

Tobacco and School Health Partnership

School Health teamed up with our Safe Communities Youth Coalition to work on Point of Sale Tobacco Audits in Somerset County. Eight youth members hit the streets to audit tobacco merchants located within one mile of a school. They looked at external and internal advertising of tobacco products and types of tobacco products sold. These audits helped in gathering data to bring to local town councils in an effort to implement policies such as raising the minimum age of sale and smoke free outdoor recreation areas. This project was conducted on behalf of the Somerset / Morris Regional Chronic Disease Coalition's tobacco work group. Thank you to the youth who participated!

Tobacco Audit

Article by Natalie Taveres, Hillsborough High School Student & Member of the Safe Communities Youth Coalition

A couple of weeks ago, my fellow youth coalition members and I conducted a tobacco audit in downtown Somerville. Beforehand, Manny, our youth leader, explained to us how we were going to conduct the audits step by step. It was clear that some of us were nervous and he picked up on that. He then told us that we were not going into the stores with papers and pens which would most likely make the store owners not receptive. It was important for us to remember that we were making visual exams of the store and then we would fill out the forms once we're outside. We all took turns going in each store with Manny handing out brochures and stickers. One of the store owners seemed really happy that we came and gave him the information packets which contained information such as age-of-sale and checking ID. This is someone who definitely does not want to get into any legal trouble. I think the most surprising moment of the night was that a pizzeria was one of the seven stores that sold tobacco products. Overall, the experience was great! This is something I would do definitely do again.

