

Investment in Tobacco Control

Call to Action: The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) calls on Congress to support a sustained funding level of \$310 million in Fiscal Year 2027 for fact based tobacco prevention and cessation programs and ensure the funding is used as Congress intended.

Federal investment in comprehensive tobacco control is one of the most effective ways Congress can save lives, prevent disease, and curb rising health care costs. Tobacco control programs save lives. Declines in tobacco use, along with earlier detection and improved treatment, have helped avert an estimated 4.8 million cancer deaths since 1991.¹ Yet many Americans still use tobacco and far too many die from tobacco-related illnesses.

Impact of the Office on Smoking and Health⁶

For the past 40 years, the Office on Smoking and Health (OSH) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has provided the nation's key infrastructure on tobacco prevention and control at the federal level, delivering critically needed, evidence-based resources to states, communities, and individuals. **During this time, OSH oversaw one of the most impactful public health initiatives in U.S. history,** helping drive historic declines in tobacco use and preventing millions of tobacco-related deaths.⁷ A fully functioning and consistently staffed OSH is essential to sustain this progress. Gaps in staffing capacity can disrupt support to states for program implementation, delay critical surveillance, weaken coordination, and put hard-won progress in tobacco control at risk.

Impact of OSH's National Tobacco Control Program⁸

The National Tobacco Control Program (NTCP) works at the national level and closely with states to prevent initiation, promote quitting, reduce exposure to secondhand smoke, and reduce differences in tobacco-related health outcomes across populations. When states receive strong technical support and invest in comprehensive tobacco control programs, they experience reduced cigarette sales, declining tobacco use rates among youth and young adults, and higher tobacco-attributable health care expenditure savings.⁹ **Yet, the elimination of OSH staff and programs have left the NTCP without the support needed to run programs efficiently and effectively.** State programs no longer have access to the latest scientific data or any functional expertise on best practices to achieve programmatic outcomes. As a result, states are losing the technical expertise and national coordination required to meet program requirements and respond to emerging public health threats, such as the quadrupling of youth use of nicotine pouches in recent years.⁹

Impact of Tobacco Use and Addiction in the United States

- Nearly 1 in 5 (47.7 million) U.S. adults used tobacco products in 2023.²
- **Tobacco use is responsible for nearly a half million deaths each year,** more than one-third of which are premature deaths due to cancer.³
- **Tobacco use costs** the nation more than **\$600 billion a year in health care costs and lost productivity.**⁴
- **Tobacco use** is the primary driver of chronic disease and **the top cause of cancer deaths in the U.S.**⁵
- **Reductions in tobacco use have been uneven, and certain populations continue to use tobacco products at much higher rates** than the national rate.³
- The burden of tobacco use and addiction vary considerably **based on where someone lives, how much income they have** and other factors.³
- **E-cigarettes and nicotine pouches are the most commonly used tobacco products among U.S. youth,** despite claims that these products are marketed to adults.¹⁰
- **Youth-appealing flavors¹¹ in products such as nicotine pouches and e-cigarettes have fueled uptake by youth and young adults.**¹⁰

OSH’s Role in Youth Tobacco Use Surveillance

The National Youth Tobacco Survey (NYTS) collects data on tobacco use by high school and middle school students and **serves as an early warning system by identifying emerging and dangerous trends in youth tobacco use.** Historically, the NYTS was a joint CDC/Food and Drug Administration effort (FDA), with OSH leading public health analysis and interpretation of the data. However, following the elimination of OSH, no federal public-health analysis has been released to accompany NYTS data. In March 2026, the FDA departed from standard practice by releasing the NYTS public-use data-set without federal analysis or interpretation.¹¹ In the absence of a government analysis, the tobacco industry published its own interpretations without a government response. Without the analysis that experienced staff at OSH bring, there is a danger that researchers, policymakers, and the public may lack clear, public health insight in trends in youth tobacco use and addiction.

OSH’s Role in Cessation Support

Most adults who use tobacco want to quit and studies show that almost half attempt to each year, yet unfortunately fewer than 10% are successful.¹³ Research shows that people who use quitlines are two to three times more successful trying to quit than they would on their own.¹⁴ **State quitlines, which are partially funded by CDC, are a critical component of state tobacco control programs.** Quitlines offer free phone- and text-based support to help people quit tobacco, are an accessible way to reach a wide audience, typically require no insurance, and are provided at no cost to users, costing states approximately \$2.72 per tobacco user on average. Since 2005, more than 6.9 million people have used quitlines and in 2024, more than 250,000 people received quitline support.¹⁵ Currently, there are no OSH staff available to guide state programs on how to enhance proven methods to help people quit.

OSH serves as the backbone for successful state tobacco control programs

30%

12 states rely on federal sources for more than 30% of their tobacco control funding.

\$55

For every \$1 invested in comprehensive tobacco control programs, states save up to \$55 in health care costs¹⁶ — a return made possible by CDC’s technical assistance, surveillance, and guidance.

Impact of OSH’s Public Education Campaigns – Tips From Former Smokers® (Tips®)

OSH’s **Tips from Former Smokers® campaign**, a groundbreaking tobacco cessation campaign launched in 2012, features people sharing the consequences they experienced from smoking or exposure to secondhand smoke, as well as the impact on family members who care for loved ones living with smoking-related diseases. **The Tips® campaign was rated a “best buy” for public health costing less than \$400 per life saved.**⁷ Despite its overwhelming success in saving lives, the current Tips contract was cancelled in November 2025. Without OSH staff support, there is no one with the expertise and experience in tobacco control to effectively write, compete, review, and award any new contracts.

From 2012 – 2018 OSH’s Highly Successful **Tips From Former Smokers® Campaign** impact:⁷



16 million+ U.S. adults made a quit attempt



1 million+ U.S. adults successfully quit tobacco



129,000+ early deaths were prevented



\$7.3 billion was saved in tobacco-related health care costs