

BREAKING THE HABIT

The 2006 Southeastern Michigan LGBT Tobacco Use Report



Affirmations
LESBIAN • GAY COMMUNITY CENTER



The Problem

Every year, smoking kills more Americans than alcohol, AIDS, car accidents, illegal drugs, murders, and suicides combined. In Michigan, for every person who dies from smoking, 20 others are suffering from serious disease and disability caused by tobacco use.¹

The numbers are even higher among lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people. Higher stress levels, the emphasis on a bar social life combined with an increased incidence of substance use, reduced access to health care, and targeted marketing efforts by the tobacco industry all contribute to increased rates of tobacco use among LGBT people.² Some evidence indicates that the smoking rate in select LGBT communities is twice that of heterosexual adults.³ One recent poll found that 36% of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people were smokers as compared to 25% of all adults surveyed.⁴

Higher smoking rates put the LGBT community at an increased risk for developing health problems, including heart disease, lung cancer, and esophageal and breast cancer.

- The American Cancer Society estimates that over 30,000 LGBT people die each year of tobacco-related diseases.
- A study of cancer-related risk factors in women found higher rates of current and former smoking among lesbian and bisexual women.⁵
- Smoking increases the risk of blood clots in transgender women who take estrogen, and it increases the risk of heart disease in transgender men who take testosterone.⁶
- HIV-positive smokers are also at increased risk; one study of gay and bisexual men found that cigarette smoking was associated with greater AIDS-related losses and HIV seropositivity.⁷

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The need for increased efforts to address the elevated rates of tobacco use in lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) communities has become increasingly apparent. Although Michigan ranks sixth highest when it comes to the rate of adults who currently smoke, there is still very little research documenting tobacco use prevalence among LGBT people.⁸ It is clear that surveillance on a local level is necessary to fully assess the prevalence and impact of tobacco use among LGBT people in Michigan.

Where LGBT People Stand

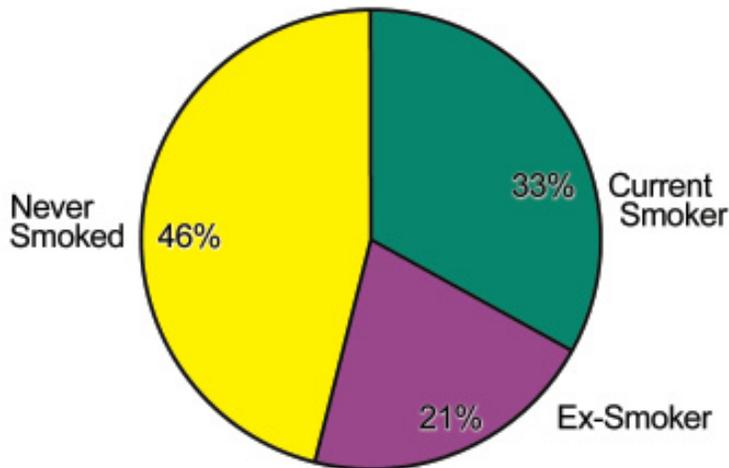
To find out more about how this problem affects lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people living in Southeastern Michigan, Affirmations, funded by a grant from the Michigan Department of Community Health (Tobacco Section), surveyed over 350 people during the summer of 2006. The survey captured information on tobacco use, secondhand smoke exposure, interest in a state-wide smoke-free ordinance, and interest in smoke-free restaurants/bars.

Demographics

Survey data were collected at local LGBT bars and restaurants (19%), Affirmations events (14%), community pride events (24%), and through an online survey (43%). The average age of survey respondents was 35, with a range of 16 to 66 years. Fifty-two percent identified as women, 42% as male, and 3% as transgender (both MTF and FTM). A majority of respondents (76%) identified as lesbian or gay, 14% identified as bisexual, and 2% identified as heterosexual. Heterosexual respondents were included in all data results in the event they were reflective of transgender respondents identifying as such. The majority of people surveyed identified as white/Caucasian (73%), with 12% African American, 4% multiracial, 2% Latino/a, 2% Native American, 1% Arab/Chaldean and 6% other or missing.



