

# Finding The Power

A Tobacco Control Advocacy Guide for  
Hispanic and Latino Youth

Finding  
The Power

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## **Finding The Power**

**A Tobacco Control Advocacy Guide for Hispanic and Latino Youth**  
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Graphics created by Joe Kelly and Phil Pacheco, KCET Graphics

# Finding The Power

A Tobacco Control Advocacy Guide for  
Hispanic and Latino Youth

**What this guide aims to do:**  
To help Hispanic and Latino youth become advocates for reducing tobacco use among peers, family members, and in the community.

**FIND THE POWER**

- ★ The power is within you.
- ★ The problem of youth tobacco use in your community won't go away by itself!
- ★ Get involved – you CAN make a difference.
- ★ *Taking action* will give you a feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment.
- ★ *Taking action* will help you, your family and your community.
- ★ *Taking action* is the RIGHT thing to do!
- ★ You ARE your brother's keeper! AND...

**YOU CAN FIND THE POWER!**

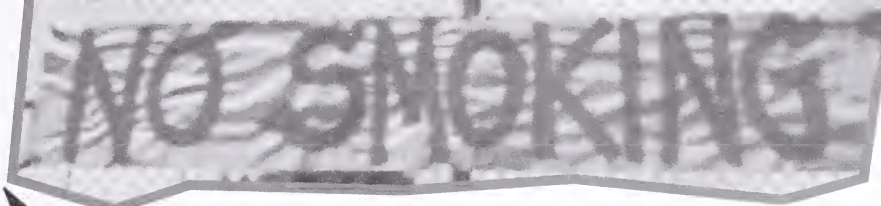


Check out how much you know about tobacco use and teens. Answer true or false to the following questions.

- |  | True                     | False                    |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. The younger a person begins using tobacco, the more difficult it is to quit.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Teens who smoke regularly are more likely to underachieve in school and athletics, cough more and show early signs of heart and lung disease. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Latino and other minority neighborhoods have more tobacco advertisements than do non-minority communities.                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Youth are more likely to smoke or chew tobacco if they have friends or family members who use tobacco.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

The correct answers can be found on page 16.





What's the tobacco use problem among Hispanics and Latinos?

- 76% of all Latino high school students—compared to 64% of all California high school students—ever tried cigarette smoking. <sup>(1)</sup>
- Among Latino youth surveyed:
  - ⇒ 35% of Latinos and 33% of Latinas said they smoked more than one cigarette in the last month;
  - ⇒ 11% of Latinos and 9% of Latinas said they are frequent smokers, who smoked more than 20 cigarettes in the last month;
  - ⇒ 4% said they used smokeless tobacco. <sup>(1)</sup>
- More specifically, about:
  - ⇒ 20% of 8th graders
  - ⇒ 24% of 10th graders
  - ⇒ 25% of 12th graderssaid they smoked tobacco in the last month! <sup>(2,3)</sup>

So why do some teens keep on smoking?

Why don't they **STOP?**

- Most smokers say they began smoking as teenagers. By age 18, over half of them had become daily smokers. <sup>(4,5)</sup>
- 70% of smokers between 12 and 17 years REGRET beginning to smoke. <sup>(4,5)</sup>
- Youth who stay smoke-free are least likely to become smokers as adults.

- Teen smokers are more likely to:
  - ⇒ remain smokers for the rest of their lives;
  - ⇒ smoke heavily;
  - ⇒ suffer the same withdrawal symptoms as adults who try to quit;
  - ⇒ develop lung cancer and other smoking-related illnesses and consequently, die sooner than those who start smoking at a later age. <sup>(4,5)</sup>

**So, what can YOU do?**

**FIND THE POWER**

to

**ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE**

and

**MAKE A**

**DIFFERENCE**

in

**YOUR** LIFE,

YOUR **FAMILY'S** LIFE,

YOUR **FRIENDS'** LIVES,

and

THE LIFE OF YOUR

**COMMUNITY.**



# **WHAT IS ADVOCACY?**

## **Advocacy is:**

- ✧ supporting a cause, an idea or a policy.
- ✧ mobilizing resources to make your support active.
- ✧ motivating people to change their behavior.
- ✧ creating change in public opinion.

