

Tobacco-Free Kids Young Ambassadors Program



The Young Ambassadors for Tobacco Control program, launched in 2022 by the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, is ensuring the long-term sustainability of the tobacco control movement by building the next generation of champions.

Young ambassadors mobilized through the program are holding the tobacco industry accountable and fighting for a healthier world through networks in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America, united and coordinated by a global secretariat.

Ending deaths from tobacco is a long-term fight. Through the Young Ambassadors Program, we are identifying, training and supporting a generation of public health advocates who are taking on the social, political and commercial determinants of health.

WHY YOUNG AMBASSADORS?

When young people are mobilized, they have the power to command attention and change narratives. When they are trained as advocates, they can drive generational change.

Young people are targeted by the tobacco industry as targets for lifelong addiction. At the same time, they are often neglected by health systems that focus on diseases that may not show up until later—even while they are forming the habits that will influence their health for the rest of their lives. They are rarely at the tables where the policy decisions that will affect them are being made.

In every region of the world, we are identifying emerging leaders and working with them to strengthen their voices as champions, innovate effective narratives and discover new ways to take on the tobacco industry while fostering and shaping the next generation of tobacco control advocates.

WHY TOBACCO?

Tobacco use is the world's leading cause of preventable death, killing more than 8 million people worldwide each year. The tobacco industry is constantly innovating to reach new users.

WHY THE CAMPAIGN FOR TOBACCO-FREE KIDS?

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids is the leading international advocacy organization reducing tobacco use around the world, through the adoption and implementation of proven public health policies. We have worked with local partners to change tobacco laws in more than 60 countries.

Since Tobacco-Free Kids' founding in 1995, our organization has championed and uplifted the voices of young people as advocates for public health policy. Youth voices have been essential across the United States in educating their peers and helping change the culture around smoking, getting laws passed and implemented, and holding Big Tobacco and governments accountable. Many of our youth advocates have remained in the tobacco control field or moved into similar public health leadership roles.

TAKING ON INDUSTRY AND WINNING

In February 2024, the tobacco industry tried to hold a closed-door meeting with Zambian lawmakers to discuss the Tobacco Control Bill being considered by parliament. When the Tobacco Control Consortium of Zambia met to plan a response, youth advocates led the way. Members of the Young Ambassadors Program staged a flash protest and convened a widely-covered press conference to denounce the tobacco industry's interference in policymaking. In response to their advocacy, the chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Health publicly declined to have any discussions on the bill with the industry, and the meetings were called off.





SOUTH AFRICA



BELGIUM

BUILDING NATIONAL MOVEMENTS

In every region of the world, young ambassadors are changing the conversation on tobacco control and forcing the issue into the spotlight.

- In **Bangladesh**, young ambassadors helped build internal and external support for the development and finalization of the Tobacco Control Law amendment by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- In **China**, Tobacco-Free Kids supported Peking University to host a youth-organized debate on the harms of tobacco and tobacco control policies. The young leaders recruited 12 teams from leading universities, and the debate was broadcast live, spurring nationwide conversations.
- In **Pakistan**, young ambassador advocacy contributed to the passage of the provincial Gilgit Baltistan Tobacco Control Act of 2020, the first tobacco control law in the country to include smokeless tobacco.
- In **South Africa**, youth gained the attention of Members of Parliament when they hand-delivered a memorandum in March 2024 to demand public hearings for a tobacco control bill.

JOIN US

Corporate influence undermining public health policies is a growing concern. Now more than ever, we need to build a new generation of leaders to preserve the gains we've made while taking on these industries head on. We need to cultivate younger voices who can innovate strategies and tools to drown out industry lies that will resonate with how their peers and, increasingly, decision makers receive information and make decisions. We need a new generation with all of their optimism, energy, and imagination to reinvigorate, reinvent, and regenerate our movement.

Find out how you can support the Tobacco-Free Kids Young Ambassadors program:

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ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN FOR TOBACCO-FREE KIDS

The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids is the leading advocacy organization working to reduce tobacco use and its deadly consequences in the United States and around the world. Through strategic communications and policy advocacy campaigns, we promote the adoption of proven solutions that are most effective at reducing tobacco use and save the most lives.

