**Pines of Carolina Girl Scouts Create Badge on Tobacco Education & Advocacy**

**Process of creating CHANGE**

The Pines of Carolina Girl Scout Council, Inc (the Council) is chartered by Girl Scouts of the USA, an organization dedicated solely to providing girls an accepting and nurturing environment to build character and skills for success in the real world. The Council recognized the need to tailor the national Girl Scouts Against Smoking Initiative, a peer education curriculum, to meet the needs of North Carolina girls. To accomplish this, they received a Central Region Question Why mini-grant of $7,000 in the Summer of 2001.

The ?Y Coordinator met with the Council Program Director to provide technical assistance and plan a training to develop critical awareness and build skills of Cadettes and Senior Girl Scouts to become Program Aides. The Aides would provide peer education to Brownies and Junior Girl Scouts. A newsletter article spread awareness and helped with recruitment. In December, ?Y youth provided a Tobacco 101 training to 28 future Program Aides. The training introduced health effects of tobacco use, components found in a cigarette, media literacy and secondhand smoke advocacy, along with basic facilitation techniques.

In March, 2002, the 28 Senior Girl Scouts, along with the Council program director, created an opportunity for future Girl Scouts to earn a badge to become leaders in educating their peers by naming and developing a Girl Scout signature No Butts About It Badge. The adult leader provided the opportunity for the youth themselves to design a logo and develop the activity guide, Girl Scouts Against Smoking Family Guide - No Butts About It. This guide is an interactive opportunity for troops to get involved in tobacco prevention activities. It also details the Patch Requirements to receive the No Butts About It signature badge. The requirements for the badge are:

1. Complete one activity from each of three sections: health issues of tobacco use, peer pressure, media literacy and advocacy. Activities are developing and distributing a smoke-free dining guide, creating public services announcements, and researching local government to find out how policies are made and changed.
2. Make a display of activities being worked on for Annual Kick Butts Event in April
3. Attend No Butts About It events in April
4. Evaluate the activities.

The Program Aides developed a smoke-free dining guide, and the badge was finalized when 50 Brownie and Junior Girl Scouts developed critical awareness by attending a Kick Butts Day event in Holly Springs, NC. The entire event was an empowering opportunity, since it was planned, coordinated and implemented by the Senior Scout Program Aides. The Aides shared various activities that they learned from ?Y with the younger Girl Scouts, including Vote with Your Feet, the BB activity and Tobacco Stink Jars. In addition, they staffed a resource room with oncology nurses who spoke and shared graphic photos on the consequences of tobacco addiction. 28 Girl Scouts served as Program Aides and received the first No Butts badge.

**Importance of the CHANGE**

The tobacco industry marketing campaign toward women have been successful -- smoking rates among women and girls increased dramatically during the 1960s to 1990s, and lung cancer is now the leading cause of cancer death among women. While some drop occurred during the 90’s, experts are concerned that the decline is slowing. Marketing toward women is continuing, and to counteract this, targeting women and girls with prevention is paramount. The Pines Girl Scouts reaches lower-income girls in an area covering 25% of North Carolina's population. Instituting a badge program that includes advocacy will ensure the future generations of Girl Scouts will receive critical awareness and opportunities in tobacco prevention.

**What we learned about CHANGE**

- Providing mini-grants can catalyze community action. Choose groups that are ready to conduct effective education but be sure to include advocacy!
- Draw on youth knowledge and skills to create a campaign. The Senior Girls Scouts were allowed to have ownership over the project, with adult guidance.
- Institutionalize programs. Funding projects that will last, rather than one-shot activities or events, builds lasting community and social norm change.