

## Healthy Communities Strategy #10: Compliance with 100% Tobacco-Free Schools Law

Increase compliance with the North Carolina 100 percent tobacco-free schools law by partnering with youth, parents and school personnel to educate about dangers of tobacco use and new and emerging tobacco products.

### **Expected Outcomes:**

Increased number of new technical assistance opportunities in support of 100 percent Tobacco Free Schools compliance.

### **Health Equity Planning Principals:**

While cigarette smoking has declined among North Carolina's young people from 15.5 percent of high school students in 2011 to 8.9 percent in 2017, use of any tobacco products increased from 25.8 percent of high school students in 2011 to 28.8 percent in 2017. This increase was due to the rising use of emerging tobacco products, including electronic cigarettes (North Carolina Youth Tobacco Survey, 2017).

Groups that use tobacco at higher rates, and/or are at risk for and disproportionately affected by tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure, include low income, less educated, males, African Americans, American Indians, people with mental illness, substance use disorders and/or disability issues, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender populations. Pregnant women who use tobacco are at higher risk for having pregnancy complications. Local health departments should engage priority populations in the planning, implementation and/or evaluation of evidence-based policies.

### **Recommended Partners:**

• TPCB Regional Managers • parents • teachers • coaches • school administration • civic and community leaders • dental and health care professionals • public health • mental health and substance abuse prevention professionals • other influencers of youth

### **Intervention Examples:**

- A. A local school administration was concerned about students using electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), so the local health department staff and regional manager presented to the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and school administration on e-cigarettes and emerging tobacco products. The school then updated their tobacco-free school policy language to state that e-cigarettes are a tobacco product, posted updated tobacco-free signs and implemented the [Catch My Breath prevention program](#) to educate students about electronic cigarettes and prevent tobacco initiation. The Catch program was also useful to educate teachers and parents.
- B. A student was caught smoking on campus, so the teacher required the student to use [ASPIRE](#), an online tool that may be used as an alternative to suspension, to help middle and high school students learn about being tobacco-free. [INDEPTH](#) is another alternative to suspension that may be used to help schools address e-cigarette use in schools. The teacher also provided the [QuitlineNC](#) and [This is Quitting](#) resource so the student could receive services to help stop the use of tobacco.

### **Related Programs:**

The Tobacco Prevention and Control Branch provides support for proven strategies to:

1. [Prevent the initiation](#) of smoking and other tobacco use
2. Eliminate exposure to [secondhand smoke](#)
3. Help tobacco-users [quit](#); and
4. Identify and eliminate [tobacco-related health disparities](#) among N.C. populations and communities.

### **Recommended Tools/Resources:**

- A. Youth Centered Programs and Resources  
[www.tobaccopreventionandcontrol.ncdhhs.gov/youth/index.htm](http://www.tobaccopreventionandcontrol.ncdhhs.gov/youth/index.htm)
- B. TPCB Tobacco-free Schools website:  
[www.nctobaccofreeschools.org/](http://www.nctobaccofreeschools.org/)
- C. Campaign for Tobacco-free Kids, Tobacco 101:  
<https://tobaccofreekids.litmos.com/self-signup/SelfSignupSuccess?tokenID=17912>
- D. The CDC and the TPCB requires evidence-based programs to prevent youth and young adult tobacco use, including vaping, and to support students in quitting. Therefore, the TPCB strongly discourages the use or any tobacco prevention and cessation programs being promoted by or funded by tobacco or e-cigarette companies. The presence of the tobacco industry in school settings may increase the likelihood of youth tobacco product initiation. Public health and school-based efforts to prevent youth tobacco product use are strongly encouraged to remain independent of tobacco industry influences. Refer to the CDC Evidence Brief ([https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/youth/evidence-brief/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/youth/evidence-brief/index.htm)) on this topic and seek recommended programs (<https://tobaccopreventionandcontrol.ncdhhs.gov/youth/Documents/TobaccoPreventionCesationProgramResourcesforYoungPeople-December2019.pdf>) to help students.

### **North Carolina Resources:**

- A. NC Tobacco-free Schools Policy Enforcement  
[www.nctobaccofreeschools.org/enforce/index.htm](http://www.nctobaccofreeschools.org/enforce/index.htm)
- B. NC TPCB State Staff:  
<https://tobaccopreventionandcontrol.ncdhhs.gov/about/contact.htm>
- C. NC TPCB Regional Manager staff technical assistance:  
<https://tobaccopreventionandcontrol.ncdhhs.gov/about/localtpcgroups.htm>
- D. NC Youth Tobacco Prevention website and Youth-Centered Programs and Resource Sheet:  
<https://tobaccopreventionandcontrol.ncdhhs.gov/youth/index.htm>
- E. Youth Empowered Solutions:  
<http://www.youthempoweredolutions.org/>

### **Data Sources**

- A. NC Youth Tobacco Survey:  
<https://www.tobaccopreventionandcontrol.ncdhhs.gov/data/yts/index.htm>
- B. 2018 National Youth Tobacco Survey:  
<https://www.fda.gov/TobaccoProducts/PublicHealthEducation/ProtectingKidsfromTobacco/ucm405173.htm>
- C. 2019 National Youth Tobacco Survey:

<https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/youth-and-tobacco/youth-tobacco-use-results-national-youth-tobacco-survey>