

On 9-10 June 2011, ASU hosted 187 teens (ages 13-17) from across the state for the annual youth Summer Event. Bridging the curriculum and lessons learned from the 2009 event, the night was thematically interactive—a lock-in “Addiction Experiment” which allowed teens to experience the disruptiveness and control of addiction. The night featured four educational sessions, with the topics of Big Tobacco marketing, the effects of addiction on the body, the chemicals found in tobacco products and the development of effective refusal skills. This Brief utilizes information from the event’s youth evaluation to discuss insights from the target audience regarding the event.

### SPEAKERS AND SESSIONS

Robert Farthing who facilitated the conference resonated the most with attendees; he spoke about his personal experience with tobacco addiction in the opening ceremonies, and earned high marks for being “informative” (78.8%) and “motivational” (74.1%). His confession to being a current smoker, and his announcement that he was quitting during the *Experiment*, were found to be incredibly moving by the youth.

### TOP 5 FAVE EVENTS:

Choose/Refuse  
Smoke & Mirrors  
Recipe for Addiction  
Anatomy of a Smoker  
Rave Against Addiction

Youth attendees rated Fred Beyer, the featured speaker for the “Recipe for Addiction” session, informative (68.7%) and relevant to their local coalition work (50.6%).

The favorite activity of the *Experiment* was “Choose/Refuse,” where attendees broke into groups and shot their own refusal skill videos. This session was also provided the most tangible take-home for attendees. In response to the prompt, “One way my coalition can use this,” 43% reflected ideas on planning a similar video production activity in their own schools or communities, while 29% planned to hold workshops aimed at discussing effective refusal methods with their peers.

### OVERALL EVALUATION RESULTS

Overall, the *Experiment* scored highest among attendees as being informative (82.4%) and motivational (77.5%), although a significant majority did also judge it as straight fun (67.8%).

The lowest overall marks addressed the *Experiment’s* “relevance to me,” with 49.5% “absolutely” agreeing and 16.5% disagreeing. This may relate to the fact that although teens can recite the facts—that tobacco is addictive and dangerous to ones’ health, etc.—they often have a hard time identifying their occasional use (or that of their friends) with both the development of a habit and adverse health effects that may take decades to materialize.

### SOCIAL MEDIA STATS DURING THE EXPERIMENT:

visits to [venomocity.com](http://venomocity.com): **2,843**  
visits to the *Experiment* homepage: **845**  
live stream views: **778**  
Facebook likes: **6,634**  
post views on Facebook: **17,915**

### WHAT CAME OUT OF THE EXPERIMENT?

The *Experiment* focused heavily upon engaging attendees—and having attendees engage their friends—through the social media “Boardroom.” This effort was extremely successful, leading to an online exposure among the target age group several times greater than the number of actual attendees. Moreover, this increased presence has continued past the event; the statewide coalition twitter feed (@AZJoinMovement) has seen a 50% increase in followers since June.

The *Experiment* also served as a kick-off for efforts to revamp the statewide coalition—known now as *Join the Movement* (JTM). Applications for JTM’s Youth Leadership Board (YLB) were solicited at the *Experiment* and 18 Board Members from across the state were announced in early July 2011.

### NEXT STEPS: HOW WILL THE EXPERIMENT LINK TO UPCOMING YOUTH COALITION EVENTS?

Youth are an incredible force for change—in both their schools and communities. Youth coalition activities this next year will build upon the strong educational and motivational foundation set by the *Experiment*, and through a newly formed collaboration with the Pima Prevention Partnership, focus on ways that youth can recognize and implement change in their schools and communities. At a statewide level, the YLB will work on branding and defining the mission of JTM, allowing it to better act as a bridge between local coalitions across the state.