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## FLORIDA ADULT AND TEEN SMOKING RATES HIT RECORD LOW

*Tobacco Free Florida Marks 10 Years of Life-Saving Program*



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**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** – Ten years ago this month, Floridians voted overwhelmingly in support of a state constitutional amendment to fund a tobacco education and use prevention program, now known as Tobacco Free Florida. The program has resulted in a significant decrease in smoking rates among both adults and teens in the state, leading to billions of dollars and countless lives saved.

“With voter support, this program was launched a decade ago and Tobacco Free Florida has had a tremendous impact on improving the health of Floridians,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary Dr. Celeste Philip. “While Tobacco Free Florida is a national leader in tobacco control, there is still more work to be done. The tobacco industry is constantly finding new ways to target vulnerable populations, and more of our youth are experimenting with a range of new options rather than using traditional products such as cigarettes.”

In 2006, the smoking rate was flattening and the state was spending billions of dollars on health care costs.<sup>1,2</sup> Further, Florida was receiving money from its lawsuit settlement with tobacco companies, but only a small percentage was being spent on a tobacco control program. By mandating the creation of Tobacco Free Florida, Florida voters ensured that a comprehensive program benefitting Floridians’ health and the state’s finances would be funded by 15 percent of the annual settlement amount – not taxpayer dollars.

Tobacco Free Florida’s beneficial impact is proven in numbers:

- In 2006, the adult smoking rate was 21 percent. In 2015, it stands at 15.8 percent – the lowest it has ever been.<sup>3,4</sup>
- Fewer young people have started smoking since Tobacco Free Florida was created. The youth smoking rate has decreased from 10.6 percent in 2006 to 3 percent in 2016 – an astounding 71 percent decrease.<sup>5,6</sup>
- The program saved the state \$3.2 billion in health care costs in 2015. Annual smoking-related health care costs in Florida decreased 15 percent from 2006 to 2015 as a result of fewer adults smoking.<sup>7</sup>

Since Tobacco Free Florida’s hard-hitting advertising launched, quit attempts across the state have increased and the campaign has been linked to reducing relapses among those who quit. Exposure to the program’s message has also caused positive shifts in smokers’ attitudes towards quitting.<sup>8</sup>

Over the past 10 years, Tobacco Free Florida has helped more than 159,000 Floridians quit tobacco. While the program has made remarkable progress, smoking remains the leading

cause of preventable disease and death<sup>9</sup> and 7,400 Floridians continue to become daily smokers each year.<sup>10</sup>

Tobacco Free Florida's new Quit Your Way program makes it easier than ever for tobacco users to access free tools and services to help them quit. For more information to quit tobacco or help a loved one quit, visit [tobaccofreeflorida.com/quityourway](http://tobaccofreeflorida.com/quityourway).

### **About the Florida Department of Health**

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on Twitter at [@HealthyFla](#) and on [Facebook](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit [www.FloridaHealth.gov](http://www.FloridaHealth.gov).

### **About Tobacco Free Florida**

The department's Tobacco Free Florida campaign is a statewide cessation and prevention campaign funded by Florida's tobacco settlement fund. Since 2007, more than 159,000 Floridians have successfully quit, using one of Tobacco Free Florida's free tools and services. To learn more about Tobacco Free Florida's Quit Your Way services, visit [www.tobaccofreeflorida.com](http://www.tobaccofreeflorida.com) or follow the campaign on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida](http://www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida) or on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla](http://www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla).

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Mann, Nathan M, Nonnemaker, James M., Thompson, Jesse. "Smoking-Attributable Health Care Costs in Florida and Potential Health Care Cost Savings Associated with Reductions in Adult Smoking Prevalence." 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data, Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016.

<sup>5</sup> Florida Youth Tobacco Survey (FYTS), Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Epidemiology, 2006.

<sup>6</sup> Florida Youth Tobacco Survey (FYTS), Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Epidemiology, 2016.

<sup>7</sup> Mann, Nathan M, Nonnemaker, James M., Thompson, Jesse. "Smoking-Attributable Health Care Costs in Florida and Potential Health Care Cost Savings Associated with Reductions in Adult Smoking Prevalence." 2016.

<sup>8</sup> Nonnemaker, James M., et al. "The effect of exposure to media campaign messages on adult cessation." Addictive behaviors 49 (2015): 13-19.

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking: 50 Years of Progress. A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014.

<sup>10</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). National Survey on Drug Use and Health. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2016.