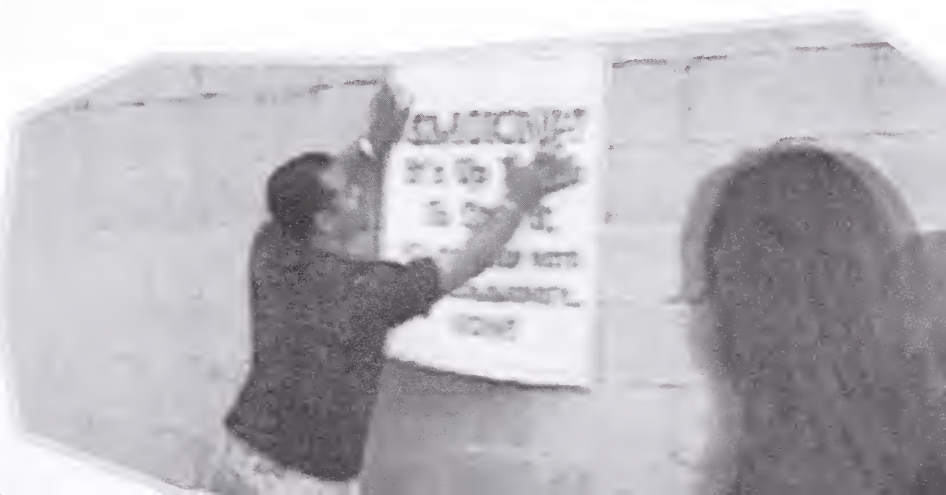
## **What does it mean to be a Tobacco Control Advocate?**

A Tobacco Control Advocate is someone who works to reduce the supply of and demand for tobacco products.

Individual Advocates often strengthen their productivity by forming groups. There is power in numbers!

**How can YOU be socially responsible and work to realize a tobacco-free Hispanic/Latino community?**

All it takes is an **ACTION PLAN**  
and **8 simple steps:**



# Finding The Power

## Action Plan

### 1. Define the problem:

Check out your neighborhood. Is a market illegally selling cigarettes to underage kids? Are tobacco product billboards near a school? Are teens smoking? Trust your judgment about what needs to be changed.



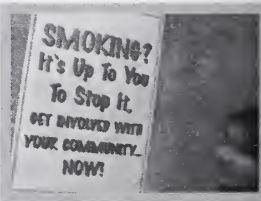
### 2. Know the facts:

Knowledge is power! Know the statistics about health effects of smoking and about young people and smoking. Know your neighborhood and its history regarding tobacco use and advertising. Share the facts with others in your community. Get their attention!



### 3. Set your goals:

What can you do about tobacco use? What can you change in your community? Start with small, realistic goals and build from there.



### 4. Identify your resources:

Look into local youth programs. Can you work with them to reach your goal? Talk to your family. Do your siblings want to get involved? Are there ways your parents and/or other adults may help?

### 5. Recognize who has the power:

Who are the community leaders, organizations, and businesses that can affect change? Analyze their interests: do they support or oppose tobacco control? Enlist the help of those who are supporters. Learn the arguments of the opposition so you may counter them.





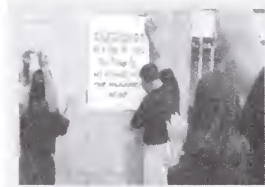


## 6. Mobilize!

**Doing:** Determine the activities required to reach your goals. Conduct a letter-writing campaign? Distribute informational packets? Set start and finish dates. Divide responsibilities: who will do what, when, where and how.

**Drawing Attention:** Present your project to the school board and/or city council. Invite the media. Use them to promote your activities and recruit others to join you.

**Documenting:** Record all your activities: take minutes of any meetings held; keep copies of all paperwork and correspondence; take photos; collect letters and newsclips.



## 7. Deal with obstacles and set-backs:

Is a part of your plan not working? Evaluate why. Make appropriate changes. Start again. Successful people use their failures as feedback for trying again!



## 8. Evaluate your success:

Were your goals accomplished? What were the different outcomes? What would you do differently next time? What accomplishments do you feel good about? Share your results with the media! Your documentation may assist them in getting the facts of the story.

