

California Family Health Council Condom Art Contest Overview

In 2008, the California Family Health Council, Inc. launched our 6th bi-annual Condom Art Contest. Residents of California between the ages of 13 and 25 were invited to submit original art for condom covers, using messages and designs that would encourage responsible sexual choices among their peers. The contest served as an innovative way to increase STD awareness among adolescents and to promote the importance of safe sex and condom use. The 2008 contest was underwritten in part by LifeStyles® Condoms.

CFHC distributes thousands of these condom packets each year to family planning clinics, STD clinics, male involvement programs, high schools, colleges, juvenile detention facilities and other community-based health agencies. Condoms and condom instructions are included in each condom packet, available in both English and Spanish. In addition, the inside covers of the condom packets are printed with facts on preventing STDs and unintended pregnancy, as well as emergency contraception and STD hotline numbers.

The first phase of the contest ran from April to July. During that time, over 100 entries were submitted using a submission form designed and distributed by CFHC. Contest winners were offered a \$500 award and an invitation to a press conference in Los Angeles to present the six winning designs to the public. The art would become the property of CFHC. Applications were sent to all California Title X Agencies and were also available on CFHC's sexual health information website, www.teensource.org.

In August, once all entries had been submitted, the voting process began. For the first time, we conducted the voting process online at www.teensource.org to allow for more youth than ever before to vote on their favorite designs. Voting on the top 50 entries was open for a month, with daily updates and reminders posted on our website blog. Once the voting closed, the top six designs were selected and unveiled at a press conference in Los Angeles and then sent off for mass production. The winning condoms were made available to all California Title X Delegate Agencies and our community partners.

In addition to using the artwork for condoms, CFHC has created Condom Art products from the artwork of previous winning artists, including apparel such as t-shirts, boxers and hats and outreach materials, such as scratch off cards that showcase myths and facts about STDs. Proceeds of the sales of these products will go to support future Condom Art programs. To check out newest products, including 'Be Safe' boxers and hats, visit <http://epahealth.stores.yahoo.net/apparel.html>.

We plan to run the contest again in 2010 and look forward to an even greater response to this innovative contest!