

W-WEST



Background

W-WEST (Why Waste Everything Smoking Tobacco?) is Scotland's first ever pro-choice smoking information group led by and for young people. W-WEST aims to give young people the information they need to make choices about smoking. Funded by NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, the group is made up of both smokers and non-smokers.

In 2008, Liverpool based group D-MYST came to Glasgow to run a peer education/training even which 31 young people attended. From this event, the core group or W-WEST members committed to taking the group forward and developing the first campaign and launch of the W-WEST website.

The members of the group act as a committee & engage with a number of other young people who participate through social media, e-newsletters & open days. Currently our youngest member is 13 years old & our oldest member is 18 years old.

W-WEST have previously won ASH Scotland's Crofton Award in recognition of their innovative work to raise awareness of smoking with other young people. They were also nominated in the Health category of the Young Scot Awards 2010.

The group have created their own recognisable brand & website as well as various social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter and Bebo) in order to engage with other young people. In June 2009 the group held a series of launch events across the Greater Glasgow & Clyde Health Board to promote W-WEST & the issue of under the counter cigarette sales which involved a street theatre performance & 'how low can you go?' limbo (Footage of which can be found on the website and Bebo page).



W-WEST Launch & Campaigns

2009

W-WEST was officially launched in June 2009, alongside the launch of the group, W-WEST carried out a campaign around under-counter tobacco products. Competitions and various events were held throughout the Greater Glasgow and Clyde health board area to raise awareness of under-counter sales and why this is an important issue in preventing young people from taking up smoking.

The events consisted of a street theatre production of a silent disco and tobacco facts and a limbo style activity, showing the various levels of tobacco point of sale – behind the counter on a tobacco display board, counter top display and under counter. Young people who attended the event were offered the chance to enter into a scratch card competition, where, if they received a scratch card with three matching symbols, they would enter the winning code into the W-WEST website to see if they had been one of the lucky winners.

2010

The group have now turned their attention to raising awareness of how the tobacco industry uses marketing & 'cool' packaging to attract young smokers to their brands. The campaign is entitled 'The Plain Truth' & will be launched on 31st May to coincide with World No Tobacco Day. W-West have collaborated with the University of Stirling to produce a survey aiming to explore young peoples views on this issue which will be on the W-West website and will hopefully provide evidence which can be used to lobby the Scottish Parliament on plain packaging.

The launch event for this campaign took place on 31st May 2010 (World No Tobacco Day) and included a street/graffiti artist to engage with passers by & create an artwork incorporating the messages/images of the campaign. In addition there was also a street team dressed as wolves & sheep handing out Plain Truth promotional postcards directing people to the survey on the website.

W-WEST will be taking their campaign to community events throughout the Greater Glasgow and Clyde health board area with the aim to encourage as many young people as possible to go onto the website and complete the questionnaire.

A member of the W-WEST group attended the 'World No Tobacco Day 2010: Setting the EU tobacco control agenda' Conference at the European Parliament in Brussels to talk about W-WEST and the Plain Truth Campaign. This was well received by the European Parliament and they are very interested in the work of W-WEST.