## **Be Assertive:**

- ⇒ State your views, but think before you speak.
- ⇒ Don't criticize.
- ⇒ Explain your reasons. Give facts to back up your statements.
- ⇒ Use "I" with confidence.

## **Some Helpful Tips:**

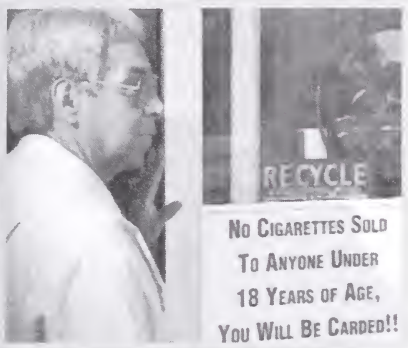
- ✓ Be respectful of your elders!
- ✓ Understand the views of others.  
Be patient.
- ✓ Be prepared. Make sure you have the facts to back up your opinions. Try to keep it simple.
- ✓ Be assertive, but not confrontational.  
Try to make statements that start with "I" rather than "you."

**TAKE ACTION!**

**WALK THE WALK!**

**TALK THE TALK!**

Let's look at three ways you can take action as a Tobacco Control Advocate.



## MERCHANT EDUCATION

### What is Merchant Education?

Merchant Education is the act of educating businesses about the laws and consequences of selling tobacco to minors. It involves reducing the availability of tobacco to youth under 18 years of age.

Here are some examples of how you can use the  
**Finding The Power Action Plan**  
to educate your local merchants:

#### 1. Define the problem:

Some retailers continue to sell cigarettes to children even though it's illegal.

Example: *We have a smoking problem among youth. The local teens are purchasing cigarettes at the ABC Mini-Mart in Huntington Park.*

#### 2. Know the facts:

- Older Latino teens are more likely than younger ones to be sold cigarettes, especially if they say they are buying them for a parent. <sup>(1,3,6)</sup>

- Most minors who smoke buy cigarettes for themselves at gas stations, convenience stores, and grocery stores. They also have their older looking friends or family buy cigarettes for them. <sup>(3,6)</sup>
- Many high school students are NOT asked to show proof of age when buying cigarettes. <sup>(3,6)</sup>

### 3. Set your goals:

Example: *By [month/date/year], to educate at least five local retailers about the laws and consequences of selling tobacco products to anyone under 18. To get several of them to stop.*

### 4. Identify your resources:

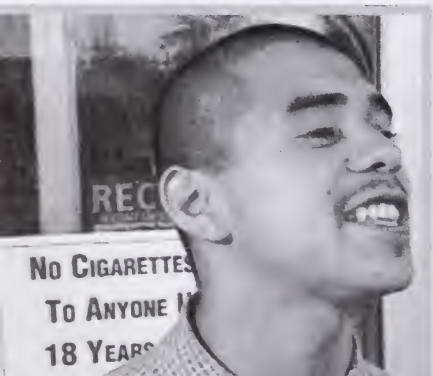
Work with others when you educate your local merchants. Many community organizations have existing merchant education programs and are always on the lookout for dedicated youth volunteers. Check out these groups. You may find that your goals match theirs!

Take L.A. LINK for example. This group has two excellent merchant education programs! The successful *Citizen Citation* project and its youth “investigating agents” received praise from local media and national health agencies. And the *Community Businesses That Care* campaign is collecting more and more pledges from LA County merchants to become “no-tobacco-ads sponsors.”

### 5. Recognize who has the power:

Many merchants belong to a local business association. Find out if one exists in your community and where they meet.

Contact the president or secretary and ask to present the issue at their next meeting.



## 6. Mobilize!

- Prepare a report card on tobacco availability to youth in your community. Where is tobacco being illegally sold to minors? Convenience stores? Vending machines? Markets? Are they located near schools?
- How about adopting a store that you documented selling cigarettes to minors? Encourage the manager or owner to change their illegal sales practices.
- Plan a **FINDING THE POWER** program in your school or community. Invite community leaders, non-smokers, former and present smokers to share their stories. Present your report cards on youth access to tobacco in your neighborhood.
- Draw attention to your activities. Think of connections. Hold special events on *World No Tobacco Day* (May 31 annually), during *El Gran Apagón* or in celebration of *Cinco de Mayo* or *Día de Los Muertos*.



