

# EXTINGUISHING THE TOBACCO EPIDEMIC *in* SOUTH CAROLINA

## THE PROBLEM

Cigarette smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death and disability in the United States, despite a significant decline in the number of people who smoke. Over 16 million Americans have at least one disease caused by smoking. This amounts to \$170 billion in direct medical costs that could be saved every year if we could prevent youth from starting to smoke and help every person who smokes to quit.



## SOUTH CAROLINA KEY FACTS

In 2019, **27.5%** of South Carolina high school **youth** reported currently using **any tobacco product**, including e-cigarettes. Among South Carolina high school **youth**, **5.9%** reported currently smoking **cigarettes**.

# \$1.6M

Was received from CDC for tobacco prevention and control activities in FY 2020

# 17.6%

Of adults smoked cigarettes in 2019

# 7,200

Adults die from smoking-related illnesses each year

# \$1.9B

Was spent on healthcare costs due to smoking in 2009

## PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO TOBACCO USE IN SOUTH CAROLINA

There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. It causes stroke, lung cancer, and coronary heart disease in adults. South Carolina has a tradition of adopting comprehensive local smoke-free policies throughout the state. As more communities adopt smoke-free laws, the state, upon request, provides research, data and analysis, and scientific consultation to communities, multiunit housing operators, hospitals, businesses, and colleges and universities that want to protect residents from secondhand smoke. For example, 25 colleges and universities prohibit tobacco use in buildings and on campus grounds in South Carolina, including 3 recent policies being adopted at Benedict College, the Citadel, and Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College. Additionally, 78% of the public school districts have adopted comprehensive tobacco-free policies. These policies aren't limited to schools, as at least 215 faith-based organizations have adopted tobacco-free policies for their buildings and grounds, and more than 36,000 individuals in 726 faith organizations receive monthly bulletins with health promoting tobacco prevention and cessation messages, plus information on resources to help prevent or address chronic diseases.

CURRENT AS OF MARCH 2021



U.S. Department of  
Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention

[www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco)

## CDC's ROLE IN ADVANCING STATE TOBACCO CONTROL PROGRAMS

South Carolina is one of 50 states plus DC that receives funding and technical support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to support comprehensive tobacco control efforts and quitlines. The Office on Smoking and Health (OSH) is the lead federal agency for comprehensive tobacco prevention and control. For decades, OSH has led public health efforts to prevent young people from using tobacco and to help all tobacco users to quit.

### CDC's TIPS FROM FORMER SMOKERS® (Tips®) CAMPAIGN HELPS SOUTH CAROLINA SMOKERS QUIT SMOKING



Despite significant progress, tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death and disease in the US. The good news is that 7 out of 10 smokers want to quit smoking. That is why since 2012 CDC has been educating the public about the consequences of smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke and encouraging smokers to quit through a federally funded, national tobacco education campaign, *Tips From Former Smokers®*. The campaign features former smokers suffering from the real consequences of smoking.

The *Tips®* campaign connects smokers with resources to help them quit, including a quitline number (1-800-QUIT-NOW) which routes callers to their state quitline. The South Carolina quitline provides free cessation services, including counseling and medication. These services are effective in improving health outcomes and reducing healthcare costs.

*"I was thinking about relapsing today and the new commercials came on. It changed my mind real fast. You don't understand the power of these commercials until you have made the decision to quit. Terrie Hall makes me cry every time . . . that could easily be me."*

– Justin: January 2016

Incoming calls to the South Carolina state quitline increased by an average **10%** during the 2020 *Tips®* campaign. The South Carolina state quitline received a total of **7,736** calls from March 23<sup>rd</sup> – October 8<sup>th</sup> during the 2020 *Tips®* campaign.

### SOUTH CAROLINA TOBACCO PREVENTION & CONTROL PROGRAMS REDUCE HEALTHCARE COSTS

Tobacco prevention and control activities are a public health "best buy." Evidence-based, statewide tobacco control programs that are comprehensive, sustained, and accountable have been shown to reduce the number of people who smoke, as well as tobacco-related diseases and deaths. For every dollar spent on tobacco prevention, states can reduce tobacco-related health care expenditures and hospitalizations by up to \$55. The longer and more states invest, the larger the reductions in youth and adult smoking. A comprehensive statewide tobacco control program includes efforts to:



**1** Prevent initiation of tobacco use especially among youth and young adults



**2** Promote cessation and assist tobacco users to quit



**3** Protect people from secondhand smoke

For more information on tobacco prevention and control, visit [cdc.gov/tobacco](http://cdc.gov/tobacco).

CURRENT AS OF MARCH 2021



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco)