

TOBACCO PREVENTION & CESSATION



Our Goal:

The goal of the Coalition for a Tobacco Free Alabama is to establish a fully tobacco free society. Tobacco is a highly addictive substance and the single most preventable cause of disease, disability, and death in the United States. The Coalition for a Tobacco Free Alabama supports measures to eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke, eliminate tobacco use by youth, promote cessation treatment, and deter tobacco use in the general population.

Why Tobacco Prevention & Cessation?

Quitting tobacco is the single most important step a smoker can take to improve the length and quality of his or her life. Helping smokers quit not only saves lives; it saves money--for smokers, employers, taxpayers and state governments. Comprehensive tobacco prevention and cessation programs – which include medications and counseling -- help prevent kids from ever starting to smoke, help adult smokers quit, and help educate the public, the media, and decision makers about policies that reduce tobacco use. Well-funded tobacco control programs combined with strong tobacco control policies also increase cessation rates. Fortunately, people who stop smoking greatly reduce their risk for disease and premature death. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) *Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control* recommends that every state fund such programs at certain recommended levels. For Alabama, the spending recommendation is \$56.7 million a year in order to have an effective, comprehensive tobacco prevention program. Consider the following facts:

- Alabama's tobacco settlement payments are governed by a 1999 law that allocated up to \$70 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2002 and annually thereafter to health and youth-related programs called the Children First Trust Fund.
- In FY2011, Alabama allocated \$861,292 for the tobacco prevention program, a nearly 60 percent cut in funding from FY2010 and FY2009.
- The FY2011 of \$861,292 allocation represents a mere 1.5 percent of the CDC recommendation for the state.

Our Position:

The Coalition for a Tobacco Free Alabama supports sustainable funding that meets or exceeds the CDC recommended levels for the state of Alabama. We oppose further cuts to the already minimal state funding put toward tobacco prevention and cessation. When program funding is cut, progress in reducing tobacco use erodes and the state suffers from higher levels of smoking and more smoking-caused deaths, disease and costs. The Coalition also supports efforts to include tobacco and health education in school curricula.



For more information, visit
tobaccofreealabama.org