

# Requirements & Standards for Developing High Quality Educational Materials<sup>1</sup>

## STEP 1

### Check To See If An Existing Material Is Already Available

I checked the [Rover Library](#) & [Tobacco Education Clearinghouse of California \(TECC\)](#) and found an existing material that I would like to adapt.

- Submit a technical assistance ticket in [MatTrack](#) and TECC will assist you.

I did not find an existing material and would like to create an original material—proceed to Step 2.

## STEP 2

### Check Your Material For These Standards Required By CTCP

Scientific and factual accuracy — including citations with original sources using a recognized standard format, such as the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition (APA) style formatting.<sup>2</sup>

\*Messages are based on research shown to be effective in discouraging tobacco use among the intended audience.<sup>3</sup>

\*Materials comply with the requirements of the ADA and are accessible to individuals with disabilities (e.g., materials utilize sans serif fonts, utilize appropriate color contrast for text and backgrounds, colors alone are not used to convey meaning, etc.)<sup>4</sup>

No offensive or misleading language, visuals or messages, and does not put down, stigmatize or otherwise blame tobacco users or other groups.

Does not promote or inhibit any religious ideology.

No images, voices, or identifiable views of any elected public official or candidate for public office.

\*No grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors.

\*Appropriate reading level for the target audience has been verified through literacy testing.<sup>5</sup>

Messages are consistent with other health or public health messaging (e.g., visuals of consumption of healthy food and beverage items, cyclists wearing helmets.)

Acknowledgment of the funding source (© [current year]. California Department of Public Health. Funded under contract # XX-XXXXX.)

\*Material is visually appealing. Elements to consider:

- Appropriate use of white space and visual hierarchy to make it easy-to-read.
- Avoid using too many different font types.
- Images used are high quality and not pixelated or distorted.
- Graphics or charts help readers understand important points.

\* TECC is available to provide assistance, just submit a 'Technical Assistance' ticket in [MatTrack](#).

### STEP 3

#### **Incorporate best practices in health communication and equity\***

Do not overwhelm your audience with too much information—the more you write, the less they will read!

Use plain language (i.e., avoid public health jargon and medical terminology).

Have a clear purpose, including a call to action.

Have a narrowly defined audience (i.e., don't create one material for multiple audiences).

Make sure to include your contact information.

Make sure your images are inclusive and appropriate for the audience.

Avoid showing disparities data (e.g., Black children are more likely to be exposed to secondhand smoke) without also providing root causes. This could inadvertently reinforce negative assumptions people have about communities of color and people with low-income.

Avoid using victimizing language such as “suffering” or “vulnerable” when referring to people or groups.

### STEP 4

#### **Consumer test and submit to TECC**

Verify your material is appropriate for the intended audience through consumer testing.<sup>6</sup>

Summarize consumer testing results in a report and make recommended changes.

If significant changes are made, you should conduct another round of consumer testing.

Submit finalized material and consumer testing summary report to TECC via MatTrack.

**Note:** TECC does not approve materials and will not provide feedback unless requested in MatTrack.

1. CTCP Program Requirements for the Development and Use of Educational, Incentive, and Media Materials (See Policy Manual, Section 303). “Educational Materials” are items such as brochures, infographics, books, booklets, curricula, tip sheets, fact sheets, posters, videos, and non-campaign related social media posts.
2. Rover Citation Help: <https://rover.catcp.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.services&service=Citation%20Help>
3. **TECC Developing Effective Messages Guide**
4. California Department of Rehabilitation: <https://www.dor.ca.gov/Home/DocumentAccessibility>
5. **TECC Readability Guide**
6. **TECC Consumer Testing Guide**