## 7. Deal with obstacles and set-backs:

Are there some merchants who, for economic reasons, refuse to stop selling to minors? Tell them about merchants who have decreased tobacco sales to youth and increased non-tobacco sales because of community support for their actions.

## 8. Evaluate your success:

Did you educate at least five local merchants about the laws and consequences of selling tobacco to minors? Did you get any of them to stop?



# COUNTERING PRO-TOBACCO INFLUENCES

## What are pro-tobacco influences?

Pro-tobacco influences are *all* of the tobacco industry's methods used to sell their products: advertising on billboards, in storefronts, newspapers and magazines; promotional giveaways like T-shirts and tote bags; and sponsorship of sports and music events.

**Here are some examples of how you can use the**

## **Finding the Power Action Plan**

**to counter the pro-tobacco influences in your community:**

### **1. Define the problem:**

The tobacco industry works hard to tempt young people. They advertise cigarettes on billboards near homes, schools, churches, shopping centers and stadiums. These ads create the false impression that most young people smoke. The tobacco industry also markets their products by sponsoring sporting and musical events that appeal to youth.

*Example: We have a problem with tobacco companies advertising and promoting cigarettes to youth in our community.*



## 2. Know the facts:

- For the tobacco industry to keep up tobacco sales, it must attract 2 million new smokers each year. <sup>(5,8)</sup>
- A national survey found that about 86% of adolescent smokers who bought their own cigarettes preferred Marlboro, Camel or Newport cigarettes—the most heavily advertised brands. <sup>(3,6,7)</sup>
- Alternative or counter advertising can increase teen awareness of the hazards of smoking and decrease teen belief that tobacco is okay. Counter advertising can make the difference if messages are communicated within the community, often enough and over time.

## 3. Set your goals:

Example: *To make our community, especially its youth, aware of the impact of local advertising and promotions used by tobacco companies. To create pro-health counter ads and place them in the community.*

## 4. Identify your resources:

Whom can you work with to reach your goal? Look into local youth advocacy groups.

Check out the *Teen Tobacco Awareness Project (TTAP)*. A proud project of the Community Coalition, TTAP is a model youth advocacy group. Lauded by the Los Angeles Mayor and the City's Board of Supervisors, TTAP has led successful campaigns to reduce billboard advertising near schools in South Central Los Angeles and to end tobacco and alcohol advertising on public transportation in Los Angeles County.

## **5. Recognize who has the power:**

Are there any groups or businesses that can help you to create and place alternative, pro-health ads in your community? Contact printing companies, advertising agencies and design schools. They may be willing to donate their services for a good cause.

## **6. Mobilize!**

- Do your homework. Know what, where and how many tobacco ads and billboards are located in your neighborhood. Take pictures of them. Analyze the sales message.
- Who is in the ad and what are they doing? Where was the ad located?
- Present your survey findings to the school board and/or city council. Recommend counter advertisements to be placed in your community.
- Perhaps you could design your own pro-health counter ads and look for small community-based grants to pay for them. Include your survey report with any grant applications.

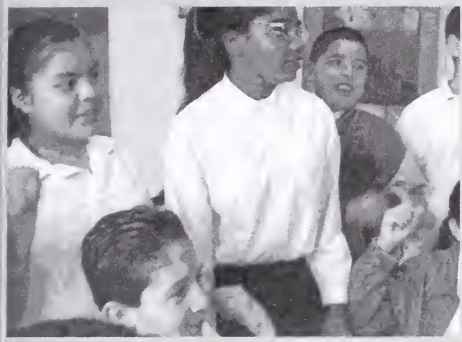
## **7. Dealing with obstacles and set-backs:**

Are you having problems getting your issue placed on the agenda for the school board and/or city council meeting? Keep your cool. Be persistent but patient. Keep talking to your allies on the board and/or council.

## **8. Evaluate your success:**

Did you effectively present your survey results to the city council? How about the school board? Did you create and post cool pro-health counter ads in the community?





