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# Dorchester Reporter



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## Fed regulators take tips from Codman Square teens

By **Alex Owens**, *Special to the Reporter*

Sep. 8, 2010

A Codman Square-based youth group has been recognized by a federal agency for their pioneering anti-smoking campaigns. On Tuesday, August 17, staff from the Center for Tobacco Products (CTP), an offshoot of the Food and Drug Administration, visited Dorchester to meet with the Breath of Life Dorchester (BOLD) Teens.

"This is our first trip out of Washington, D.C. to meet with a youth group doing such amazing work", said Dr. Lawrence R. Deyton, Director of the CTP, in a press release.

The purpose of the visit was to discuss the warning labels that are printed on cigarette cartons. In 2007, the BOLD Teens developed newer, more graphic labels, and distributed them to several local vendors to be placed on tobacco products. The BOLD Teens were one of the first groups in the nation to employ this particular strategy and have been able to spread the labels under contract to at least 15 merchants across Boston.


President Obama signed the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act in 2009, granting the FDA powers of regulation over the content of tobacco products—anything from distribution, ingredients and wording on the packaging. The new law requires larger and more colorful warning labels on tobacco products. CTP will be redesigning the labels through 2011, to be employed in 2012.

BOLD has been at the forefront of local anti-smoking campaigns since 1997. The group has lobbied for several changes to tobacco laws, including prohibiting the sale of tobacco from pharmacies, higher taxes on non-cigarette tobacco products, and increased advertising regulations.

"We found that the labels are resonating with the community," said Cynthia Loesch, BOLD's Director of Community Organizing. "We definitely wanted to use shock value to get people to think twice about what they are putting in their bodies."

Preliminary designs for the labels sometimes depicted graphic physical results of prolonged tobacco use. The most recent design is a list of chemicals and additives which are equated with household cleaning products.

"We want to educate people, but the vendors have the right to sell tobacco products," said Loesch. "We want to create a plan for empowerment. We are not anti-smokers. We're more anti-industry."



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