Smoking History



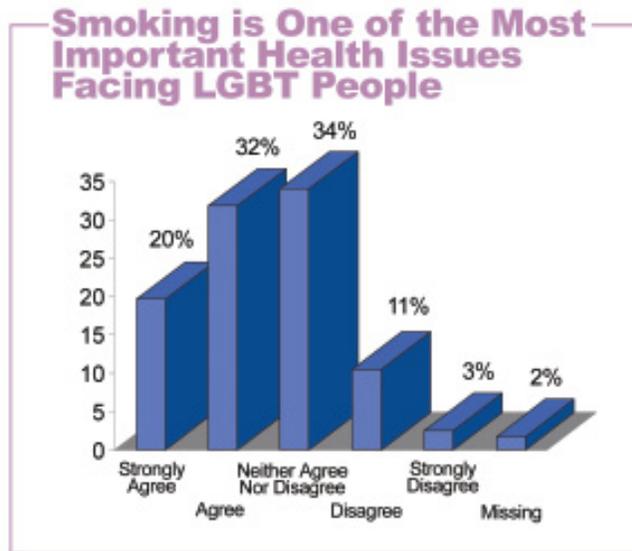
Tobacco Use

Fifty-three percent of those surveyed were past or current smokers with 33% indicating that they were current smokers. Nationally, 22% of all adults smoke and in Michigan, just over 26% of all adults smoke. According to the data, respondents to our survey smoke at a rate that is 30% higher than the national average and 8% higher than the state average.

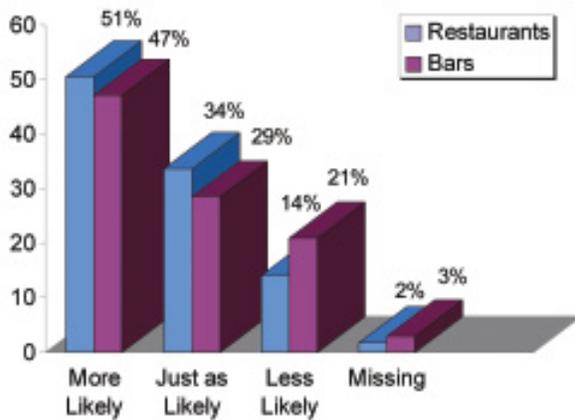
LGBT Views on Smoking

Is smoking one of the most important health issues for LGBT people? More than half of those surveyed (51%) agree or strongly agree that smoking is one of the most important LGBT health issues.

Would you support smoke-free environments? A significant majority of people surveyed (73%) would support state-wide legislation promoting smoke-free environments. Responders also looked favorably on smoke-free dining with 84% indicating they would eat out more or just as often if their favorite restaurant went smoke-free; only 14% would eat out less. And notably, a majority of people (76%) would be more or just as likely to frequent their favorite bar if it went smoke-free.



Likelihood of Visiting Restaurants/Bars if Smoke-free



Research

¹ CDC, *State Highlights 2002: Impact and Opportunity*, April 2002, <http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/StateHighlights.htm>

² Harris Interactive. Gays and Lesbians More Likely to Smoke Than Other Adults Despite Risks. May 14 2001. <http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/allnewsbydate.asp?NewsID=289>

³ H. Ryan, PM Wortley, A. Easton, L. Pederson, G. Greenwood. Smoking Among Lesbians Gays and Bisexuals: a review of the literature. *Am J of Prev Med*, 2001; 21(2) 141-149

⁴ Gay and Lesbian Medical Association and LGBT Health Experts. (2001). *Healthy People Companion Document for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Health*. San Francisco: CA. Gay and Lesbian Medical Association, 358-369.

⁵ SD Cochran et al. Cancer Related Risk Indicators and Preventative Screening Behaviors Among Lesbian and Bisexual Women. *Am J. Public Health*. 2001;91:591-597

⁶ National Coalition for LGBT Health. www.lgbthealth.net/downloads/tobacco/factsheet/smoking/.glbt.pdf

⁷ RD Stall, G Greenwood, M. Acree, J. Paul, TJ Coates. Cigarette Smoking Among Gay and Bisexual Men. *Am J. Public Health*. 1999 Dec. 89(12) 1875-8

⁸ CDC. State-Specific Prevalence of Current Cigarette Smoking Among Adults—United States, 2003. *MMWR* 2204; 52; 1035-37.

