

Connecticut Department of Public Health

Tobacco Control Program | June 2023

TOBACCO PROGRAM FACT SHEET

Background: Tobacco use continues to be the leading cause of preventable death and disease in Connecticut (CT) and the United States. Tobacco causes harm to almost every organ in the body. The nicotine in tobacco products, including cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, snuff, dip, snus, pipes, hookah tobacco (shisha), e-cigarettes, and other electronic vapor products is highly addictive. There is no safe level of use for tobacco products or for exposure to tobacco smoke or aerosol.



The Connecticut Tobacco Control Program

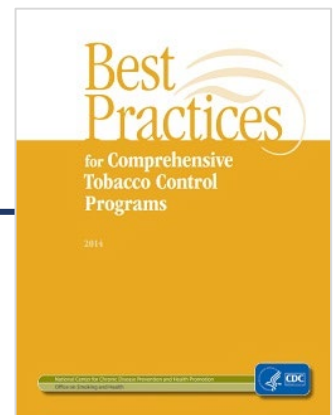
The Program works to enhance the wellbeing of CT residents by promoting tobacco-free lifestyles and by educating communities about the economic and health costs and consequences of tobacco use. The Program coordinates and assists state and local efforts to prevent people from starting to use tobacco, to help current users quit, to reduce nonsmokers' exposure to both secondhand and thirdhand smoke and aerosol, and to reduce disparities related to tobacco use.

Connecticut Program Goals

- Prevent the initiation of tobacco use
 - An estimated 11.2% or 17,600 high school students reported using some form of tobacco, including cigarettes, cigars, hookahs, traditional pipes, smokeless tobacco, and e-cigarettes or other electronic vapor products, in the last 30 days¹
 - Among adults, 17.2% or 456,000 reported using cigarettes, cigars, hookahs, smokeless tobacco, e-cigarettes or other electronic vapor products some days or every day²
- Promote quitting among young people and adults
 - About 44% of high school youth and 40% of adults who used tobacco stopped using all tobacco products for a day or longer in the past year because they were trying to quit for good^{1,2}
- Eliminate non-smokers' exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke and aerosol
 - Around 31% or 47,500 high school students and 15% or 373,600 adults were exposed to secondhand smoke or aerosol in the past seven days^{1,2}
- Identify and eliminate disparities related to cigarette smoking and its effects
 - The prevalence of current cigarette smoking was significantly greater for adults with the following:²
 - Health coverage by Medicaid – 23.8%
 - Lower socioeconomic status (<\$25K annual household income) – 22.9%
 - Poor mental health – 21.3%
 - No high school diploma – 18.4%

Program Initiatives

All Program activities follow the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs (2014) and other national best practice recommendations including the Community Guide.



Prevention Activities

- Community intervention programs implement evidence-based activities that address tobacco prevention through policy, systems, and environmental changes. These programs engage, educate, and support youth groups to 1) visit and talk to retailers in their communities about the placement and sale of tobacco products in stores; 2) address the impact of tobacco product advertising and sponsorships; and 3) promote adoption of policies that protect communities from exposure to tobacco smoke through activities such as tobacco-free campuses, parks, and workplaces.
- Ongoing education and information are provided on proposed policy changes that would impact tobacco control using Best Practices and new research findings from the CDC and other national organizations. This includes clean indoor and outdoor air, restrictions on the sale of flavored tobacco products, and other policy areas that are expected to have a positive impact on the health of Connecticut residents.

Cessation Activities

- *CT Quitline*: Call 1-800 QUIT-NOW [1-855-DEJELO YA]

The CT Quitline is available free of charge to any state resident. Telephone and web-based coaching is provided 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Multiple languages are available via quit coaches or translation lines. Nicotine replacement therapies (patches, gum, lozenges) are currently offered to callers who are medically eligible and who enroll in a multiple call or web-based program. Coaching, referrals, and educational materials are provided that are tailored to a caller's needs.



- *This Is Quitting*: Text VAPEFREET or DEJELOCT to 88709

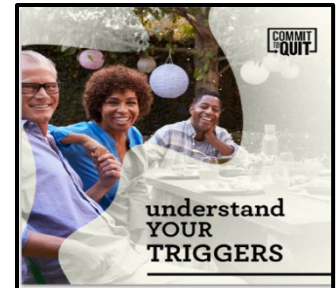
The Department of Public Health has partnered with Truth Initiative to offer a customized version of This Is Quitting: a free and anonymous text messaging program designed specifically to help young people quit vaping nicotine. The program incorporates messages from other young people like them who have attempted to or have successfully quit vaping, alongside expert advice. The program focuses on the real side of quitting, as well as keeping people motivated and supported through their quit journey. This Is Quitting is intended for young people ages 13-24 who want to quit vaping.



- Community Cessation Programs offer in-person group and individual tobacco use treatment services, cessation medications, and relapse prevention services at locations around the state, targeting persons who are under/uninsured for tobacco use cessation. Programs also provide outreach and training to healthcare providers in their service areas on how to screen patients for tobacco use and refer them for treatment.

Mass Reach Health Communication Activities

- **Vape Free CT** promotes tobacco use cessation resources focused on the youth and young adult population. Through coordinated efforts with our local health departments and districts, this campaign involves tactics such as social media ads and videos (TikTok, Instagram, Twitch, Spotify), digital banner ads (in-game, dating apps, Google), and posters at family fun centers. Check it out online at www.VapeFreeCT.org.
- **Commit to Quit** promotes available tobacco use cessation resources for adults through advertisements on social media (Facebook, Instagram) streaming services (Pandora), search engines (Google), broadcast radio, and printed ads for bus tails, newsprint, and bar signage. Check it out online at CommitToQuitCT.
- Enhancement of the CDC 'Tips from Former Smokers' Campaign is ongoing to promote awareness and increase the reach of this multi-faceted campaign.



Surveillance and Evaluation Activities

- Data from both the Youth Risk Behavior Survey and the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, as well as other state and national data are used to inform program planning.
- All funded programs have outcome measures, and activities are evaluated to ensure effectiveness.

Secondhand Smoke and Aerosol Activities

- Public education on the dangers of exposure to tobacco smoke and aerosol is ongoing.
- Technical assistance and resources are developed and provided to encourage the adoption of smoke aerosol and tobacco-free policies in various settings.
 - Specific toolkits have been developed for tobacco-free college campuses, multi-unit housing, and parks and recreational areas.
 - Questions and complaints from the public are received on various issues including housing owners and tenants, and workers exposed to secondhand smoke and aerosol in the workplace.



For More Information, Contact:

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Last updated: June 21, 2023

References:

¹State of Connecticut Department of Public Health; Connecticut Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2021.

²State of Connecticut Department of Public Health; Connecticut Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey, 2021.