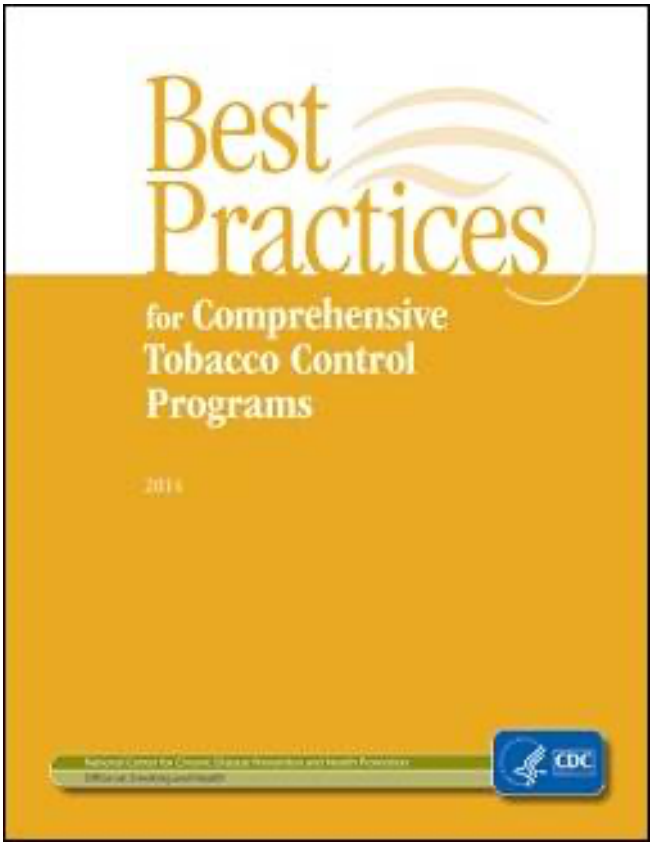
State Tobacco Prevention Programs Reduce Tobacco Use, Reduce Healthcare Costs, and Save Lives

Tobacco use takes a devastating toll on our country – it remains the leading preventable cause of death, killing more than 490,000 Americans every year.[1] It is a problem that starts with our children because nearly 90 percent of current smokers begin when they are 18 or younger.[2] E-cigarettes have been the most commonly used tobacco product among youth since 2014.[3] Youth e-cigarette use remains at unacceptably high levels and is placing a new generation at risk for nicotine addiction and tobacco use.



Comprehensive tobacco prevention and cessation programs are a proven method of preventing kids from starting to smoke, preventing e-cigarettes from addicting a new generation of kids, and helping adults quit smoking. Tobacco prevention programs also serve as an important counter to tobacco and vape companies that are spending huge sums promoting their deadly and addictive products, much of which influences kids to use tobacco.

To prevent disease and promote health, comprehensive tobacco prevention programs employ a variety of evidence-based approaches including, but not limited to:

- **State and Community-Based Programs:** State and community programs help to make tobacco less desirable, less acceptable, and less accessible. Community groups can reach people where they live, work, play, learn, and worship with prevention and cessation programming and messaging.
- **Public Education Efforts:** Health communication campaigns raise awareness of the harms of tobacco use, help to prevent smoking initiation and promote cessation. These efforts can include paid media (TV, radio, print, web-based, etc.), earned media (press releases, local events and promotions), and other efforts to counter pro-tobacco messages.
- **Helping Smokers Quit:** Nearly 70% of adult cigarette smokers want to quit.[4] State quitlines provide telephone-based counseling services and access to tobacco cessation medications to help tobacco users to quit. Quitlines can efficiently reach large numbers of smokers and are cost-effective. Smokers who use quitlines are at least two to three times more likely to succeed in quitting compared to those who try to quit on their own.[5]
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Every element of a comprehensive tobacco control program should be rigorously evaluated to demonstrate effectiveness and ensure accountability. Through this evaluation work, program elements can be adjusted and improved to ensure that the program is working as intended to drive down tobacco use rates and ensure that achieved reductions are sustained.

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Tobacco prevention programs reduce smoking and save lives.

Every scientific authority that has studied tobacco prevention and cessation programs has concluded that when properly funded, implemented and sustained, tobacco prevention programs reduce smoking among both kids and adults.[6] Data from numerous states provide additional evidence of the effectiveness of comprehensive tobacco prevention and cessation programs.

- States with sustained, well-funded prevention programs have cut youth smoking by more than 90 percent.[7]
- California, with the nation's longest-running prevention and cessation program, has reduced lung and bronchus cancer rates twice as fast as the rest of the nation.[8] Washington state estimates that its smoking reductions have prevented 13,000 premature deaths.[9]
- Minnesota's comprehensive program demonstrates that long-term investments reduce smoking and prevent serious tobacco-caused disease. Through the state's program, researchers estimate that Minnesota's decline in smoking effectively prevented over 4,500 cancer cases, over 44,000 hospitalizations for cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease and diabetes, and approximately 4,100 smoking-attributable deaths.[10]

Tobacco prevention programs are highly cost-effective and can be cost-saving.

Treating tobacco-caused disease is expensive. Tobacco use is responsible for $241 billion in health care costs each year.[11] Preventing youth from starting tobacco use, and helping adults to quit, can reduce health care spending by reducing the need for hospitalizations and other medical services related to treating tobacco-caused disease. It can also improve productivity by reducing the number of people unable to work and the number of missed workdays due to tobacco-related illness and by increasing employee productivity while at work.

- The Community Preventive Services Task Force, an independent expert advisory committee created by CDC, found, "Evidence indicates that comprehensive tobacco control programs are cost-effective and savings from averted healthcare costs exceed intervention costs."[12]
- From 1989-2019, California's tobacco control program contributed to significant declines in adult smoking, translating to enormous healthcare savings.[13] Over the 30-year period, the program was estimated to have reduced health care costs by between $544 and $816 billion, far more than that of the $3.5 billion spent on the program over the same time period – an incredible return on investment. This builds on previous research which found that for every dollar the state spent on its tobacco control program from 1989 to 2004, the state received as much as fifty dollars in health care cost savings in the form of sharp reductions to total healthcare costs in the state.[14]
- Washington State saved more than $5 for every dollar it spent on its tobacco-prevention program by reducing hospitalizations for heart disease, cancer and other tobacco-related diseases.[15] This strong return on investment demonstrates that tobacco prevention is one of the smartest and most fiscally responsible investments states can make.
- Minnesota's long-term investment (1998-2017) in comprehensive tobacco prevention and cessation saved an estimated total of $5.1 billion, avoiding $2.4 billion in productivity losses and $2.7 billion in medical care costs.[16]
- A report on the early investments in Massachusetts' comprehensive tobacco prevention program found that during its early years, the state's program was reducing statewide healthcare costs by $85 million per year – a return of at least two dollars for every single dollar invested in its comprehensive tobacco-prevention efforts.[17]

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