What can you do?

If you are a smoker, quit. Participate in the Gay American Smokeout (www.gaysmokeout.net), a quit day that coincides with the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout, and take your last drag. Remember, it takes five to seven tries before the average smoker is able to quit. Don't give up!

quit

Be patient and supportive with the smokers in our community. Remember, no one has ever been harassed into successfully quitting. Approach them with love and genuine care for their well-being.

Support smoke-free policies. Go to bars and dine in restaurants that are smoke-free. Protect yourself and speak up for smoke-free environments and clean air for bar and restaurant employees.

support

If you own or run a business, establish entirely smoke-free workplaces. Most businesses provide safe and healthful work environments because they value their employees and customers. They also know that smoking and environmental tobacco smoke hurt the bottom line for employers and employees. Health care, maintenance, lost productivity, ventilation, and property costs could all be reduced with smoke-free policies. The greatest benefit of a smoke-free restaurant is the removal of all health risks associated with secondhand tobacco smoke; plus, clean air makes the food taste and smell better.

Encourage LGBT organizations and businesses to refuse tobacco money. Tobacco companies sponsor LGBT bars, events and publications to appear to be our friend and gain loyalty. Yes, we need the money, but we shouldn't have to die for it.

encourage

Encourage your employer to post quitting resources. Many health plans now offer free or low cost quitting programs. Find out if yours does, and make sure that other employees know about them too.



Snuff Out Common LGBT Tobacco Myths:

- Tobacco use equals masculinity.
- Tobacco use will make you sexy.
- Tobacco use demonstrates independence or rebellion.
- Tobacco use is no big deal with the threat of HIV/AIDS, anti-LGBT violence or discrimination hanging over your head.
- Tobacco use is just "part of being gay".

Educate yourself. The tobacco industry exploits LGBT communities while at the same time giving money to anti-LGBT politicians. We don't need to support an industry whose products are tied to health-related concerns for our community. Find out more about the industry's targeted marketing through bar promotions, event sponsorships, and advertisements. Tell your friends.

educate

Resources

Affirmations

1-800-398-4297 (GAYS) or www.GoAffirmations.org. Serving the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities in Southeastern Michigan. Offers Quit Smoking Workshops: Learn how to quit smoking in a safe environment, examine smoking triggers and develop an individual quit plan. Call for more information.

Michigan Tobacco Quit Line

1-800-480-7848. The Quit Line provides cessation services to Michigan residents that want to quit using tobacco. The Quit Line offers a personal health coach and participant toolkits to help tobacco users gain confidence and motivation they need to quit for good.

Mautner Project, the National Lesbian Health Organization

202-332-5536 or www.mautnerproject.org. The Project offers smoking cessation and can make referrals to national programs providing smoking cessation services to the LGBT community. Project also manages the Delicious Lesbian Kisses Project, the first national anti-smoking awareness program for lesbians over 40.

www.Smokefree.gov

Created by the Tobacco Control Research Branch of the National Cancer Institute, with important contributions from other nationally recognized agencies and organizations such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Cancer Society. Website is designed to provide information and professional assistance to individuals that wish to quit smoking.

The Smoking Quitline of the National Cancer Institute

877-44U-QUIT

QuitNet

www.quitnet.com. Stop smoking help and cessation support.

Nicotine Anonymous

415-750-0328 or www.nicotine-anonymous.org. Free 12-Step programs.

Gay American Smokeout

www.gaysmokeout.net

Project Scum

www.projectscurm.org. Information and resources on targeted marketing by tobacco industries to LGBT communities.

Tobacco Technical Assistance Consortium

www.ttac.org. The Tobacco Technical Assistance Consortium (TTAC) is dedicated to assisting individuals and organizations in building and developing highly effective tobacco control programs.

BREAKING THE HABIT: The 2006 Southeastern Michigan LGBT Tobacco Use Report was produced by Affirmations Lesbian and Gay Community Center and funded by a grant from The Michigan Department of Community Health, (Tobacco Section). The purpose of this grant is to eliminate tobacco-related disparities in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community by reducing gaps in data among LGBT people, a disproportionately affected population with regards to tobacco use and exposure to second hand smoke.

To request additional copies of this report, please contact:

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