# PEER EDUCATION

## What is Peer Education?

Peer Education is youths teaching other youths about important issues. Peer influence and role-modeling have a major impact upon youth knowledge, attitudes and behaviors.

### Here are some examples of how you can use the **Finding The Power Action Plan** to become a tobacco control peer educator:

#### 1. Define the problem:

Example: *We need to change the social acceptance of smoking among youth in El Monte.*

#### 2. Know the facts:

- Most adolescents think the teen smoking rate is higher than it really is. The teen smoking rate in California is 1 in 10, but most teens think it is 5 of every 10 teens.
- Role models from television, films, and music videos have a lot of influence on teen expectation about health risks and behavior problems.
- Most 12th graders think their friends would *disapprove* of them smoking one or more packs of cigarettes per day. <sup>(3)</sup>

### 3. Set your goals:

Example: *Conduct a teen workshop. Discuss what you and your peers really think about tobacco use. Discourage them from using tobacco products.*

### 4. Identify your resources:

National, regional and local organizations have programs that can train you to become a tobacco control peer educator. Check out these groups. Get qualified!

Valley Community Clinic is making a difference with its *Tobacco Prevention/Intervention Theater Troupe*. The Troupe tours the San Fernando Valley School District performing plays that promote anti-tobacco, anti-peer-pressure messages and encourage behavior changes. The Troupe's repertoire includes the provocative *Addiction Blues* and two innovative and truly modern takes on traditional fairy tale favorites, *Jack and the Tobacco Stalk* and *Suddenly Cindy*.

### 5. Recognize who has power:

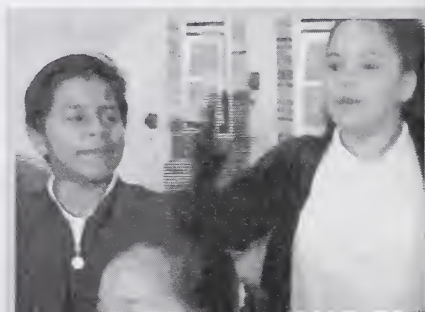
Study the role of schools. Your school may be doing a good job with teaching about the hazards of tobacco use and the benefits of not smoking, but how is it doing with changing teen attitudes and opinions about tobacco use?

Understand the power of role-modeling and peer influence on teen attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. Use **your** power!

### 6. Mobilize!

Peer education comes in many shapes and sizes. Here are a few examples:

- Survey friends, younger kids and other groups to find out who shares your opinions and beliefs about not smoking and their willingness to help others from starting to smoke;



- Hold a school assembly or write an article for the school newspaper;
- Organize a peer education summit in your community with other youth groups, clubs and coalitions involved in tobacco use prevention;
- Coordinate your activities with the local American Cancer Society's *Great American Smokeout* in November.

## 7. Deal with obstacles and set-backs:

Are there some kids who think they're too cool to listen to you? Don't stop believing in yourself and what you're doing. You know the facts!

## 8. Evaluate your success:

Did your peer education efforts change the way other youth think about tobacco use? Did they discourage others from smoking and/or using other tobacco products? Did they change their own habits?

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## References

- (1) U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. September 27, 1996. CDC Surveillance Summaries. *MMWR*. YRBS Surveillance Summary. 45[SS-4].
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- (3) Johnston, L., O'Malley, P., and Buchman, J. 1996. The Monitoring the Future Study. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan.
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- (5) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 1994. Preventing Tobacco Use Among Young People: A Report of the Surgeon General. Washington DC: Public Health Service.
- (6) U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. May 24, 1996. *MMWR*. Tobacco Use and Usual Sources of Cigarettes Among High School Students--United States, 1995. 45[20].
- (7) Klonoff, E.A., Landrine, H., Alcaraz, R. May 1997. "An Experimental Analysis of Sociocultural Variables in Sales of Cigarettes to Minors." *AJPH*, 87[5].
- (8) Federal Trade Commission. 1996. Report to Congress for 1994, Pursuant to the Federal Cigarette Labeling and Advertising Act.

