

# EXTINGUISHING THE TOBACCO EPIDEMIC *in* GEORGIA

## 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.



## GEORGIA KEY FACTS

In 2017, **19.5%** of US high school **youth** reported currently using **any tobacco product**, including e-cigarettes. Among US high school **youth**, **8.8%** reported currently smoking **cigarettes**.

# \$1.6M

Was received from CDC for tobacco prevention and control activities in FY 2019

# 16.1%

Of adults smoked cigarettes in 2018

# 11,700

Adults die from smoking-related illnesses each year

# \$3.2B

Was spent on healthcare costs due to smoking in 2009

## PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO TOBACCO USE IN GEORGIA

There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. It causes stroke, lung cancer, and coronary heart disease in adults. Georgia does not have a comprehensive smoke-free law to protect people from secondhand smoke in all indoor areas of workplaces, restaurants, and bars. However, the state has continued to identify opportunities to protect people from secondhand smoke in other locations. Upon request, the state 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. Currently, five cities and one county have adopted a comprehensive smoke-free ordinance, and 33 University of Georgia campuses have adopted tobacco-free campus policies. Further, the state has partnered with the Georgia Hospital Association and now 132 hospitals are tobacco-free and 31 are smoke-free. Furthermore, these policies prohibit tobacco use at school-sponsored or school-related events both on and off campus. Currently, 116 out of 181 public school districts in the state have adopted tobacco-free school policies.

PAGE LAST UPDATED: 2/14/2020



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

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

Print Only

# GEORGIA

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

Georgia 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 GEORGIA 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 Georgia 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 Georgia state quitline increased by an average **154%** during the 2019 *Tips*® campaign. The Georgia state quitline received a total of **11,452** calls from April 23<sup>rd</sup> – October 8<sup>th</sup> during the 2019 *Tips*® campaign.

### GEORGIA 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).

PAGE LAST UPDATED: 2/14/2020



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

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

Print Only

GEORGIA