

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS
State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FIFTH ANNUAL TOBACCO FREE FLORIDA WEEK CELEBRATES LIFE-SAVING PROGRAM

~Tobacco Free Florida has helped 72,000 people quit through its 3 Ways to Quit services~

TALLAHASSEE – The fifth annual Tobacco Free Florida Week runs from April 6-13. Themed “High Five: Celebrating Five Years of Tobacco Free Florida Week,” it will highlight progress made in protecting Floridians from tobacco’s deadly toll.

The Florida Department of Health’s Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida educates youth about the harmful effects of tobacco use, aids current tobacco users in their efforts to quit, and brings to light the impact tobacco has on Florida’s health and economy.

“Each year, Tobacco Free Florida week turns up the heat on tobacco by educating Floridians about the dangers to health from smoking and chewing tobacco,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. “Florida has seen remarkable success in reducing smoking rates in recent years, one of the program’s many accomplishments that we will celebrate during this five-year anniversary.”

Since the inception of the Tobacco Free Florida program, the following milestones have been achieved:

Protecting the People:

- There are more than 500,000 fewer adult smokers in Florida.
- Tobacco Free Florida has helped 72,000ⁱ people quit through its 3 Ways to Quit services.
- There are now 70,000ⁱⁱ fewer youth smokers.
- There are more than 220,000ⁱⁱⁱ fewer youth in Florida exposed to secondhand smoke, which contains a deadly mix of more than 7,000 chemicals, hundreds of which are toxic and 69 that can cause cancer.^{iv}

Benefitting the State:

- The reduction in smokers has helped save more than \$4.2 billion in personal health care costs.²
- Twenty colleges and universities in Florida have taken the bold step to enact 100 percent smoke-free campus policies.^v
- In June 2011, Gov. Rick Scott signed a law amending the Florida Clean Indoor Air Act to give school boards the authority to designate all district property as tobacco free. Currently, all but two (65 total) school districts have implemented tobacco-related policies.
- More than 40 counties and more than 100 cities in the state have passed resolutions urging local vendors to cease the sale and marketing of all candy-flavored tobacco products, which target youth.

Florida Department of Health

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These efforts are supported by a statewide media campaign driven by powerful advertisements that demonstrate the dangers and real-life consequences of tobacco use, inspiring Floridians to quit and encouraging youth to never start. Research shows that hard-hitting media campaigns are effective.^{vi}

“Comprehensive tobacco control programs like Tobacco Free Florida work,” said Bureau Chief Shannon Hughes. “If you use tobacco, the most important step you can take for a healthier and longer life is to quit. Tobacco users who quit can double their chances at success by using the state’s free quit services.”

Tobacco Free Florida offers three ways to quit:

- **CALL:** Call the Florida Quitline at 1-877-U-CAN-NOW to speak with a Quit Coach who will help you assess your addiction and help you create a personalized quit plan.
- **CLICK:** Enroll in the Web Coach®, which will help you create your own web-based quit plan that’s right for you, visit <https://www.quitnow.net/florida>.
- **COME IN:** Visit the Florida Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Network’s website, <http://ahectobacco.com>, to locate your local AHEC and sign up for Quit Smoking Now group classes.

For more information, visit www.tobaccofreeflorida.com/TFFWeek.

ABOUT TOBACCO FREE FLORIDA WEEK

The fifth annual Tobacco Free Florida Week takes place from April 6-13. Visit www.tobaccofreeflorida.com/TFFWeek for more information and join the conversation on Twitter using the hashtag #WhyImTobaccoFree.

ABOUT TOBACCO FREE FLORIDA

Tobacco Free Florida is a statewide cessation and prevention campaign funded by Florida’s tobacco settlement fund. Tobacco Free Florida is managed by the Florida Department of Health, specifically the Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida.

Smokers and smokeless tobacco users interested in quitting are encouraged to call the Florida Quitline at 1-877-U-CAN-NOW to speak with a Quit Coach. To learn about Tobacco Free Florida and the state’s free quit smoking resources, visit www.tobaccofreeflorida.com or follow the campaign on Facebook at www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida or Twitter at www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla.

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ⁱ Professional Data Analysts (PDA). Numbers served and quitters FY08-FY12. Provided on Feb 22 2013.

ⁱⁱ Florida Youth Tobacco Survey (FYTS), Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Epidemiology, 2012

ⁱⁱⁱ Florida Youth Tobacco Survey (FYTS), Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Epidemiology, 2012

^{iv} U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease: The Biology and Behavioral Basis for Smoking-Attributable Disease: 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, 2010.

^v American Nonsmokers’ Rights Foundation. U.S. Colleges and Universities with Smokefree and Tobacco-Free Policies. <http://www.no-smoke.org/pdf/smokefreecollegesuniversities.pdf>. as of January 2, 2013.

^{vi} National Cancer Institute, The role of the media in promoting and reducing tobacco use. Tobacco Control Monograph No. 19. NIH Pub. No. 07-6242, 2008, USDHHS, National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute: Bethesda MD.