**WHAT'S IN IT  
FOR YOU?**



**Find The Power**

**Challenge**

**Satisfaction**

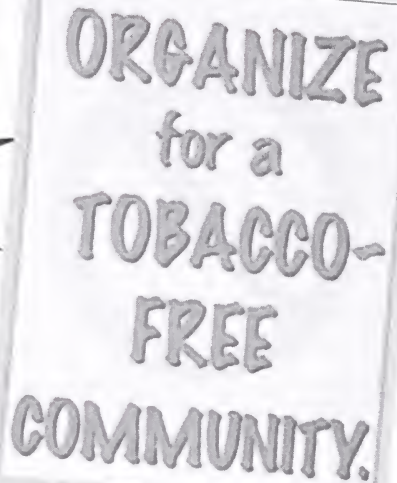
**Creativity**

**Accomplishment**

**Innovation**



**CHALLENGE  
YOURSELF!**



**ORGANIZE  
for a  
TOBACCO-  
FREE  
COMMUNITY.**

**BECOME A**

# **Finding The Power LEADER!**

**Take any one of  
these three actions:**

- Educating Merchants**
- Countering Tobacco Ads**
- Educating Peers**

# Resources

Check out any of the following groups. They can help you advocate for change!

**Bay Area Regional Tobacco Education Resource (BARTER)**

4905 Central Avenue, Ste. 300  
Richmond, CA 94804  
(510) 559-5595

**Bilingual Foundation of the Arts**

421 North Avenue 19  
Los Angeles, CA 90031  
Theater-in-Education Coordinator  
(323) 225-4044

**Central Coast Tobacco-Free Regional Project**

17872 Moro Road  
Prunedale, CA 93711-1258  
(831) 663-9208

**Central Valley Regional Linkage Project**

2109 W. Bullard Avenue, Ste. 149  
Fresno, CA 93711-1258  
(209) 446-2323

**Community Coalition**

8101 South Vermont Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90044  
Marquee Dawson (323) 750-9087

**Gold Country Tobacco Prevention Coalition**

909 12th Street, Ste. 110  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 442-5694

**High Country Region**

P.O. Box 160  
Quincy, CA 95971  
(916) 283-6362

**Hispanic/Latino Tobacco Education Network**

USC Institute for Prevention Research  
1441 Eastlake Avenue, MS44, Room 3407  
Los Angeles, CA 90033  
Radón López Rodriguez (323) 865-0341

**Los Angeles Regional Linkage Project (L.A. LINK)**

4010 Watson Plaza Drive, Ste. 235  
Lakewood, CA 90712  
(562) 429-0134

**Multicultural Area Health Education Center**

5051 East Third Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90022  
Patricia Salas (323) 780-7640

**North Coast Tobacco Prevention Network**

5340 Skylane Boulevard  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
(707) 524-2616

**North Valley Region Community Linkage Project**

2732A Cohasset Road  
Chico, CA 95973  
(530) 897-4140

**Southern Coast Regional Board**

9245 Sky Park Court, Ste. 115  
San Diego, CA 92123  
(619) 505-8046

**Tri-County Regional Team**

1806 Cliff Drive, Ste. B  
Santa Barbara, CA 93109  
(805) 899-3300

**Tri-County South Regional Tobacco-Free Project**

11860 Magnolia Avenue, Ste. L  
Riverside, CA 92503  
(909) 637-3040

**West San Gabriel Valley Boys & Girls Club**

328 South Ramona Avenue  
Monterey Park, CA 91754  
Sergio Gonzalez (626) 573-2831

Contact your local health department tobacco control program.

**For help quitting, call the  
California Smokers' Helpline**

**1-800-7-NO BUTTs**

*or*

**La Línea Telefónica de Ayuda para Fumadores de California**

**1-800-45-NO FUMe**

## Advisory Board

Special thanks for the critical support and professional contributions of members of the

### **Finding The Power**

Advisory Board during the development of the music video and this guide.

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and the music video,

## **Finding The Power**

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### **Tobacco Education Clearinghouse of California (TECC)**

P.O. Box 1830  
Santa Cruz, CA 95061-1830  
(800) 258-9090

*or*

### **KCET**

Public Television  
4401 Sunset Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90027  
(323) 953-5280

The information included in this guide  
is also available on the KCET website  
<http://www.kcet.org/findthepower>



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