       Not Sure

a. **If yes**, what restriction would you most likely support?

- Would you support a policy that restricts people from smoking 1-5 ft from doorways
- Would you support a policy that restricts people from smoking 6-15 ft from doorway
- Would you support a policy that restricts people from smoking more than 15 ft from doorways
- Would not support any of these options

11. Are there other policies that you would support to limit exposure to smoking in public areas?

12. What obstacles do you think might be faced if someone were to pursue these policies?

13. What specific groups or individuals do you think would support efforts to pursue a policy and why?

14. What specific groups or individuals would oppose efforts to pursue a policy and why?

15. Would be you be interested in helping to get the policies passed?

Yes       No

**Other Solutions and Support: Parks**

16. What other type of solutions other than policy changes, do you think would be most effective in reducing the Russian community's exposure to second hand tobacco smoke in or near public areas?

17. What kinds of information do people in the Russian community need regarding exposure to second hand smoke in or near public areas?

18. What is the best way to deliver this information? Would sources would be the most credible?

19. What would be the best way to implement this solution?

20. What other recommendations or comments do you have?

## SUNSET Sample Staff Interview Questions

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1. **Educational Outreach.** I know back in December, Linette explained that Ylena and Olga were going out to parks and other sites conducting educational outreach with Russian speakers.
  - a. How are things going with your educational outreach efforts?
  - b. Have you continued these efforts?
  - c. How many people did you reach?
  - d. What did you hope to accomplish? (Probe: obtain broad-based community support for reducing secondhand smoke exposure in the Russian community)
  - e. Do you think that you did accomplish that?
  - f. How do you know?
2. **Smoke-Free Policy.** I know that The Russian Center for Emotional Support agreed to pass a no-smoking within 20 ft of the entrance policy. When you look back on your role in getting this policy passed,
  - a. What do you think you did well and could take to other settings?
  - b. What would you change or improve about your process?
  - c. Have you had any contact with them since passage?
    - i. If so, have they talked about whether or not the policy is being observed? Or anything else about the policy? For example, clients reactions to policy?
3. **San Francisco Smoke Free Parks ordinance.** Now that the SF Smoke-Free Parks Ordinance passed,
  - a. How do you think that it will impact your program and the Russian speaking community?
  - b. Does SUNSET have any plans to help introduce it to the Russian community or have any other type of involvement with it?
4. **Smoke-Free Public Places.** I know that staff observed many different public spaces including public housing and other housing serving the Russian community and completed observation forms. I also know that you had sent out educational materials to site managers at these sites and requested a meeting to discuss SUNSET's work.
  - a. What has happened since then?
  - b. What did you hope to accomplish?
  - c. Do you think that you did accomplish that?
  - d. How do you know?
  - e. Do you have any future plans? (*Will you be pursuing a second policy?*)
  - f. What are those?

### SUNSET Outdoor Area Observations

Type of Public Area	Name	Date	Patterns of Smoking			Tobacco Promotion or Prohibition	
			# of People Smoking	Where Smoking	# of Cigarettes Smoked	Tobacco Advertising	Signage Prohibiting/ Limiting Tobacco Use
Housing	150 Font Blvd, SF	6/15/04	2	Near Door	Unknown	No	No
Housing	150 Font Blvd, SF	6/22/04	2	Near Door	4	No	No
Housing	220 Avenue, Daly City	5/11/04	0	N/A	N/A	No	No
Housing	220 Avenue, Daly City	6/5/04	0	N/A	N/A	No	No
Housing	240 Avenue, Daly City	5/11/04	4	Near door	5	No	No
Housing	250 Serrano Dr, SF	7/15/04	0	N/A	N/A	No	No
Housing	250 Serrano Dr, SF	Unknown	2	Near Door	2-4	No	No
Housing	35 County St, Daly City	5/11/04	2	Near Door	2	No	No
Housing	50 Chumasero Dr., SF	7/6/04	1	Near Door	1	No	No
Housing	50 Chumasero Dr., SF	7/14/04	0	N/A	N/A	No	No
Housing	50 East Market St, Daly City	5/11/04	0	N/A	N/A	No	No
Housing	50 East Market St, Daly City	6/6/04	0	N/A	N/A	No	No
Housing	51 Chumasero Dr., SF	7/6/04	0	N/A	N/A	No	No
Housing	51 Chumasero Dr., SF	7/14/04	1	Near Door	2	No	No
Housing	750 Gonzalez Dr., SF	6/22/04	3	Near Door	Unknown	No	No
Housing	750 Gonzalez Dr., SF	6/29/04	2	Near Door	3-4	No	No
Housing	El Bethel Apartments, SF	4/14/04	5 passerbys	Sidewalk	5	No	No
Housing	El Bethel Apartments, SF	4/26/04	3 passerbys	Sidewalk	3	No	No
Housing	El Bethel Terrace, SF	4/14/04	6 passerbys	Sidewalk	6	No	No
Housing	Fellowship Manor	4/26/04	0	N/A	N/A	No	No
Housing	Fellowship Manor	4/14/04	0	N/A	N/A	No	Yes
Health & Social Services	Institute on Aging	4/23/04	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	No
Health & Social Services	L'Chaim Senior Center, SF	4/13/04	0	N/A	N/A	No	No
Health & Social Services	L'Chaim Senior Center, SF	4/22/04	1	Sidewalk	1	No	No
Housing	Menorah Park Apartments, SF	4/12/04	0	N/A	N/A	No	No

Type of Public Area	Name	Date	Patterns of Smoking			Tobacco Promotion or Prohibition	
			# of People Smoking	Where Smoking	# of Cigarettes Smoked	Tobacco Advertising	Signage Prohibiting/ Limiting Tobacco Use
Housing	Menorah Park Apartments, SF	5/10/04	0	N/A	N/A	No	No
Park	Mt. Lake Park, SF	4/7/04	1	Near Lake	1	No	No
Park	Mt. Lake Park, SF	4/22/04	1	Near Lake	1	No	No
Store	New World Market, SF	4/13/04	1	Near Door	1	No	No
Store	New World Market, SF	4/23/04	1	Near Door	1	No	No
Park	North Civic Dr., Walnut Creek	11/19/04	2	Sidewalk-nr playground	3	No	No
Health & Social Services	Ocean Park Health Center	4/29/05	0	N/A	N/A	No	N/A
Health & Social Services	Outer Sunset Resource Center	4/13/04	0	N/A	N/A	No	No
Health & Social Services	RAMS	4/16/04	2	Sidewalk	2	No	Yes
Housing	Rosa Parks Senior Apt., SF	4/14/04	0	N/A	N/A	No	No
Health & Social Services	Russian Center for Emotional Support, SF	3/28/05	2	Sidewalk	2	No	No
Health & Social Services	SF Jewish Community Center	5/10/04	2	Sidewalk	2	No	No
Health & Social Services	SF Jewish Community Center	4/12/04	1	Bus Stop	1	No	No
Park	Stow Lake, SF	4/13/04	0	N/A	N/A	No	No
Park	Stow Lake, SF	4/23/04	0	N/A	N/A	No	No
Health & Social Services	UCSF Cancer Department	6/23/04	1	Sidewalk	1	No	N/A
Health & Social Services	UCSF Cancer Department	6/25/04	2	Sidewalk	2	N/A	N/A