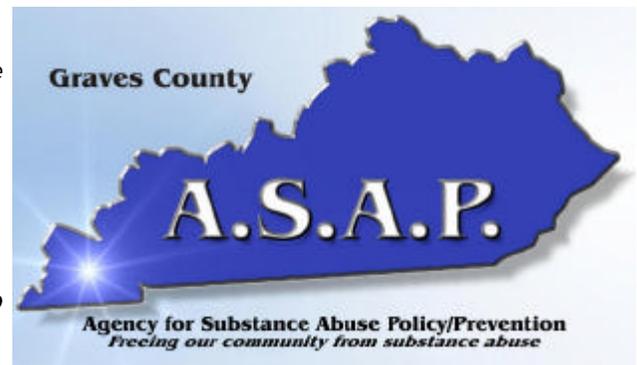


Our Vision - Freeing our community from substance abuse

Our Mission - The Graves County Agency for Substance Abuse Policy board will help our community be free of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD) by helping change the culture that approves of and supports ATOD. This will be accomplished by working with concerned community partners to educate, treat, and prevent ATOD use.

www.gcasap.org



PRESS RELEASE

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June 11, 2013

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Regarding the Mayfield smoking ordinance - concerns and ideas about it

Smoke-free policies are not only evidence-based, but are also the most effective way to promote healthy behaviors. Many smokers want to give it up and smoke-free policies make it easier to break the habit. Many businesses want to go smoke-free but they want the government to impose it to make it easier and level the playing field for them to implement it. If all restaurants are required to go smoke free then there are no alternatives for smokers and smokers will continue to eat at the restaurants and then go outside or to their car to smoke. When a restaurant has really good food, studies show that smokers are willing take a break from smoking long enough to enjoy the good food. Ultimately, studies show that businesses are not harmed when smoke free policies go into effect.

This is a public health and safety issue. We have many friends and family who smoke and they are respectable people and we are not judging them or putting them down for their habit, the concern is if they choose to expose others to that habit in a public building such as a restaurant. Remember 40 years ago when DUI laws were beginning to be enacted and enforced. Drinking can be a personal habit but when that personal habit impacts another's health and safety that is when government has a right to step-in and put public safety first.

Now that we have reliable science proving second hand smoke harms, we wonder what the potential for future law suits will be for damages? This of course is if governments or businesses do not enact policies to prevent citizens and patrons from being harmed after the scientific evidence has been presented to them.

Since we do not have stand alone bars in Mayfield or Graves County the financial impact of a smoke-free law should be minimal. A majority of our Graves County tobacco farmers businesses' would not be harmed because the majority of Graves County tobacco farmers raise dark fired, which is used in

smokeless products such as snuff. Paducah already has a smoking ban and we don't believe Paducah's restaurants have been harmed financially because we know a great number of Mayfield and Graves County people who travel there to eat out.

Public opinion was solicited through an email by our coordinator on 1/29/13, and an article in the Mayfield Messenger on 1/30/13 asking who supports and does not support a smoking ordinance in Mayfield. The responses received were...26 support a non-smoking ordinance in Mayfield for public and private public buildings, 5 against any type of smoking ordinance(this includes one letter to the Messenger printed 2/4/13), & 2 support it in public buildings only and not private owned businesses such as restaurants. Teresa Cantrell also conducted a separate solicitation of public opinion and she reports that the responses were overwhelming in support and very few against.

We do not believe enforcement will be an issue. We believe citizens will abide by it and citizens will enforce it on those who do not.

Smoke free laws protect the rights of all people by preserving: (1) **life** by reducing SHS related death and disease; (2) **Liberty** by promoting the freedom to work and visit public buildings without experiencing negative health consequences; and (3) **the pursuit of happiness** by ensuring the right to breathe smoke free air.