

"I don't want to prosecute you"

Summary

District Attorney Maeghan Maloney, tired of seeing so many of the young people she works with addicted to nicotine due to vaping, approached Healthy Communities of the Capital Area to find out how she could make a difference. That conversation sparked a media campaign that reached thousands across Kennebec and Somerset Counties with the simple message: Furnishing tobacco to minors is a Class D offense that Meaghan does not want to prosecute for.

Challenge

We know from the most recent Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey that 46% of Kennebec County high school students and 15% of our middle school students have tried vaping - numbers close to double the previous report. However, it's not illegal for our young people to own vaping products. So how could the DA help reverse this trend? By spreading the word about a new law making it illegal for adults to provide the products to minors. You must be 21 to buy these items, so cutting off the adult source could make a real difference.

Intervention

Bringing together DA Maloney's vision with feedback from local educators and young people, HCCA created and launched [a webpage](#) and a media campaign across Kennebec and Somerset Counties coinciding with back-to-school. In addition to targeted digital ads on smart phones near schools, youth centers, convenience stores and other crucial areas, the campaign also included a news story and interview on WABI-TV5, a morning show appearance for DA Maloney, and an Op-Ed from her in the Kennebec Journal. We also created double-sided flyers for tobacco retailers and other community members.

Results

- HCCA social media reached 1,172 people – and one Snap-Chat ad reached 41,679 people
- Somerset Public Health reached 2,607 people via social media
- DA Maloney's Facebook page reached 27,864 people
- Townsquare Media targeted ads reached 65,920 people. The traditional ads reached 64,564 people

All told, these numbers add up to 203,806! Combined with the media spots, we spread the word all over Central Maine!



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