

Communities Putting Prevention to Work



FLORENCE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA Tobacco Use Prevention

Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) is an initiative designed to make healthy living easier by promoting environmental changes at the local level. Through funding awarded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2010, a total of 50 communities are working to prevent obesity and tobacco use—the two leading preventable causes of death and disability.

“ONE OF THE GOALS OF SMOKE-FREE FLORENCE IS TO RAISE THE AWARENESS OF THE AVAILABILITY OF ASSISTANCE FOR TRYING TO QUIT SMOKING. IT’S A WONDERFUL TIME AND YOU DON’T HAVE TO WAIT FOR THE BAN TO COME INTO PLAY, YOU NEED TO START NOW.”

— Deborah Dunbar, Smoke-free Florence Project Coordinator

Community Overview

Florence County, South Carolina, is tackling tobacco use, the leading preventable cause of death and disease in South Carolina. The adult smoking rate in Florence County is 26%, which is higher than the state’s adult smoking rate of 21%. Approximately 53% of teenagers in South Carolina have smoked a cigarette in their lifetime. Further, 30% of Florence County adults reported secondhand smoke exposure in their workplace in the past seven days.



Community Successes

If healthy options are not available, then healthy living is not possible. With the support of the *CPPW* initiative, Florence County has implemented a variety of changes throughout the community to make healthy living easier.

To decrease tobacco use, Florence County:

- Conducted trainings at 28 physician practices that reach women of childbearing age to encourage health care providers to refer their patients who smoke to effective smoking cessation resources.
- Developed a multifaceted public awareness initiative that educates residents about the health risks associated with tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke.
- Worked with all five public school districts in Florence County to improve their tobacco policies. Four districts have adopted tobacco-free policies, and more than 20,000 students, faculty, and staff no longer are exposed to secondhand smoke in school and on school campuses.
- Recruited 17 faith-based organizations to work on smoke-free issues in their community. Eleven organizations have adopted tobacco-free policies, protecting approximately 1,650 community members and visitors from secondhand smoke exposure on church grounds.



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



"I WAS DIAGNOSED WITH COPD [CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE], AND MY DOCTOR TOLD ME I MUST QUIT SMOKING. I HEARD ABOUT THE QUITLINE AND WHAT IT OFFERED. THE BIGGEST THING FOR ME WAS THE COUNSELING SERVICE—BEING ABLE TO TALK WITH SOMEONE WHO KNOWS HOW HARD IT IS TO STOP WAS THE BEST PART OF THE CESSATION PROGRAM. I HAVE NOT HAD A CIGARETTE IN THREE MONTHS. THANK YOU FOR OFFERING THIS TO FLORENCE."

— Todd, Florence County resident

Community Successes *(continued)*

- Expanded smoke-free workplace protections for more than 32,000 City of Florence employees, customers, residents, and visitors.

(The list above is a sample of all activities completed by the community.)

Florence County Increases Quitline Use

Florence County is increasing tobacco cessation attempts in the community. Through a public awareness campaign using both traditional and social media, the county has increased calls to the South Carolina Tobacco Quitline, 1-800-QUIT-NOW. The number of county residents calling the quitline has jumped from an average of six per month to an average of nearly 100 per month from November 2010 through July 2011. The quitline offers smokers in the community access to tobacco cessation resources, including free nicotine gum and patches. To encourage successful referrals to the quitline, medical professionals now are offered an online training, which provides continuing medical education credits (www.helppatientsquitsc.org). Additionally, the county trained 234 health care providers on successful referral techniques. Florence County also coordinated media activities surrounding the *Great American Smokeout* on November 18, 2010, which encourages smokers to make a plan to quit.

Leadership Team

The leadership team includes high-level community leaders from multiple sectors, who have the combined resources and capacity to make healthy living easier. Members of Florence County's leadership team are key agents for change in their community. The leadership team includes representatives from the following organizations:

- American Cancer Society
- American Heart Association
- Concerned Citizens
- Florence County Department of Social Services
- Florence County Medical Society Alliance
- Florence County School Districts
- Florence-Darlington Technical College
- Francis Marion University
- Keep Florence Beautiful
- McLeod Regional Medical Center
- *The News Journal*
- Pee Dee Area Health Education Center
- Pee Dee Community Action Agency Head Start
- Pee Dee Community Action Partnership

Additional Information

For more information, please visit www.smokefreeflorence.org.